

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING
February 25, 2026

This Regular Meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals, was held in The Great Hall, 41 Pleasant Street, Methuen MA. The meeting was called to order at: 7:04 PM.

Chairman Matthew D'Agostino asked for a moment of silence in memory for all those who have died for our country. He then led the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Matthew D'Agostino, Chairman
Mr. Nicholas Boucher, Vice Chairman
Mr. Philip Cultrera, Member
Mr. Vincenzo Pesce, Member
Mr. Matteo Zingales, Alternate Member
Mr. Mansour Chaya, Alternate Member
Mr. William Haneffant, Alternate Member

Also, In Attendance:

Gene Walsh, Building Inspector
Joseph Salamone Building Commissioner
Lori Moriarty HHSI Clerk III
Petitioners and Representatives

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Jose Frias, Clerk

ROLL OF APPLICANTS:

Carolyn Parker for Two Daughter's Realty LLC- present
Daniel Pedneault-present
Kevin Keleher-present

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

1. January 28,2026

Phil Cultrera made a motion to accept the minutes of January 28,2026. Nick Boucher Seconded.

Discussion: none

Vote: unanimous

NEW BUSINESS:

2026-02 Carolyn Parker for Two Daughter's Realty LLC

A Special Permit is requested under Section IX-B of the City of Methuen Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, to Erect/Construct a Free-Standing Sign (that is not allowed) in a BN (Neighborhood Business) Zone, at **65 HAVERHILL STREET, METHUEN MA 01844 (PARCEL ID:618-155-5F)**

Carolyn Parker of 3 Lorion Ave. Worcester MA, came forward representing Two Daughter's Realty. At 65 Haverhill St there is a new *Aroma Joe's*. They filed for sign permits and wanted a free-standing sign about 12 ft high. The building inspector informed them that this type of sign is not allowed in BN, and would require a Special Permit. They have shrunk down the sign to follow an allowable size in Methuen's zoning ordinance, from 12ft to 6ft high by 6ft wide (7ft maximum allowed). The sign needs both a Special Permit and a Variance, due to the location inside the front set-back. There are other businesses to the left and right of this site, that have free standing signs. *Aroma Joe's* is not open yet, but is expected to open shortly.

Gene Walsh stated Community Development is waiting for a bond to be posted for landscaping and fencing, and that the sign Special Permit and Variance should have no bearing on what Community Development is waiting for.

Ms. Parker stated that customers can park and walk in, as well as enter via the drive thru. They are a "in and out" business. There are not many parking spaces and they expect most people will use the drive-thru.

The Chairman opened public participation. No one came forward in favor or opposition, and public participation was closed.

Phil Cultrera inquired if the sign is in the approximately the same position/distance from the street as the Perrault sign next door. Matt D'Agostino stated that the dimensional questions should be addressed with the Variance application if the Special Permit is approved, and suggested they wait to ask this question for that petition. Nick Boucher asked if it will be lighted and what the hours will be. Ms. Parker stated it will be lit during business hours only, but she did not know the exact hours of operation. She guessed the hours would be about 5a-10p.

Gene Walsh stated that they have not applied for a variance for the drive-thru, so they will be open during hours that is allowed by the City. Mr. Walsh also was not sure of the hours of operation. Mr. Walsh further stated that the building and site plan has been approved through the Community Development Planning Board and the hours of operation would have been discussed and approved through the Community Development decision.

Vincenzo Pesce asked what the necessity of the sign was, believing that one could clearly see the business driving by. Ms. Parker stated that there are signs on the building, which are facing the street and are set back from the street. The monument sign at the street will be facing another direction, and help people to see it and be aware that there is a new business in town. Nick Boucher asked if the signs on the building were illuminated and the response was "yes" from Ms. Parker.

Matteo Zingales asked for clarification that the sign would be the same size as other signs on the road. Ms. Parker stated that the sign to the left maybe a little bit bigger, with a manual message board.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote of the Special Permit.

ROLL CALL:

Phil Cultrera: yes

Matteo Zingales: yes

Nick Boucher: yes

Matthew D'Agostino: yes

Vincenzo Pesce: yes

2026-03 Carolyn Parker for Two Daughter's Realty LLC

Variance is required under Section VII-D, Section 2-b of the City of Methuen Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, for a Free-Standing Sign (that is not allowed) required to be no closer than 1/2 (half) the Front Setback (which would be 12'-6") request is for 5'-0" in a BN (Neighborhood Business) Zone at **65 HAVERHILL STREET, METHUEN MA 01844 (PARCEL ID:618-155-5F)**

Ms. Parker stated that now that they have the approval of a Special Permit to have a monument sign, they are requesting a variance for the front setback. She stated that the business is a drive thru coffee shop and to put the sign where it would be allowed (at 12 ft 6 in from the property line) it would end up in the drive thru lane. The variance for front setback requested, is 5 ft instead of 12ft 6in because of where the sign would end up on the site, in middle of drive thru.

The Chairman opened public participation. No one came forward in favor or opposition, and public participation was closed.

Phil Cultrera stated that it makes sense to be consistent to locate sign within the 12 ft, if that is where other signs are located surrounding this business. He asked why they can't move it to the left or right, so that it wouldn't be in the drive thru lane.

Carolyn Parker stated that there are utilities underground in the parking area and she said if they went to the right, there would then be a side yard setback issue as well. Phil Cultrera stated that the sign at the Law office on left hand side, seems to be within the required setbacks. Carolyn Parker stated that their building is set back a lot further, and they have a different scenario. Phil Cultrera stated that it appears to him, the sign would be on the sidewalk at 5ft. Ms. Parker responded that her company didn't do the engineering for the site plan, but now they are limited to the size of the lot.

Matt D'Agostino stated that the applicant appears to be handicapped by the size of the small lot, and anything they put to conform will cost them business with loss of parking spaces. They are also hampered by the underground utility wires.

Carolyn Parker reminded the Board that they did adjust from a 12ft high sign they originally wanted to a 6ft high sign to adhere to the sign size by laws.

Vincenzo Pesce mentioned that one can put something on top of easement, but that one would need to remove the sign to access if needed. In this case, underground utility lines. Chairman D'Agostino stated that is a reason not to put something over an easement.

Gene Walsh stated that there are conservation issues in the back of the lot, which they had to deal with in site planning, which caused the building to be much closer to the front of the lot, than they would have wanted to. They didn't have the option of moving the building further back to have the sign set back further on the property.

Bill Haneffant asked if Ms. Parker knew the position of the sign on the Island. He specifically wanted to know what is the distance on either side to know if the site line may be impacted for cars coming in and out on both sides of the island. Carolyn Parker stated she didn't think there would be an issue with site coming in and out of the lot.

Joseph Salamone stated that there are signs on the building, and this monument sign would be in addition to those signs. He believed that one wouldn't necessarily see the signs on the building until you were past or right up to the location.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote of the Variance application. Phil Cultrera stated that the site had unique problems, and he didn't initially realize that there were conservation issues to the rear of the property. In light of that land hardship, he was voting in affirmative. Vincenzo Pesce also mentioned his affirmative vote was due to the hardship on the land with conservation to the rear. The Chairman stated that his affirmative vote took into consideration that they would not normally approve a variance deviation of the zoning ordinance more than 50%, and this request was on the edge of that.

ROLL CALL:

William Hanefant: yes

Phil Cultrera: yes, per plan

Nick Boucher: yes

Matthew D'Agostino: yes

Vincenzo Pesce: yes

2026-04 Daniel Pedneault

A Variance is required under Section VI-D of the City of Methuen Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance for the construction of a Detached Garage, in a RD Zone, that will be over the allowed Maximum Lot Coverage (required is 25% request is for 30%) at **13 SCHOOL STREET, METHUEN MA 01844 (PARCEL ID:614-134-97)**.

Daniel Pedneault came forward stating that he has been living at this location for 37 years, and is missing a garage. He is before the Board because his proposal exceeds lot coverage by 5%, for a 30x30 garage.

Chairman Matt D'Agostino asked the applicant if the garage was for residential use, and Mr. Pedneault confirmed it was strictly for personal use.

The Chairman opened public participation. No one came forward in favor or opposition, and public participation was closed.

Phil Cultrera stated that he noticed on his site visit that there is a canopy/shed in the rear. He asked the applicant what that was for. Mr. Pedneault stated that he has a temporary canvas cover to keep his Dad's car from the elements, but it is not permanent. He wants to remove that structure and make the yard look presentable by keeping everything maintained in the garage.

Matt D'Agostino asked if the size was standard for a two-car garage. Gene Walsh stated it was a little bit bigger than standard (24x24), but the size proposed is allowed by right for a garage (up to 900 square feet). Gene Walsh further stated that the proposed garage meets the setbacks and the reason why they are in front of the Board is because the proposed garage would cover a little too much of the lot.

Nick Boucher asked if it was an overage of lot coverage by 5% than that allowed, and Gene Walsh confirmed.

Vincenzo Pesce asked why the door size for the garage is over 8 feet, standard height. Mr. Pedneault stated that he has a personal truck, so the door needs to be high enough to clear the truck and he wants to put in a lift to work on his personal vehicles. He stated that the taller the door the better.

Vincenzo Pesce asked the applicant what he did for work, and Mr. Pedneault responded that he was in construction. He further stated that he wants to use the space only for his personal vehicles to work on.

Vincenzo Pesce stated that he has an issue with the oversize garage door, and that there could be issues down the road with a sale of the home, and new ownership looking to have a business there. He further stated that he believes the garage door needs to be standard size to prevent those type of issues, since they have seen similar situations in the past.

Daniel Pedneault asked the Board what size door they prefer. Mansour Chaya asked Mr. Pedneault if his truck would fit in the garage if there was an 8ft instead of 10ft door. Mr. Pedneault stated that it would, but he was just looking to give himself a little more room. Chairman D'Agostino confirmed with Mr. Pedneault that his proposed garage would be one story. Mansour Chaya asked the applicant to confirm that his neighbor has a garage. Mr. Pedneault stated his neighbor to the right has a 24x24 garage, but with a very small door.

Chairman Matt D'Agostino mentioned the two sheds currently on the property. Daniel Pedneault stated that both will be eliminated if he is able to build the garage. Chairman D'Agostino stated that the size of lot was undersized for the zoning area, and he inquired if there was a previous variance. The lot size is 6335 square feet and 8000 square feet is the minimum. Gene Walsh said that the house is old as was probably built before current zoning was in place. He further stated that this is an older neighborhood with similar size lots. Matt D'Agostino asked Mr. Walsh if an affirmative vote would bring everything into compliance for the site. Gene Walsh confirmed that it would.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote. Vincenzo Pesce stated that since there was no opposition from abutters, he would vote in favor of the petition.

ROLL CALL:

Vinny Pesce: yes
Mansour Chaya: yes
Phil Cultrera: yes
Nick Boucher: yes
Matthew D'Agostino: yes

2026-05

Kevin Keleher

A Variance is required under Section VI-D of the City of Methuen Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to construct a 33.98' x 16' Addition and Shed, to the left side of existing dwelling, that will be too close to the Left Side Setback (required is 15', request is for 4.68') in an RB (Residential B) Zone at **43 BLUEBERRY LN., METHUEN MA 01844 (PARCEL ID:312-126A-206)**

Nick Boucher recused himself for a conflict of interest and left the room.

Mr. Keleher came forward seeking variance to build a garage. He stated that as he ages, it is becoming difficult and unsafe to clear the snow and ice and access their vehicles, which are currently in the driveway. A garage will allow them to store their cars in a safe and practical manner. The proposed garage would be located at the end of the existing driveway and is designed with no living space above, to have limited impact on his neighbors. He spoke with three neighbors/abutters, who wrote letters of support, that were provided to the Board, in the application. They are from direct abutters, one on either side and one directly across the street. Their plan is to remove the old deteriorated shed and build an addition that will enhance their own safety and improve aesthetics for the neighborhood, believing it to be within the existing

character of the neighborhood. They don't believe that this addition will cause any detriment to the neighborhood and, it would resolve a hardship for them during the winter months. Chairman D'Agostino confirmed that the neighbor directly next to the proposed addition would be the St. Hilaire at #47.

The Chairman opened public participation. No one came forward in favor or opposition, and public participation was closed.

Chairman Matt D'Agostino read one of the three support letters, from the abutters. It was from Ann and Patrick Danahy of 39 Blueberry Lane, and dated 1-8-26.

RE: Support for Garage Addition at 43 Blueberry Ln, Methuen MA

Dear Members of the Zoning Board,

I live at 39 Blueberry Ln and as a direct abutter to Kevin and Paula Keleher's property at 43 Blueberry Ln, Methuen, MA, I am writing to express my support for their request for a zoning variance to construct a garage addition.

My property directly borders the Keleher's and can confidently state that the proposed garage will not negatively affect my property or enjoyment of it. On the contrary, Kevin and Paula have always maintained their home and yard with great care, and this addition will further enhance the appearance and value of their property.

Improvement of this kind strengthen the overall character of our neighborhood and contribute to the value of surrounding homes, including mine.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Board to approve the requested variance. This addition represents a positive investment in our neighborhood and has the full support of those most directly affected.

The Chairman said that the other two letters had similar sentiments, and he didn't read them for redundancy. They are from the following abutters: Lori and Michael St. Hilaire of 47 Blueberry Ln, and Dawn Aiello of 26 Blueberry Ln. The letters are on file with the City Clerk's office with the application.

Matteo Zingales stated that he was by the subject site this morning, and he inquired if there was any vegetation between this property and number 47 Blueberry Ln. The applicant stated that there was a tree, which is not being removed with this proposed addition. Chairman Matt D'Agostino stated that their Homeowners insurance may get involved and order them to get rid of it.

Matteo Zingales stated that he noticed a roof overlap on the 2nd story, and he asked about the existing window. Mr Keleher stated that the window will be fully removed with 2 smaller windows on either side.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL:

William Hanefant: yes

Phil Cultrera: yes, per plan

Matteo Zingales: yes

Matthew D'Agostino: yes

Vincenzo Pesce: yes, per plan

Nicholas Boucher re-entered the room.

Chairman Matt D'Agostino advised the Board that normally, if they have a quorum they will meet. It is his decision whether or not to cancel a meeting. The Chairman and the Mayor will make the decision if there are weather related issues. Chairman D'Agostino stated that he does not like to cancel if at all possible, and delay petitioners' decisions. He further advised Board members to plan on being here unless there is a hurricane or catastrophic event.

Chairman D'Agostino thanked Mayor Beauregard for working with him over the last year to fill alternate seats and coming up with people that are very competent.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, Vincenzo Pesce made a motion to adjourn, and Phil Cultrera seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous

Chairman Matthew D'Agostino adjourned the meeting 7:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Moriarty
City Clerk III HHSI