

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
March 18, 2026

The public hearing began at 7:00 P.M.

Members present were:

Terry Andrus
Albert Fisher
Andrew Groetsch
Eric Hernandez
Joseph Stefano
George LoBiondo

Members absent: Ryan Flaim, Rudolph Luisi, Joseph Repice

Others Present were:

Amanda Moscillo, Alternate Zoning Board Solicitor
Yasmin Perez, Zoning Board Secretary
Kathleen Hicks, Supervising Planner
Rickie Caudill, Substitute Zoning Board Engineer
Elizabeth Jambor, Assistant Planner
Rick Crudele, Assistant Zoning Officer

Ms. Moscillo went over revisions to the agenda.

The Chairman entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2026, meeting.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes
Albert Fisher: Yes
Andrew Groetsch: Abstain
Eric Hernandez: Abstain
Joseph Stefano: Yes
George LoBiondo: Yes

The Chairman entertained a motion to approve the resolutions from the February 18, 2026, meeting.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes
Albert Fisher: Yes
Andrew Groetsch: Abstain
Eric Hernandez: Abstain
Joseph Stefano: Yes
George LoBiondo: Yes

ROBERT SWANSON ESTATE, 85 Columbia Avenue, Block 4214, Lot 40, Zones R-2, certification of non-conforming use for a three-unit family dwelling.

The applicant was represented by Mr. Michael Guccio, Esq. He explained that no construction or development were proposed as part of this application. The request before the Board was solely for a determination that the existing multifamily use of the property is valid, lawful, and nonconforming.

He stated that the property contains three dwelling units. The principal structure has two units with an upper and lower level. The third dwelling unit is located within an accessory structure, specifically the garage. Mr. Gruccio noted that triplexes, or three-family dwelling units, were permitted uses in the R-2 zone until June 24, 2008. The records obtained and submitted with the application show that during the City's reassessment conducted in approximately 1988 or 1989, the property was recognized as containing three dwelling units. He explained that current assessment documents provided by the City Tax Assessor also reflect the same arrangement, recognizing two dwelling units in the principal structure and one dwelling unit in the accessory structure. Records obtained from the Landis Sewerage Authority dating back to 1998 indicate three dwelling units on the property. There are records from Licenses and Inspections that included certificates of registration for all three units dated 1999 and 2014. Mr. Gruccio stated that the property was acquired by Swanson Hardware in 1999 and later transferred in 2020 to the late Robert Bruce Swanson. Application materials included floor plans and a survey of the property. The survey shows a driveway on each side of the principal structure and a garage, and a two-car garage. The garage also contains a residential unit located in the rear. Floor plans for all units were also submitted. The first-floor dwelling unit within the principal structure includes a kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms, and a living room. The second-floor dwelling unit contains a similar layout, including a kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms, and a living room. The dwelling unit within the accessory structure contains one kitchen, one bathroom, one bedroom, and one living room. Mr. Gruccio addressed the issue of abandonment, stating that the multifamily use of the property has never been abandoned and that there has always been an intention to continue the three-family use of the property.

Mr. Russell Swanson, Co-Executor of the property owner's estate, provided testimony regarding the application. He testified that from the time Swanson Hardware acquired the property until it was transferred to his late brother, the property was continuously rented with all three dwelling units in use. He explained that his brother was a contractor and had begun renovations to the property. However, due to declining health, his brother did not complete the renovations. His brother ultimately succumbed to his health issues in August, which prevented the completion of the planned renovations. Mr. Swanson testified that he had no knowledge of any garage demolition occurring during the period of ownership by Swanson Hardware or during his late brother's ownership.

Mr. Gruccio placed the bulk variances on the record. He stated that the property contains approximately 10,413 square feet of lot area, with frontage of 72.5 feet along the eastern side of Columbia Avenue and a lot depth of 142 feet along the southern property line. The property contains a front yard setback of 22.5 feet and a side yard setback of 4.3 feet along the northerly property line. He requested that the Board grant bulk variance relief to recognize these existing conditions as valid, lawful, and nonconforming. None of the bulk deviations have been intensified, increased, or worsened since the property was acquired.

Mr. Fernando Figueroa, 87 Louisa Lane, member of the public, had concerns regarding the application. He expressed concerns regarding privacy and parking associated with the subject property. He stated that he was concerned about the availability of parking for three families and the potential impact on privacy in the rear yard area. His property is located to the rear of the subject property along Louisa Lane. He was not aware of all three units being rented and indicated that he had not observed occupancy in the garage.

Mr. Swanson testified that there has historically been adequate parking available on the property and that parking has never presented an issue. He stated that the property includes a two-car garage and sufficient driveway space on both sides of the principal structure, allowing for multiple vehicles to park. He further testified that there is adequate room for four to five vehicles on the property. The applicant also noted that Mr. Figueroa had previously approached him shortly after his brother's passing to inquire about purchasing a portion of the rear yard area, although the applicant indicated that subdivision of the rear portion may not be feasible. Mr. Swanson also stated that any parking associated with the property would occur from Columbia Avenue and that there would be no access or encroachment from Louisa Lane. He explained that parking issues observed in the neighborhood were more likely attributable to a nearby commercial property with limited parking, which has resulted in employees

parking along Columbia Avenue and walking through adjacent areas. This issue is unrelated to their individual properties.

Chairman made a motion to close the public hearing.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Mr. Stefano made a motion to approve the application.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Application granted.

WEST WOOD REALTY, LLC, 240 W. Wood Street, Block 2915, Lot 12, Zone R, certification of non-conforming use for a two-unit family dwelling.

The applicant was represented by Matthew Robinson, Esq. Mr. Robinson explained that although two-family dwellings are permitted within the zone, the layout of the property does not comply with current bulk standards. As a result, certification of the existing nonconforming conditions was required. Mr. Robinson stated that the application materials included a recent survey prepared at the time Westwood Realty purchased the property, along with floor plans that would be confirmed as accurate by the applicant's witness. He further noted that historical documentation obtained through an Open Public Records Act (OPRA) request was submitted, including a property record card indicating that the structure dates back to approximately 1887, making it one of the oldest structures he had encountered in similar applications. The record card also included notes referencing the historical conversion of the property to a two-family dwelling, which he stated was a permitted use but nonetheless documented as part of the property's history.

Mr. Josh Reese, Managing Member and representative of Westwood Realty, gave testimony regarding the application. He testified that since acquiring the property, the company has been working to bring the property into compliance so that it may be properly registered as a rental property. Mr. Reese confirmed that he recognized the survey dated October 22, 2025, submitted with the application and testified that the survey accurately depicts the location of the structures. The floor plans submitted with the application accurately represent the current layout and configuration of the units. He explained that the application became necessary during the process of attempting to register the property as a rental. He stated that when the applicant initiated the fire inspection process, they were advised that zoning review and certification were required prior to proceeding with inspections due to the nonconforming bulk conditions associated with the existing structure.

Mr. Robinson stated that the documentation demonstrates the long-standing existence of the structure in its current configuration dating back to approximately 1887, as reflected in the property tax records and survey information. He requested that the Board grant certification recognizing the existing nonconforming bulk conditions.

Mr. Reese to clarified his role with Westwood Realty, and he confirmed that he serves as the Managing Member of the limited liability company. He was also asked whether any renovations or upgrades were planned that would alter the structure, and he testified that while renovations and improvements may be undertaken, no changes would be made to the structure that would alter its footprint or configuration.

Mr. Crudele stated that the public record card demonstrates the longevity of the property's use as a duplex and requested that the record memorialize the layout of the two dwelling units, each consisting of two bedrooms and one bathroom, as well as the existing bulk variances identified in the survey.

Chairman made a motion to close the public hearing.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Mr. Stefano made a motion to approve the application.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Application granted.

LEADERS OF TOMORROW, INC., 28 S. West Avenue, Block 3602, Lot 19, Zone R-2, preliminary/final major site plan approval to construct additional parking and site improvements to an existing one story building.

The applicant was represented by Mr. Brian Swope, Esq. Mr. Swope stated that a use variance had been granted on October 16, 2024, permitting the property to be utilized as a law office. He explained that the purpose of the current application was to obtain site plan approval in connection with the previously approved use.

Mr. Swope introduced Mr. Jack Ramos, President of Leaders of Tomorrow, and Mr. Patrick Laudisi of Morgan Engineering and Surveying, who prepared the site plans submitted for the project.

Mr. Swope stated that he reviewed the Board Engineer's report prepared by Mr. Ryan Headley and met with Mr. Headley in January to address the concerns raised. During that meeting, the applicant agreed to install a bicycle rack on the property and to address concerns related to the size and condition of the existing asphalt. Mr. Swope explained that it was agreed that a portion of the asphalt surface would be removed, particularly in areas where deterioration was most evident. He then referenced photographs previously submitted into evidence to illustrate the areas of asphalt that would be removed and replaced.

Mr. Swope described the first photograph as showing deteriorated asphalt that would be removed and replaced. He explained that subsequent photographs indicated the specific section of asphalt to be removed, highlighted in red, with certain areas to be replaced with grass rather than new pavement. There were additional photographs showing the remaining asphalt that would not be removed, noting that those areas were in satisfactory condition.

He also referenced an overhead plan labeled "Asphalt Removal Overhead Plan," which identified in red the approximate 4,500 square feet of asphalt to be removed and replaced with grass. He explained that the width of the remaining asphalt strip could not be further reduced due to the need to maintain sufficient space for emergency vehicle access and required parking spaces recommended by the Board Engineer.

Ms. Moscillo marked Exhibit A-1, consisting of five (5) photographs of the asphalt, and Exhibit A-2, the Asphalt Removal Plan.

Ms. Hicks stated that she and Mr. Ryan Headley had met earlier in the day to review the proposed modifications. She recommended that the northern driveway, located behind the parking stalls, be saw-cut and adjusted to provide a 24-foot-wide driveway width, which is necessary to allow vehicles to safely back out of parking stalls. Ms. Hicks also noted that the applicant had requested a waiver from the requirement to install shade trees within the parking lot. She suggested that relocating the shade trees to perimeter areas could provide an opportunity to frame the parking lot with landscaping, in accordance with the Board Engineer's recommendations.

Mr. Patrick Laudisi, Professional Engineer, testified on behalf of the applicant. He explained that the existing driveway width, measuring approximately 40 feet from edge to edge, could be reduced to the required 24 feet. He testified that additional asphalt removal may be possible; however, the limits of the proposed removal had originally been established to ensure adequate circulation for emergency vehicles. He stated that fire trucks require additional turning space to maneuver without encroaching upon parking spaces within the center aisle and rear parking areas. Mr. Laudisi indicated that he would review the circulation patterns to determine whether additional asphalt could be removed while maintaining safe vehicle access.

The Board acknowledged that final adjustments could be addressed during resolution compliance.

Mr. Laudisi testified regarding impervious coverage, stating that the existing impervious coverage on the property was previously calculated at approximately 64.8 percent, exceeding the permitted maximum of 40 percent. He explained that, as part of the proposed improvements, the applicant agreed to remove a portion of the asphalt, including encroachments located beyond the property lines. The total removal would reduce impervious coverage by approximately 8.3 percent, resulting in a revised impervious coverage of approximately 56.5 percent. He stated that the southerly and northerly side yard buffer deficiencies and the rear yard buffer condition would remain as currently existing. He also addressed the parking space width requirements, parking spaces currently measure 9 feet in width, while 9.5 feet is required. The applicant proposed to revise the parking layout by eliminating one standard parking space from the front row, thereby reducing the total number of spaces from 13 to 12. This modification would allow the remaining parking spaces to be widened to 9.5 feet, bringing the parking layout into compliance with ordinance requirements. Reducing the parking row to 12 spaces would eliminate the requirement for a tree island break within the parking row, as the ordinance permits a maximum of 12 consecutive spaces without a tree island. Ordinance requires three parking lot shade trees at a ratio of one tree per 12 parking spaces. However, the applicant requested a waiver from the shade tree requirement. Additionally, he testified that the applicant requested a waiver from providing additional screening materials along the adjacent residential properties located on the southerly side of the site. He noted that the property currently contains existing vegetation and underbrush and that no additional landscaping improvements were proposed, stating that the site conditions have remained generally consistent since approximately 1948, when the property was previously used by the American Legion.

Ms. Hicks noted that Mr. Ryan Headley had recommended that required parking lot shade trees be placed elsewhere on the site rather than within the parking lot itself. After discussion, the placement of three parking lot shade trees elsewhere on the site could be addressed as a condition of approval, with final placement to be coordinated with the Board Engineer.

Mr. Laudisi testified that the applicant was requesting a waiver for the driveway entrance configuration, noting that the existing driveway features a flared connection rather than the required radiused connection. The driveway configuration has existed since approximately 1948, when the property was occupied by the American Legion. He further testified that four existing street trees are located along the frontage of the property and may satisfy the required street tree requirement, although no new street trees were proposed at this time. The applicant requested a waiver from providing pedestrian access to Southwest Avenue, explaining that the proposed use as a law office is not expected to generate significant pedestrian traffic and that most clients would arrive by vehicle. He confirmed that bicycle parking would be provided, with a bike rack to be installed in coordination with the Board Engineer at a suitable location near the building entrance. He also testified that the applicant requested a waiver from providing irrigation, stating that irrigation is not proposed for the grassed areas.

Ms. Hicks stated that newly planted trees should be provided with temporary watering measures, such as watering bags, until they are established.

Mr. Laudisi further testified that no fencing was proposed for the site. With respect to signage, he stated that an existing freestanding sign is currently located on the property and that no new signage was proposed. Permits for the existing sign had been previously obtained and that the sign would continue to be utilized. The applicant would comply with electric vehicle (EV) readiness requirements by installing conduit and wiring to support future EV charging stations. The applicant requested a waiver from showing all structures within 150 feet of the property and identifying land uses within 200 feet of the subject parcel. They also requested a waiver from indicating the location of nearby stormwater inlets, stating that none are located immediately adjacent to the property; however, he agreed to provide a notation indicating the approximate distance to the nearest inlet. He further requested waivers from providing finished floor elevations, storm sewer profiles, and a detailed landscaping plan, stating that the primary landscaping improvement would consist of replacing removed asphalt with seeded grass areas. He testified that no dumpster enclosure was proposed, as trash would be handled using standard receptacles and confidential document disposal services consistent with the office use. He agreed to provide a notation on the plan indicating that trash would be maintained indoors and removed in accordance with office operations. The applicant would revise the plans to include required notes, signage dimensions, and building dimension information that may have been omitted due to drafting layer issues. He further agreed to include required certifications and outside agency approvals as part of the perfected plan submission.

Chairman made a motion to close the public hearing.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Mr. Stefano made a motion to approve the application.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Application granted.

KG RENOVATIONS, LLC, 1108 E. Landis Avenue, Block 3114, Lot 24, Zone R-P, use variance for a real estate management office.

The applicant was represented by Matthew Robinson, Esq. The property located on East Landis Avenue within the RP (Residential Professional) Zone, which does permit professional office uses. He explained that the proposed use involves a real estate administrative office, which was somewhat atypical compared to other professional office uses previously reviewed by the Zoning Department. For that reason, the applicant elected to present testimony before the Board to demonstrate that the proposed use would remain consistent with the intent and spirit of permitted professional office uses within the zoning district. The property survey dated June 20, 2025, shows a two-story frame dwelling with residential components located on both the first and second floors of the main structure. He explained that a rear addition to the structure had historically been utilized as a professional office, specifically as a doctor's office. The doctor previously occupied the residential portion of the structure while operating the medical practice from the rear office space, where patients would visit for services. The property has since been sold and that no changes have been made to the building footprint. The current proposal is to utilize the same rear office space formerly occupied by the doctor as a small ancillary real estate administrative office, maintaining the professional office function historically associated with that portion of the building.

Michael Mazzarelli, Property Manager for KG Renovations, provided testimony and confirmed that the testimony previously offered by Mr. Robinson was accurate. Mr. Mazzarelli stated that the proposed use of the office would accommodate four (4) employees for administrative real estate operations. He noted that the company's primary office is located at 2581 East Chestnut Avenue. The proposed hours of operation will be typical office hours, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and the office will not be open to the public. Mr. Mazzarelli testified that there is adequate parking available to serve both the residence and the office use. He further stated that signage is proposed and that any signage will comply with the requirements of the ordinance through the appropriate permitting process. The submitted floor plan was represented as accurately depicting the current conditions of the site, which he testified is already suitable for office use. He indicated that meetings at the site will occur only occasionally and that use of the meeting space will be rare. Mr. Mazzarelli also testified that the proposed use would not be more intense than the previous doctor's office use.

Chairman made a motion to close the public hearing.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Mr. Stefano made a motion to approve the application.

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Application granted.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

Roll call:

Terry Andrus: Yes

Albert Fisher: Yes

Andrew Groetsch: Yes

Eric Hernandez: Yes

Joseph Repice: Yes

Joseph Stefano: Yes

George LoBiondo: Yes

Yasmin Perez, Secretary

Zoning Board of Adjustment