



The City of Worcester

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER

Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 29, 2026

Worcester City Hall – Levi Lincoln Chamber,

with remote participation options available via Zoom online at:

**<https://worcesterma.zoomgov.com/j/1604564634> and
call-in number 1-669-254-5252 (Access Code: 160 456 4634#).**

Attendance:

Zoning Board Members Present:

Jordan Berg Powers - Chair
Lawrence Abramoff - Vice Chair (online)
George Cortes
Angie Muharremi (online)
Eric Torkornoo (online)
Erik Bartenhagen – Alternate
Matthew Sacco – Alternate (absent)

Zoning Board Members Absent:

Staff Participating:

Michelle Smith, DPRS
Amy Beth Laythe, DPRS
David Horne, Inspectional Services Department

Call to Order:

Mr. Berg-Powers called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM.

Requests for Continuances, Extensions, Postponements, and Withdrawals

Continuances/Postponements/Withdrawals

Continuances

Item #1 149 Plantation Street (ZB-2026-003) Special Permit

Request to Continue to July 20, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to August 11, 2026

Item #4 o Grafton Street (ZB-2026-035)

Request to Continue to July 20, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to August 11, 2026

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Torkornoo, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Continuances.

Postponements

Item #6 256 Sunderland Road (ZB-2026-022) - Special Permit & Variance

Request to Postpone to July 20, 2026

Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to August 11, 2026

Item #7 1 Jackson Street (ZB-2026-031) - Variance

Request to Postpone to July 20, 2026

Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to August 11, 2026

Item #10 23-37 Boylston Street (ZB-2026-062) - Variance

Request to Postpone to July 20, 2026

Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to August 11, 2026

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Abramoff, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Postponements.

Board Member Cortes arrived to the meeting @ 5:54pm after the above votes were taken.

Old Business – Public Hearings

2. 318 Park Avenue (ZB-2026-027)

Variance: For relief from the minimum setback requirement for a permanent accessory freestanding sign in the BG-3.0 zoning district (Article IV, Section 6, Table 4.3.1.)

Special Permit: To allow dimensional relief for accessory signs (Article IV, Section 6.J.1.a)

Special Permit: To extend, alter or change a privileged pre-existing, nonconforming structure and/or use (Article XVI, Section 4)

Petitioner: Sean McGlone

Present Use: Presently on the premises is a restaurant with associated parking and a sign pole.

Zone Designation: BG-3.0 (Business, General) zoning district and within the Commercial Corridors Overlay District - Elsewhere (CCOD-E)

Petition Purpose: The applicant seeks to construct a restaurant sign on a pole.

Exhibits: Exhibit A: Special Permit Application; clerked 4/7/2026; prepared by Sean McGlone

Exhibit B: Sign Special Permit and Variance Application; clerked 4/7/2026; prepared by Sean McGlone

Exhibit C: Property Survey; dated 12/10/2019; prepared by B&R Survey, Inc

Exhibit D: Sign Post Survey; dated 4/10/2026; prepared by B&R Survey, Inc

Exhibit E: 1964 Photo of sign

Exhibit F Sign Plan; dated 6/15/2026; prepared by Serrato Signs

Testimony Date: 6/8/2026 Constructive Grant Deadline: 7/9/2026

Mr. Berg Powers noted that Board member Abramoff recused himself from voting on this item.

Sean McGlone from Sorano Signs gave an overview of the project. He hopes to install a new sign cabinet on a pre-existing pole that is non-conforming. The total sign square footage is 44 sq. ft., and 96 sq. ft is allowed. The applicant is seeking relief on the total height of the new sign, which will be over 21 ft. with

the new pole, with 20 feet being the allowed height. The setback of the sign needs to be five feet, and the current setback of the pole is 0.4 feet.

Mr. Berg Powers asked the applicant to explain some of the changes made since the first proposal was before the board.

Mr. McGlone noted that at the last meeting the sign proposed was 73 ½ sq. ft. and it has been downsized it to 44 SF, only a little larger than BT's and D'Angelo's signs previously at this location. The new sign is now 6 ¼ ft by 7 ft.

Amy Beth Laythe, Planning Division, said since this item was last before the Board, the applicant has submitted revised plans for the sign. The previous sign was 73.8 SF per side, and the Board requested some revisions to that sizing. The applicant returned with a new sign now sized at 44.1 SF per side. Comparing it to the previous sign at this location, that sign was 36.42 square feet per side. This does change the height variance. The height variance originally sought was 3 ft when they were at 23 feet. Now the sign is at 21.08 ft, so the relief is only 1.08 ft to meet the ordinance height requirement of 20 ft for the freestanding sign. She noted that the pre-existing pole is closer to the property line than the 5 feet as required for a setback. That is still the same and the sign pole has been there since the 1950s.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers commended the applicant and the changes in their proposal. He said it is a cool looking sign and would vote, "Yes."

Mr. Abramoff recused himself from comments or votes.

Mr. Cortes thanked the applicant for paying attention to the Board's concerns at the last meeting. He has no problem with approval of the proposal.

Ms. Muharremi and Mr. Torkornoo had no comments.

Mr. Bartenhagen appreciated the responsiveness of applicants who hear board comments and actually take them to heart. He asked if the applicant accepted the three conditions of approval on page 6 of the memo. Mr. Berg Powers read the conditions and Mr. McGlone said, "No problem." Mr. Bartenhagen asked McGlone if the applicant is requesting the waivers and McGlone said, "Yes." Mr. Bartenhagen had no further comment.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with the conditions as set forth on page 6 of the staff memo and the waivers as requested by the applicant.

Old Business - Public Hearings

3. 25 Wabash Avenue (ZB-2026-028)

- Variance:** For relief from the minimum lot area requirement for a multi-family high-rise dwelling use in a RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)
- Variance:** For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a multi-family high-rise dwelling use in a RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)
- Variance:** For relief from the minimum side yard setback requirement for a multi-family high-rise dwelling use in a RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)

Variance:	For relief from the maximum compact parking space requirements (Article IV, Section 7, Table 4.4, Note 3.b.)		
Special Permit:	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)		
Petitioner:	Monroe Management, LLC		
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a two-family dwelling.		
Zone Designation	RG-5 (Residence, General) zoning district		
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks to convert the two-family dwelling to a 4-unit multi-family low-rise dwelling with the addition of 2 stories, ±4 parking spaces, and associated site improvements.		
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 4/6/2026; prepared by Monroe Management, LLC	
	Exhibit B:	Site Plan; dated 2/16/2026, revised 6/15/2026; prepared by New England Environmental Design, LLC.	
	Exhibit C:	Architectural Plans; dated 4/2/2026, revised 6/15/2026; prepared by Alves Drafting & Consultation	
	Exhibit D:	Zoning Narrative; prepared by New England Environmental Design, LLC	
	Exhibit E:	Public Comment Letter; received from Alain & Marcia Grenier; dated 4/26/2026	
	Exhibit F:	Public Comment Letter; received from Justin Grenier; dated 4/23/2026	
Testimony Date:	5/18/2026	Constructive Grant Deadline:	7/21/2026

Mr. Berg Powers asked for verification as to which board member would not vote. Board member Bartenhagen noted that board member Muharremi would not vote because she was not yet on the board when this item was opened on 5/18/2026. Mr. Berg Powers said that he looks forward to hearing Ms. Muharremi's input, but she was not eligible to vote.

Adam Gaval, 717 Pleasant St. in Worcester, MA, is the managing member of Monroe Management, LLC and contractor of this project. He explained that the last time he was before that board, he was seeking to convert a two-family to a four-unit building. At this time, he hopes to convert a 2-family dwelling to a 3-family dwelling. He is still proposing five compact spaces at the rear of the house because he believes the neighborhood was concerned about residents parking on the street. He also took the advice of the board noting that the parcel is a tight area, so the new design is shorter in height and the first floor will be 100% accessible, the structure would accommodate three units. The porch has been expanded but cannot be the full width of the front of the structure because there are gas meters that are going to be installed there. The applicant said he could have requested a permit through the ADU provisions to get the third unit if it were over 900 SF, but wanted the full three-decker because each unit is 3 or 4 bedrooms with multiple bathrooms which are really needed by the City of Worcester. Mr. Gaval then reviewed the Conditions of Approval and discussed items he would like changed or stricken.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, noted that this item was discussed in May 2026. There are a number of comments relative to the architecture. The relief has adjusted slightly since the prior iteration. A four-story unit has been reduced to be three units, three stories. The existing structure is two units, two stories. She noted that in addition to staff and resident comments, the board has a series of comments that were provided in writing from the public. Ms. Smith walked through the relief requested since the changes. Staff did have a number of comments and noted that the applicant called out to a few in particular. She clarified that the plans do not show a retaining wall so, it was not something that Staff was aware being proposed. She spoke to the conditions addressed by Mr. Gaval and whether staff would support and what board action is needed on each item.

Ms. Smith noted that there are new comments from the Department of Transportation and Mobility (DTM) that are not included in the Planning recommendations and they are all standard comments.

Mr. Horne commented on the concern about the front door's accessibility and stated that there are no ADA requirements for this project. Mr. Gaval responded that they are doing it because they want to put an ADA unit on the first floor. Mr. Cortes said that he is not sure about ADA regulations but ADA requirements do not specify the material of the door, only the dimensions. He asked Mr. Gaval about the location of the ramp. Mr. Berg Powers said there is no problem with the applicant's ramp, but the question focuses on the doors accessing the structure and whether or not the board agrees to amend the condition of approval.

Public Comment:

Marcia Grenier from 28 Wabash Avenue in Worcester was present. She has lived there for 37 years and raised two children at that address. She noted that she has seen more and more cars on the street and bigger vehicles. It is difficult to drive through the street if there are two big vehicles parked on either side of the street. She owns a Honda Civic, and she and her husband are in their eighth decade. She has health concerns, and there are other people on the street who are older with health concerns. What happens if an emergency vehicle cannot get through to us? The buildings are close together and what happens if the fire trucks can't get through. The parking plan proposed by Monroe Management is totally inadequate. They are only installing compact spaces, and she asked if they are going to require all the tenants to have compact cars and only one car? If a tenant has a business or a larger vehicle, they are likely to park on the street, rather than to negotiate through that narrow driveway into the backyard. She inquired where Monroe Management would deposit the snow in the winter. She added that there are three-deckers up and down the opposite side of the street and none of those three-deckers have adequate parking and those people park on the street. The neighborhood does not need another three decker with inadequate parking. She also raised the issue that there are other two-family homes that could be converted to three deckers and contribute to the parking issues. This project is not in the public good. People on the street have enough trouble with parking and congestion. She noted that the three-deckers were built over 100 years ago. She is a descendant from Swedish ancestors who immigrated to this zip code where she lives at the end of the 1800s. There were no cars, SUVs, Amazon trucks delivering. It was probably a dirt street with horsedrawn carts delivering milk and ice to the people who lived there. It was a different world. She concluded that having another three decker will cause a lot of problems on her street. She asked the Board if they had seen the petition and noted that there are a lot of people on the street who don't want to see another housing unit on the street. She and her neighbors would like to see 25 Wabash restored as a two-family house that would beautify the neighborhood. She noted too that the house has been in disrepair for over a year, the yard is overgrown and there is plastic hanging from the walls. The driveway has a pile of dirt and an abandoned car. I hope you do not approve a three-story building for that site.

Kim (no last name) from Wabash Avenue was present. The biggest concern of neighbors is access for fire rescue ambulances. There was a car fire a few weeks ago almost diagonally across from 25 Wabash. Fortunately, the firetrucks were able to access the street that day, but a police officer commented that if there were vehicles parked on both sides of the street, the fire trucks would not have been able to reach the fire. The street consists of single-family homes and three-deckers. She noted last year was difficult to park because of the amount of snow. She noted that the parking plan for 25 Wabash saying that 50% of the tenants will have compact cars. It is not going to happen and not realistic. She also commented on the dilapidated condition of the property. She noted that you cannot take one zoning requirement in order to meet another requirement and there is a reason that he needs all these variances. The lot is made for a two-family. She believes that the property should stay as a two-family and she noted that the windows are replicated on every single three-family on that street. She commented that the ramp he proposes in that location would not accommodate a wide wheelchair. The applicant also wants to build a porch in the back on one of the plans and that would inhibit the flow of parking on the property. She reiterated that the number of parking spaces is not enough for the number of tenants planned for 25 Wabash. She concluded that it should stay as a two-family.

Mr. Berg Powers reviewed the purview of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Someone comes before the City, and it has to be done in a way that complies with city rules. The meeting is talking through what it would look like if the project was approved in a way that works with what the city sets out as a way it thinks about doing it. If this project gets approved, it has to fit with the city's rules, what the structure should look like.

Marcia Grenier, 28 Wabash Avenue, Worcester MA returned to the podium. She noted that according to the Mass General Laws, there should be a hardship. She has not heard anything about a hardship. This project is not for a family who wants to build an apartment for an elderly or disabled family member to keep them out of a nursing home. This is a business investment and changing the building from a 2-family to a 3-family for profit. People on Wabash Avenue should not suffer the hardship that will be caused by this building.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers asked the board to give comments on the proposed changes to the conditions of approval.

Mr. Berg Powers noted that he liked the idea of a 4-story which was innovative, however it was too much for Wabash Avenue. He has visited Wabash a few times and he noted that in the wintertime, it is tough to get through there. Ultimately, he will vote “Yes” on some version of this project. He noted that the applicant has the right to build three units on the property, but it should be done in a way that the City has oversight. He hears the voices of the neighbors and said that the City Councilor should think about some regulations around parking in this area, as well as regulations on keeping flow on the street. He said that people choose to live in places where they can park. He is happy to move forward with the parking requirements as is, and some version of a three-decker with board oversight. Mr. Berg Powers then gave his opinion on amending and changes to the conditions of approval.

Mr. Abramoff commented that Mr. Berg Powers did a good job summing it up. The developer seems like he listened to the Board that four units were too much. They can do three units here by-right. He gave his opinion on the changes to the conditions of approval. He supports the project with the conditions that the Chair has outlined.

Mr. Cortes noted that this project was reviewed by the Board previously and they paid attention to the size of the building, and the abutters’ concerns regarding parking. The current proposal is amenable because the size of the building has been reduced from 4 to 3 levels and the applicant has made other concessions to accommodate and resolved the main concerns. He gave his opinion of the changes to the conditions of approval and he understands that the applicant is amenable to working with the City. He asked the applicant if he understood why the City was advocating for certain conditions. The applicant said, “Yes”.

Mr. Berg Powers reviewed the conditions again. Ms. Smith clarified the conditions and Mr. Berg Powers agreed with where the conversation ended.

Ms. Muharremi had no comment.

Mr. Torkornoo clarified his stance of the conditions of approval as long as the applicant is amenable to all the conditions laid by the city, he is fine.

Mr. Bartenhagen said he shares some of the same concerns as other board members. He noted that a third floor could be built without the Board’s approval through an ADU, which would be 900 square feet, which would be a third residence with its own car. The proposed third floor is larger than what they could build by right through an ADU. He is okay with approving this project with these conditions as outlined by the chair. This proposal is better than the first proposal which added another story on top. He understands the neighbors’ concerns on the street. There would be third floor, regardless and this pushes it over in his mind toward, “Yes.” He questioned the applicant about trees and whether they are on the property. The applicant said, “Yes.” He then clarified that the applicant should try to keep the trees if possible.

Ms. Smith said that two shade trees are required under current zoning. Smith noted that Staff can work out details with the applicant. Mr. Bartenhagen then said to clarify what was required for trees with Ms. Smith for the condition. The applicant also requested the waivers.

Mr. Berg Powers and the board members then gave further opinions and edits to the conditions of approval.

Michelle Smith restated that there are two trees that are required on the right hand side unless the Board waives that requirement. The applicant should revise the plans to reflect the trees on the back right. The front tree is one of the City’s standard requirements. On the right side, they are also required to have two trees.

Mr. Berg Powers recapped the conditions the board is keeping, amending and striking. Additionally Mr. Berg Powers requested that the retaining wall show up on the plans. The applicant agreed to this.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application on 25 Wabash Avenue with amended conditions, and waivers requested by the applicant.

New Business - Public Hearings

5.	125 Grandview Avenue (ZB-2026-052)		
Special Permit:	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)		
Petitioner:	Brandon Halig	Petitioner:	
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a single-family dwelling with an ADU under construction.		
Zone Designation:	RL-7 (Residence, Limited) zoning district		
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks to construct an additional curb cut and driveway to serve the ADU.		
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 4/27/26; prepared by Brandon Halig	
	Exhibit B:	Survey (Existing), dated 8/11/2026; prepared by HS&T Group, Inc	
	Exhibit C:	Survey (Proposed); dated 4/21/2026, revised 6/15/2026; prepared by HS&T Group, Inc.	
	Exhibit D:	Driveway Diagram; dated 5/30/2025; prepared by Asphalt Engineering.	
	Exhibit E:	Architectural Plans; dated 6/11/2025; prepared by Acropolis Design Consultants.	
Testimony Date:	6/8/2026	Constructive Grant Deadline:	7/21/2026

Brandon Halig, the owner of 125 Grandview Ave in Worcester, stated at the last meeting he had requested two variances, and he no longer is requesting those variances. He is not applying for any variances related to the driveway. He plans to follow the zoning requirement of a 22 foot driveway and also close up his neighbor’s extrusion and existing 30-ft entrance will be narrowed to 22 ft. While applying for this special permit, another issue was found with the existing driveway. He explained he was told that when a driveway exceeds 22 feet, it becomes a parking area. A parking area requires 5 ft. setback from the neighboring property. He reviewed the location of the neighbor’s driveway which is on his property line which allows him to park his cars one foot from his house. His goal is to add a second driveway for his ADU.

Mr. Berg Powers asked if the applicant had reviewed City Staff’s recommendation for an 18 foot entry and the applicant said, “Yes.” Mr. Halig said he disagreed with the comments at the last meeting. He believes adding the driveway will take three cars off the street and will allow more street parking. The 18 foot

recommendation will not allow more street parking. He said he is trying to make backing out of this driveway safer on this one-way street.

Mr. Berg Powers asked the applicant about changes to the conditions of approval and the applicant indicated he would like certain changes.

Michelle Smith noted that the applicant applied for a special permit and because what was built was not consistent with the plans that were submitted. The plans were reviewed to approve authorization to access the public way not for zoning compliance. The applicant is here for the zoning compliance piece of the project. Staff have proposed a condition after the last meeting from feedback from the public and the Board. There was a concern about on street parking and the board asked the applicant to find a compromise. The Depart of Transportation and Mobility clarified that parking is not allowed within 5 ft. of a curb cut. The new curb cuts on the applicant's property not only have removed the parking where the actual curb width is, but anything within 5 feet of that. For on-street parking spaces, cars are 15 to 18 feet in length typically. Staff's condition allows for a 17 ½ inch foot long car to park in compliance with the 5-foot requirement to park curb to curb. Staff suggest an expansion of the curbing that is not shown on the plans that would gain an on-street parking space. During a snow ban, cars can still park in this space because this is the snow ban side of the street.

Public Comment:

No comments.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers said he was of two minds - he feels that the board approves variances for really large projects and then puts a lot of burden on smaller people who don't have the ability to have lawyers. He has visited the property and likes the ADU that is being built. He noted that 22 feet is a really large curb cut. If the applicant did comply with the recommendations, the curb cut would not need to be changed. The City is right to recommend getting one on-street parking space back. He believes that the applicant is making a fair request to change the condition proposed and the City is fair to ask for it.

Mr. Abramoff agrees with the City to keep one on-street parking space and keep the condition as is and vote Yes.

Mr. Cortes appreciated the changes made by the applicant to his proposal. He believes the condition should stand as written and by reducing the curb cut, it preserves one parking space.

Ms. Muharremi had no additional comment and agrees with previous comments.

Mr. Torkornoo had no comment.

Mr. Bartenhagen would agree to keep the condition as it is written and it is up to the applicant whether or to fix the driveway that is not compliant or reduce the curb cut.

The applicant responded that there are two parking spaces used now. By changing the driveway from 22 feet to 18 feet is not going to create more parking spaces. The two parking spaces are already there.

Mr. Berg Powers replied that the he sympathized but that he does not have the votes for his proposed solution. The choice is to either reduce the flare of the driveway to 18 ft. or reduce the size of the driveway to get the five feet on each side, which would make it zoning compliant. The Board would like the applicant to keep the conditions as written and then the board will vote yes on the application. Mr. Berg Powers said that the other alternative is that the applicant could choose to continue the hearing.

The applicant decided for the Board to vote and keep the condition as written to change the 22 foot curb cut to 18 foot curb cut.

Ms. Smith suggested that the board vote on the special permit. If the applicant wants to appeal, he could hire counsel to go through that process. The by-right option remains preserved so the applicant can make the decision. Staff are happy to continue to discuss this with the applicant if it's not clear. Ms. Smith asked the applicant to speak directly to Planning Staff, instead of going to DPW moving forward.

Mr. Bartenhagen clarified if the board votes to keep the conditions as written, and the project is approved, and the applicant decides that is not what he ultimately wants to do, the applicant can always change the driveway even though there is an approved special permit. The applicant said he understood and also requested the waivers.

On a motion by Mr. Abramoff, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Abramoff, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application for a special permit at 125 Grandview Avenue with the conditions of approval set forth on page 4 of 8 of the staff memo and the waivers as previously requested by the applicant.

New Business – Public Hearings

8.

40 Sherbrook Avenue (ZB-2026-058)

Existing Lot:

Variance:For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a single-family detached dwelling in an RL-7 zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)

Proposed Lot:

Variance:For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a single-family detached dwelling in an RL-7 zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)

Petitioner:Rafael Hernandez

Present Use:Presently on the premises is a single-family detached dwelling and detached garage.

Zone Designation:RL-7 (Residence, Limited) zoning district

Petition Purpose:The applicant seeks to divide the property, raze the detached garage, relocate the driveway access, construct a single-family dwelling on the newly created lot conduct and associated site improvements.

Exhibits:

Exhibit A:Application; clerked 6/10/2026; prepared by Rafael Hernandez

Exhibit B:Survey; dated 4/28/2026; prepared by New England Land Survey Inc.

Exhibit C:Architectural Plans; dated 5/18/2026; prepared by Acropolis Design Consultants, Inc

Exhibit D:Landscape Plan; dated 5/22/2026; prepared by Acropolis Design Consultants, Inc

Exhibit E:Walkway Plan; dated 6/11/2026; prepared by Acropolis Design Consultants, Inc

Exhibit F:Architectural Plans showing walkway; dated 6/11/2026; prepared by Acropolis Design Consultants, Inc.

Public Hearing Deadline:8/14/2026

Constructive Grant Deadline:9/18/2026

Rafael Hernandez, Acropolis Design and Worcester resident, gave an overview of the project. The project involves dividing the property into two lots to construct a new energy efficient single family house one

level for the current owners of the main house, for the current owners of the property, Mr/Mrs. Grilla. They want to subdivide the lot and build a house with an ADU to retire, and either sell or rent out the current house. They want the ADU that they can rent to family or rent to an individual that needs a home. Mr. Hernandez reviewed the conditions of approval and changes he would like to see and also requested the waivers.

Mr. Berg Powers asked the applicant why the frontage isn't on Anna Street. Mr. Hernandez replied that the frontage isn't on Anna Street to maintain the front and rear setback requirements so that the only relief needed was for the frontage.

Amy Beth Laythe, Planning Division, gave an overview of the project. She spoke about requesting the applicant to use Anna Street as frontage, architectural details, sidewalks and walkways. If and when this approval is granted, the applicant's next step would be a definitive frontage subdivision process through the Planning Board.

Public Comment:

No comments.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers is happy to move this project forward with conditions of approval remaining as written.

Mr. Abramoff commented that the relief is fairly minimal, agreed with the Chair on the conditions remaining as written and can support the project with that.

Mr. Cortes said that this is a straightforward request and agrees with the Chair about conditions.

Ms. Muharremi had no additional comments.

Mr. Torkoono had no comment.

Mr. Bartenhagen had no additional comments.

On a motion by Mr. Abramoff, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application on 40 Sherbrook Avenue for approval with the conditions of approval set forth on page 3 or 6 of the staff memo as written and the waiver as requested by the applicant.

New Business – Public Hearings

9. 13-15 Blithewood Avenue (ZB-2026-059)

13 Blithewood Avenue (Lot 1)

Special Permit: To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)

15 Blithewood Avenue (Lot 2)

Variance: For relief from the minimum setback requirement for an accessory structure (Article IV, Section 8.B.10)

Special Permit:A	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2		
Petitioner:	Jason P. and Patricia A. Lessard		
Present Use:	Presently on the premises at 13 Blithewood Avenue is a two-family dwelling and a detached garage and at 15 Blithewood Avenue is a single-family dwelling and an accessory shed.		
Zone Designation:	RS-7 (Residence, Single Family) zoning district		
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks retroactive relief to create a common driveway between the two lots and the location of a shed at 15 Blithewood Avenue.		
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 6/8/2026; prepared by Donald J. O'Neil, Attorney	
	Exhibit B:	Survey; dated 5/26/2026; prepared by B&R Survey, Inc	
Public Hearing Deadline:	8/12/2026	Constructive Grant Deadline:	9/16/2026

Donald O'Neil, attorney in Worcester, representing Jason Lessard gave an overview of the item which requires a special permit for the driveway setback provisions and location of a shed. Mr. O'Neil has no objection to the recommended conditions of approval. He also requested the waivers.

Amy Beth Laythe Planning Division, gave an overview of the project and the relief sought by the applicant.

Public Comment:

No comments

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers noted that the Board does not like when owners make mistakes and then come before the board. He visited the site and believes the common driveway request is fine, and the shed is fine and he votes Yes.

Mr. Abramoff said he agrees with Mr. Berg Powers. No other comments.

Mr. Cortes reviewed the project proposals and has no problems with it. He agrees with moving forward with the plan.

Ms. Muharremi had no comment.

Mr. Torkoono had no comment.

Mr. Bartenhagen had no additional comments.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen seconded by Mr. Abramoff, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen seconded by Mr. Abramoff, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with the conditions on page 4 of 5 of the staff memo and the waivers as requested by the applicant.

Other Business

11. Communications

None.

12. Discussion of Board Policies and Procedures

Revisiting Administrative Procedure and Deadlines. Mr. Berg Powers asked the board if there was any feedback to City Staff about required deadlines and making sure that people get information to staff in a timely manner. Michelle Smith noted that the Planning Division is making adjustments to their standard operating procedures and encourage applicants to connect with Planning Staff before the hearing.

Ms. Smith added that she connected with the City's Law Department and noted that Robert's Rules of Order do not mention motions by Alternate members. Out of an abundance of caution, if all other board members are present, the alternate should not be substituting in for someone unless there is a member on the board that is unable to vote, whether through a recusal, absence or otherwise. Ms. Smith suggested continuing current practice which is for someone to make that motion and second that motion and then vote. If Planning receives a more formal response, she will update the Board.

Mr. Berg Powers reminded the board members that if they miss a meeting, they are required to watch the video and fill out a Mullin form that the video was seen.

16. Approval of Minutes 5/18/2026; 6/8/2026

Minutes were held until the next meeting.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, Board voted 4-0 to adjourn at 8:25pm