



COLERAIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Minutes

4200 Springdale Road – Cincinnati, Ohio 45251

Wednesday, May 28, 2025 – 6:00 PM

1. Meeting Called to Order
Board Chair Robert called the meeting to order at 6:01.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
All recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Explanation of Procedures
Board Chair Mr. Roberto explained the rules and procedures of the meeting.
4. Roll Call
Present & Voting: Board Member Mr. Bartolt, Board Member Ms. Owens, Board Member Mr. Schupp, Alternate Board Member Mr. Theimann, Board Chair Mr. Roberto
Present & Not Voting: Alternate Board Member Ms. Smith
Absent: Board Member Mr. Sidow
5. Swearing in: appellants, attorneys, and all speakers in the cases
All who wished to speak during the public hearing portions of the meeting were sworn in by Board Chair Mr. Roberto.
6. Hearing of Appeals

BZA-25-8: Applicant is requesting a variance to allow for outdoor residential storage at 6066 Blue Rock Road.

- Applicant spoke to the Zoning Administrator prior to the meeting May meeting date to request a continuance on their case. The applicant stated they needed more time to straighten out some issues before he spoke to the board.

Motion & Roll Call:

Board Member Mr. Bartolt motioned to accept the request for a continuance at 6066 Blue Rock Rd to hear at the June 25, 2025 meeting date. Board Member Ms. Owens second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

- b. **BZA-25-9:** Applicant is requesting a variance to the comprehensive development

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TOWNSHIP ~ OHIO

standards at 2411 Roosevelt Avenue.

- **Staff Presentation:** Given by Zoning Administrator
- **Details of case:** This parcel's lot acreage is not in compliance with Colerain's Zoning Resolution Single Unit Residential zoning district. In order to build on a lot in the Single Unit Residential zoning district, the lot size must be seventy-five hundred square feet; The proposed lot is fifty-two hundred square feet. Because of the insufficient acreage, the applicant is requesting a use variance to build a single-unit dwelling on this property. At this property there is an abandoned curb cut and partial driveway assuming the original intention was for a house to be built on the property.
- **Staff Recommendation:** Approval with the condition to follow all other site development standards required by the Township.
- **Applicant Presentation:** The applicant thanks staff for creating their presentation and for the board to hear their case for the variance.
- **Meeting attendees speak in favor or against case:** None

Motion to Close Public Hearing

Board Member Mr. Thiemann made a motion to close the Public Hearing.
Board Member Mr. Schupp second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

Questions for the Applicant:

- **Board Member Bartolt:** Asked the applicant if this would be for a single family home. Mr. Peters responded yes. Mr. Bartolt asked the applicant if "Bed and Breakfast" is their company. The applicant stated that is the owner's name and they are just under contract to purchase the land. Mr. Bartolt asks for clarification on whether the "Bed and Breakfast" name is from the previous owner. The applicant stated yes. Mr. Bartolt was curious if this would be a rental based on the name of the company. The applicant stated they have no interest in making it a rental property.
- **Board Chair Roberto:** Asked the applicant if their sale of ownership is contingent on whether this variance is approved or not. The applicant said yes.

Motion & Roll Call:

Board Member Mr. Bartolt made a motion to approve with conditions stated by staff.
Board Member Ms. Owens second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

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TOWNSHIP ~ OHIO

- c. **BZA-25-11:** Applicant is requesting a variance for parking & landscaping standards at 3310 Compton Road.

- **Staff Presentation: Given by Zoning Administrator, David Peters**
- **Details of case:** The site currently predates current zoning regulations and is located in the Single Unit Residential zoning district of Colerain Township. It is situated between condominiums and single-unit residential housing. It is currently owned by the Northwest Local School District and operates as the Houston Early Learning Center. The school district proposes a full redevelopment of the site for the new Colerain Elementary School. The project would include demolition of the existing structure, new school construction, redesigning circulation and parking, and enhancing outdoor play areas. During the preliminary zoning review, staff identified a few issues that may need zoning variances. These issues include interior parking lot landscaping, streetscape and perimeter buffer yard requirements and facade massing and architectural standards. The variances are sought to address site constraints, enhance operational efficiency, and reduce long-term maintenance needs. Plans incorporate strategies such as snow storage lands, retention of existing vegetation, and compliant architectural elevations in line with zoning design intent. Regarding the issue of landscape buffers, it was discussed internally within the department that the spirit and intent behind the parking lot island requirements does not apply to school buses and school bus parking. It only applies to automotive parking. The panhandle entrance off of Compton Rd. is the entrance being referred to for the streetscape buffer variance. The applicant would like to reduce the required streetscape buffer along Compton Rd. Per the Township's new Zoning Resolution, monument signs require a radius buffer around a monument sign, the applicant would like a variance to reduce that buffer. There is also a question about vegetation and if the vegetation lining the panhandle entrance act as a landscape buffer.

- **Zoning Issues**

- **Buffering Standards: (§ 4.3.3(B)) Streetscape Buffers:** Requires a streetscape buffer along public street frontages. The applicant is requesting a variance due to limited frontage and space constraints at the entrance driveway.
- **Buffering Standards: (§ 4.3.3(E)) Planting Requirements for Buffers:** Specifies the planting requirements for required buffers. The applicant seeks to count existing dense vegetation along the east property line in lieu of new planting.
- **Buffering Standards: (§ 4.3.3 (F)) Alternative Requirements for Buffers:** Allows for alternative buffering standards, subject to certain conditions. The applicant is requesting that the

existing vegetation be accepted as an alternative buffer.

- Facade Massing: (§ 4.6.2(A)) Front Facades: Requires defined modulation of the front facade including offsets or architectural transitions. The applicant requests that proposed material transitions and fenestration be accepted as meeting the intent of the regulation.
- Facade Massing: (§ 4.6.2(B)) Roofline Changes: Requires variation in roofline height and parapet treatment. The applicant seeks recognition of proposed changes in parapet height and wall modulation as meeting this requirement.
- Facade Massing: (§ 4.6.2(C)) Flat Roofs: Set design standards for flat roofs, including parapet treatments. The applicant requests acceptance of the school's parapet design as compliant with the intent of the standard.
- Parking Landscaping Standards: (§ 4.7.5 (B)) Interior Landscaping: Requires interior landscape islands within parking lots. The applicant seeks relief to eliminate interior islands for operational purposes and instead rely on terminal islands and other landscaped areas on site.

- **Staff Recommendation:**

- **Approval with No Conditions:** Planting Requirements for Buffers, Alternative Requirements for Buffers, Facade Massing for Front Facades, Facade Massing for Roofline Changes, Facade Massing for Flat Roofs.
- **Approval with Conditions:** Buffering Standards for Streetscape Buffers - Approval with the condition that a continuous landscaped bed with a minimum radius of six feet shall be installed and maintained around the base of the existing monument sign and shall include a combination of ornamental grasses, shrubs, and groundcover.
- **Denial:** Parking Landscape Standards for Interior Landscaping.

- **Questions from Board:**

- Board Member Mr. Bartolt asked staff if the facade stipulations are being brought up because the board can override staff or are the stipulations met but still need the board's input. Mr. Peters responds by stating that he recommended approval for the variances related to facades. Mr. Bartolt then asks why they are variances. Mr. Peters states the applicant's plans don't meet the requirements in the Zoning Resolution for these categories and, since there is not a number system for these sections, we can not grant these stipulations with an administrative waivers.

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TOWNSHIP ~ OHIO

- **Applicant Presentation:**

- **Michael Parkinson:** The applicant states they are trying to maintain the same standards as they do with the other three elementary schools. With that being said, they are looking at what was accepted at the older elementary schools and applying it to this new one. Keeping it at ease of maintenance for the school district. The trees that were originally going to be along the panhandle will now be relocated and they are actively trying not to omit islands without having any additional landscaping spread throughout the site. At the end of the parking areas, there are curbed landscaping for an extra buffer and creates an anchor point for the lots and for snow plows.
- **Josh Shaw:** States he is the one wanting to eliminate the landscape buffers, not just for snow plows but also because there is an elevation drop on the east edge of the property that requires a catch basin for runoff water. His concern is that if they are to put landscape buffers around the parking lot, all of those buffers would need their own catch basin, which then creates extra maintenance and issues for the pavement. He understands that Colerain is trying to remove the sea of asphalt in the Township but for the safety and efficiency of the school, he feels as though his concerns for eliminating parking islands should be taken into consideration.

- **Meeting attendees speak in favor or against case:**

- **In Favor:**
 - No one outside of the applicants spoke in favor of the requested variances.
- **Against:**
 - **Adam Schmitt**
- **Concerns:**
 - Negligence by Northwest School District on locking/closing the gate to shut the street down after school hours. It is generally left open, which then allows people to speed through by car and put the residents that live near that road in danger of getting hit by a car.
 - Their concern is with a larger student body and higher car rate, would Lillwood Lane be used as an exit for cars as well?

Motion to Close Public Hearing

Board Member Mr. Bartolt made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting.

Board Member Mr. Schupp second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

Questions for the applicant

Board Member Mr. Schupp: asked the applicant how they will address the concerns about locking the gate at night and had there been any consideration about locking it at night. The applicant responds by stating they intend for traffic to flow in and out of Compton Road. The back access road is intended for fire and emergency personnel only.

Board Member Mr. Bartolt: asked the staff if the other three schools needed a variance for their parking lots/landscaping. Mr. Peters is not aware, those cases would have been before his time at Colerain. Mr. Peters does state that the Zoning Resolution was updated in October 2024 and with that, the parking minimums have been taken away but the landscaping has become stricter. Mr. Bartolt asked staff if there is existing native vegetation that is being used but then cut down, would they need to put in the buffers that are required? Mr. Peters states that the zoning Resolution and our department encourages using native plants for landscaping. Staff has also been in contact with the school team to utilize some of their existing landscape buffer to meet the requirements rather than completely removing the native plants from the property. Mr. Bartolt would like clarification on what Staff means by "looking better when the school opens" by new plantings? Mr. Peters clarify by saying tree trimming, cleaning things up around the area. Mr. Bartolt states that the image showing the existing tree lined buffer does not look appealing. Mr. Peters asked the applicant if it will look better than what the picture indicated on the screen once the school opens. The applicant states yes.

Board Chair Mr. Roberto asked for confirmation of whether the back gate would be locked at all times until the fire department needs access to it. The applicant responds with a yes. Mr. Roberto recalls Pleasant Run having a case for landscaping because their concern was for kids to be doing car donuts in the parking lot and these would help control that. Mr. Peters agrees that it would help reduce the potential of kids doing donuts in the parking lot, but it would also reduce the heat island effect on the environment. The applicant came up to the podium proclaiming that they were the design team for the previous schools and they do not believe they had to get a variance for landscaping but all those parking plans had endcap landscape buffers and the parking is laid out differently with fourteen spaces in a row whereas this school will have longer aisles of parking. Mr. Roberto asked staff to go back to the landscape picture showing the existing plant buffer.

Board Member Mr. Theimann asked for clarification on through traffic from the school to Lillwood Lane and from his understanding, there will not be an increase in traffic through this road. Mr. Roberto responds that the lane will only be used for fire emergencies. The applicant spoke away from the microphone so Mr. Roberto restated the applicants statement; It was in use this year and last year, and it will be discontinued for use and will only be used for emergencies only.

Ms. Owens asked for clarification if Lillwood Lane is supposed to be used for fire currently or are they going to be changing that. The applicant states that the traffic flow will be made as a loop around the school so the flow will only come in and out on Compton Rd. Lillwood Lane will be used as a service drive and for nothing else.

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Motion and Roll Call:

Board Member Mr. Bartolt made a motion to approve the five conditions under “Approved with No Conditions”. Ms. Owens second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

Board Member Mr. Bartolt made a motion to approve what is listed under “Approved with Conditions” with staff’s condition recommendation. Board Member Mr. Schupp second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

Board Member Mr. Bartolt made a motion to approve the variance for 4.7.5(B) with the condition that all the plantings that should have gone into the parking islands, will go somewhere else on the property. Board Member Mr. Thiemann second the motion.

Roll Call: YES(5), NO(0), ABSTAIN(0)

7. Unfinished Business
None

8. Approval of Minutes

- a. February 26, 2025 Minutes

Board Chair Mr. Roberto found a typo that was given to staff to be changed.

9. Next Meeting: June 25, 2025

Next month cases will include abandoned signs and variances.

10. Administrative Matters

Although there are no administrative matters, Board Member Mr. Bartolt asked staff what the next step will be for the abandoned signs after they go through BZA. Mr. Peters explained that the signs that are deemed vacant by the board will then go to the trustees. The trustees will either vote to abate them and have them be removed or they will deem them not abandoned and no action will be taken. If the outcome is vacant and the owner does not comply within a certain amount of days, the township has the authority to remove the sign from their property.

Board Member Mr. Bartolt asked what is the process for acknowledging the sign is vacant. Is it from residents filling out complaints or how? Mr. Peters said he goes around the Township and finds the properties that fit the profile as "abandoned" in our Township's Zoning Resolution.

Board Member Ms. Owens asked about the green signs along the highway. Mr. Peters state that those belong to ODOT and we cannot do anything about those. Same thing with billboard signs.

Board Member Mr. Bartolt asked that when there are new board members, is there an orientation that could take place or a handout we can give new members or even as a



refresher? Mr. Peters stated he has been in talks with the administration on holding a meeting to go over the by-laws of the board and suggests we should do it in the next ninety days. Mr. Roberto exclaims that there used to be workshops for boards.

11. Adjournment
All in favor adjourned the meeting at 6:44pm



Approval of Meeting Minutes

Colerain Township Board of Zoning Appeals

4200 Springdale Rd

Cincinnati, OH 45251

Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 - 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

Mr. David J. Peters, Board of Zoning Appeals Administrator

6/25/25

Date

Secretary:

Mark Schupp, Secretary

6/25/25

Date

Accepted By:

Mr. Ronald Roberto, Chairman

6/25/25

Date