

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Regular Meeting
February 24, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Russ Boersma at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Russ Boersma, Members Jack Vander Meulen, and Ross DeVries. Also present were Community Development Director Corey Broersma, Assistant Planner/Zoning Administrator Kate White and Recording Secretary Laurie Kissau.

Absent: Members Elliott Church and Robert De Vries.

First on the agenda was the election of officers for 2026.

**It was moved by Ross De Vries and supported by Vander Meulen to re-nominate the same officers to their position: Russ Boersma to Chairman, Ross De Vries to Vice-Chair, and Bob De Vries to Secretary. Motion carried unanimously with a voice vote.

Public Comment: Mandy Brower of Quality Car Wash indicated their support of the Chick-Fil-A and Essenburg Car Wash applications.

Mr. Vander Meulen had one correction to the minutes of December 16, 2025. On page 6, the paragraph starting "In March 2023..." should be March 2003.

** It was moved by Ross De Vries and supported by Boersma to approve the minutes of December 16, 2025, with the correction of the date. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Chairman Boersma explained the Public Hearing process to the audience. He further informed the applicants that there were two members absent, so any roll call vote on a motion would need to be unanimous for it to be approved. The applicant has the option to have their application tabled until there are more Board Members present.

Hearing declared open to consider a petition for a Nonuse Variance Request submitted by Jared & Tiffany Stevens for property located at 10850 Riley Street, known specifically as Parcel Number 70-16-14-100-022. Petitioner is requesting a variance of 700 square feet from the maximum 1,050 square feet permitted for attached accessory building area, resulting in a total area of 1,750 square feet for an attached garage. The variance is being requested for a new garage addition. The subject property is AG Agriculture and FP Floodplain.

Present for this request were Jared and Tiffany Stevens. Also present was Lucas Ulberg of Viking Construction Group.

Mr. Stevens indicated a desire for the hearing to proceed with only 3 Board Members.

Mr. Ulberg explained to the Board that the applicant would like to add a garage of 1,750 square feet. The size of the property is 10 acres. The addition would not be visible from the road. There are two neighboring properties. They share a driveway. One is Mr. Stevens' brother and the other is his in-laws. They are both in favor of the request.

Mr. Ulberg noted the applicant did look at building a stand-alone accessory building, however there are limitations. This is the scenario that makes the most sense. They are planning on putting in a large family pool. The plan is to turn the existing garage into a pool house. The addition would be for storage of off-season pool accessories and parking of vehicles.

Mr. Ulberg explained the addition would be true to the style of the existing house – all brick. The character of the house would be maintained. Doing a stand-alone accessory building on the property would take away from the uniqueness of the property. The size of the addition would still be under 50% of the square footage of the house, as the ordinance requires. It would be 42%. However, it would be more than the maximum square footage of 1,050 allowed by ordinance for a property of this size. Complying with the 1,050 square feet allowed by ordinance does not allow for enough space for parking of the vehicles and storage of personal items that the applicant needs. Currently Mr. Stevens cannot park his truck in the garage. It does not fit.

Mr. Ulberg further stated that there are planters attached to the house. They plan to add planters to the new side of the garage to tie it all together.

Mr. Vander Meulen asked why they decided to do this instead of an addition to the existing attached accessory building (garage).

Mr. Stevens replied that the existing garage is 20' x 20' a good space and location for the pool house. It will be all brick so it will tie in with the existing garage. If they had just added on straight to the left of the house it would have been long and monotone.

Mr. Ulberg stated they arranged it so that it would line up with the front of the house and the roof lines and architecturally look good. They also have an interior designer, so everything ties all together coming into the house.

The Board asked if they were to approve the request as presented at tonight's meeting, is this the plan they would need to use to build the garage.

Mr. Broersma replied that yes, this is the plan that would be submitted to the building department to obtain permits.

Mr. Stevens further explained that there is a bathroom in the far corner that is accessed from outside specifically for the pool use – changing, etc. There is currently one small accessory building (shown in pink on the presentation) that will be removed.

Again, Mr. Stevens was asked if he had considered a 1,000 square foot garage with a 750 square foot accessory building. He replied that he had. He said it would not be ideal because of the intended use of space. There would be more steps to get to the vehicles. Also, there is less cost this way.

Mr. Stevens noted the neighbors to the east would be more in line of site of a stand-alone accessory building. They prefer the addition better than an accessory building. With the proposed garage being brought to the front, it doesn't look so long.

Mr. Ross De Vries commented that the size of property allows for the addition. The house is a good distance from the road. Taking the neighbors' comments into consideration, this would make less of an impact on them.

Chairman Boersma commented that granting this variance does not keep them from putting up an accessory building later. This creates a lot of storage space. There appears to be space in the rear yard for an accessory building in the future. The house does sit far back on the property and is not visible from the road.

Chairman Boersma further commented that the Board had a similar situation on Garden Ridge and the Board approved it with an applicant offered stipulation that they would not be allowed to have an detached accessory building in the future.

Mr. Stevens replied that at this time he has no plans of putting a detached accessory building on the property. With the outdoor living space with the pool, it is not feasible. He further commented that they will probably be downsizing in the next ten years.

Chairman Boersma opened the floor for public comment. There was no one present in the audience to speak to this request.

** It was moved by Ross De Vries and supported by Vander Meulen to close the hearing. Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

The Board went over the standards to review when considering the nonuse variance request.

1. ***That compliance with the Zoning Ordinance would result in practical difficulties due to exceptional, extraordinary, or unique characteristics or conditions of the land or lot of record, including but not limited to:***
 - a. ***Exceptional narrowness of the width or depth of a lot of record, or irregular shape.***
 - b. ***Exceptional natural or topographic features located on the lot of record, such as steep slopes, water, existing significant trees, or other unique or extreme physical conditions of the land.***
 - c. ***Extraordinary location of an existing building or structure that allows no other practical or feasible location for expansion because of exceptional land features.***
 - d. ***Other exceptional or extraordinary dimensional conditions or characteristics of land or lot of record.***

The Board found that the difficulty for this parcel is the harmony of the whole outside design. Also, the building envelope is extremely small for it being a 10-acre parcel. There is not a lot of additional space for a detached accessory building. The structure is in the back corner of the property out of view. The applicant has a good relationship with the neighbors that will see it and they spoke with them about the addition.

2. ***That the unusual circumstances do not apply to most other lots of record in the same manner to the same extent to other lots of record in the same zoning district.***

The Board found it would be hard to find another lot of record with a similar lot size, this building area and house placement. There is also a creek going through the middle of the property.

3. ***That the variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right. The possibility of increased financial return shall not of itself be deemed sufficient to***

warrant a variance.

The Board found the applicant can enjoy the property with a garage that conforms; however, the size of the property lends to allowing the attached accessory building to be larger. It costs a lot of money to do this. They are not looking to flip the house; it is not for financial gain.

4. *That the granting of the variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent and nearby land uses and properties.*

The Board found that the structure will not be visible from the road. It will not be of substantial detriment to the neighbors. There are existing evergreen trees for a buffer. The addition does not encroach on the neighbor's property in any way. It will match the existing house and tie in with the house.

5. *That the applicant shall not have created the problem for which the variance is being sought.*

The Board found that the applicant did consider a separate accessory building. With the vehicles under another roof, there would be issues getting back and forth in inclement weather. It was more aesthetically appealing to have an addition to the existing structure than to have a separate accessory building on the property.

6. *That the granting of the variance will not be contrary to the public interest and that the spirit of this ordinance shall be observed, public safety secured, and substantial justice done for both the applicant and other property owners in the district.*

The Board found that granting this variance would not be contrary to the public interest and that the spirit of this ordinance would be observed. There would be no public safety issues. The structure is not visible from the road. There are buffers.

** It was moved by Ross De Vries and supported by Vander Meulen to approve the request as presented. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Hearing declared open to consider a petition for a Nonuse Variance Request submitted by Chick-Fil-A, Inc. for property located at 2332 North Park Drive, known specifically as Parcel Number 70-16-21-100-046. Petitioner is requesting a variance from the Type D Buffer requirements in Section 11.7 of the Township Zoning Ordinance for 151.86 feet of the northern property line resulting in a 0 foot buffer with no canopy or evergreen trees. The variance is being requested for an expansion of Chick-Fil-A's current drive-thru operation. The subject property is zoned C-2 Community Commercial.

Present for this request was Seth Arthur, Council for Chick-Fil-A. Also present was Jason Toole of CPH, 1031 W 23rd Street, Panama City, FL 32405, and Shaun Page of Owner, Operator of Chick-Fil-A, 2332 North Park Drive, Holland, MI 49424.

Mr. Arthur stated that they would like to have their request tabled tonight. However, they would like to give a small presentation as there were several people present that had traveled quite far to be here.

Mr. Broersma responded that it was a publicly advertised hearing and it would be appropriate to give a small presentation of some kind as there may be someone in the audience here wishing to comment.

Before turning the presentation over to Mr. Tool and Mr. Page, Mr. Arthur stated the intention of the variance request from the 10' landscape buffer is to allow a drive-through operation expansion to include a second lane.

Jason Toole of CPH, engineer, architect and landscape designer for Chick-Fil-A, explained to the Board that the benefit of this additional lane is if you are stuck in line behind a person with a large order, a Chick-Fil-A employee could come out, give the person behind their order and they could leave by using the bypass lane. Also, should a customer decide they do not want to place an order and wait for it, they could leave by using the bypass lane. Currently, there is a problem with stacking out to the access road. This would keep the line flowing.

Mr. Toole explained the enhanced landscape plan. He stated that a lot of it would be along the US-31 frontage. The buffer may be more beneficial to the roadway as opposed to the carwash – between Chick-Fil-A and them.

Chairman Boersma stated that other restaurants have areas to divert cars with large orders where they can wait for their food. Does Chick-Fil-A have such an area or have they thought about having such an area?

Mr. Toole stated that they prefer to keep the cars in the drive-thru and deliver the food that way because of safety issues that could arise for their employees having to go into the parking lot area.

Chairman Boersma had further questions about parking spaces within the parcel to the west of the building.

Mr. Page approached the podium and spoke to Mr. Boersma's questions.

Mr. Page stated that he has been with Chick-Fil-A for 8 years. The spaces to the west are currently used for customer vehicle parking for the purpose of waiting for their order. However, employees having to walk out there to deliver orders which creates the potential for more slip and fall types of accidents in the winter. They are trying to prevent that as much as possible with the second lane.

Mr. Page shared the vision of Chick-Fil-A is to be Holland's most caring company. To take care of the community. To take care of the customers. To take care of the team members. He believes that the addition of a second lane accomplishes that by being more efficient. Currently cars are being stacked, they are not allowed to get out of line, and it is not as great an experience as it could be. It is also for the safety of the Chick-Fil-A team members. The approval of this request would be a big win for the Holland Community.

Chairman Broersma asked if they would still have employees walking out to the cars. Mr. Page responded that yes, they would, but they would not be walking out into the parking lot to deliver the food, just back to the second car in line. So, the walking would be less.

There was further discussion about how the two lanes would work together. The Board wanted to be clear about this. Would stacking occur in the second lane too? Mr. Page replied that it could, but they would merge into one lane. That would only happen at peak times.

Mr. Vander Meulen explained that when they appeared before the Planning Commission, they too did not understand how exactly the bypass lane would work. He stated that 90% of the time it would be a bypass lane, so the customer is not held up with a large order or issue at the window. They could get their order delivered to them and leave by the bypass lane. He further explained that there was no one from Quality Car Wash at the Planning Commission meeting to speak to the request to create a PUD out of these two parcels. Did they realize that doing so, moving forward any change they make would need to go before the Planning Commission? If there is another way around it, the Planning Commission felt that would be better.

Mr. Vander Meulen continued that one of his main concerns is the traffic on North Park Drive and getting out onto James Street. There is just not a good movement of traffic through there. He was concerned that if they had faster service that the volume of customers would rise and make the traffic worse.

Mr. Toole responded that the traffic is typically driven by the square footage of the building and they are not changing the square footage. So, there is no additional seating or parking, anything that would increase traffic.

Mr. Vander Meulen had a concern with the barrier between the two properties being all grass. He would like to see a different option. The problem with grass is it's there for six months of year and cut down for the winter months. It takes time to grow, for the most part it is not there. Also, the garbage blowing around would get caught in it. Landscaping should look nice.

Mr. Toole responded that he would take that back their landscaping team and see what they can do. He further confirmed with Mr. Broersma that the landscaping plan would have to be submitted and approved by his department. Mr. Broersma replied that that is correct.

Mr. Arthur gave his final comments on the variance request. He stated that the Planning Commission encouraged them to ask for a variance. That is what they are here to do. Many of the Planning Commission were in support of the concept of the expansion to alleviate the congestion in that area. There was also opposition at that hearing.

The car wash is in support of the expansion. They would be the most impacted by the variances.

Mr. Arthur further noted that the Staff Report stated that the variance would not be detrimental to surrounding properties and that there is not a public safety issue. He believes that granting this variance is going to help with traffic congestion on North Park Drive. So, it seems to make a lot of sense to grant these variances.

Chairman Boersma opened the floor for public comment. Mandy Brower of Quality Car Wash spoke in support of the variances. She stated that they had been working with Chick-Fil-A a couple of years to develop the best plan without impacting the car wash process and the oncoming lanes. By reducing the landscape buffer a little, it will be a great benefit for them, and it does not hinder the car wash business at all. There are only about 12-15 days per year that the car wash is extremely backed up. Quality Car Wash's goal is to get customers in and out as quickly as possible and that is what Chick-Fil-A wants to do too.

** It was moved by Vander Meulen and supported by Ross De Vries to table this request with the public hearing remaining open. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Hearing declared open to consider a petition for a Nonuse Variance Request submitted by Chick-Fil-A on behalf of Essenburg Car Wash of North Park, LLC for property located at 2352 North Park Drive, known specifically as Parcel Number 70-16-21-100-045. Petitioner is requesting a variance from the Type D Buffer requirements in Section 11.7 of the Township Zoning Ordinance for 151.86 feet of the southern property line resulting in a 4.54 foot buffer with no canopy or evergreen trees. The variance is being requested in conjunction with the variance request for the Chick-Fil-A site. The subject property is zoned C-2 Community Commercial.

Present for this request was Seth Arthur, Council for Chick-Fil-A.

Mr. Arthur asked to reserve the same comments they had on the first request, requesting this item to be tabled also, allowing them to dive deeper into the factors at a subsequent hearing.

There was no one present in the audience to speak to this request.

** It was moved by Ross De Vries and supported by Vander Meulen to table this request with the public hearing remaining open. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

There was no other business.

Meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Kissau
Recording Secretary