Approved 11-10-2026

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL
31555 W. ELEVEN MILE ROAD
OCTOBER 13, 2026

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
   Chair Irvin called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and made standard introductory remarks to explain the roll of the ZBA and the formal procedures for the meeting.

   A site visit was held on Sunday, October 11, 2026. No business was conducted.

2. **Roll Call**
   Members Present: Irvin, Khan, O'Connell, Reames (alt.), Rich, Rowland (alt.), Vergun

   Members Absent: Jamil, Injeti

   Others Present: Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult, Code and Zoning Supervisor Curry, City Attorney Mendelsohn, Recording Secretary McGuire

3. **Approval of Agenda**
   MOTION by Rich, supported by Rowland, to approve the Agenda as published.
   Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. **NEW BUSINESS:**
   A. **ZBA CASE: 10-26-5794**
   LOCATION: 27777 Stansbury
   PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-14-101-037
   ZONE: ES
   REQUEST: In order to install a third wall sign on the west façade of the building. The following special exception is requested:

   1. **A special exception from Section 34-5.5.3.B.ii.a(1) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit wall signs on the (3rd) façade of a building, where only two are permitted.**

   CODE SECTION: 34-5.5.3.B.ii.a(1)
   APPLICANT: Intercity Neon
   OWNER: Antonio Jarbo

   This case was withdrawn, as the plans meet the requirements of a variance that was previously granted.

   B. **ZBA CASE**: 10-26-5795
   LOCATION: 30179 Stockton
   PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-26-401-040
   ZONE: RA-4
   REQUEST: In order to install a 528 sq. ft. two-car, detached garage in the rear yard, the following variance is requested:

1. **A 78 sq. ft. variance from Section 34-5.1.2.D of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a detached accessory structure of 528 sq. ft., which, combined with the existing 300 sq.ft. accessory garage, would result in a total accessory structure floor area of 828 sq.ft., where the maximum allowed is 750 sq. ft.**

CODE SECTION: 34-5.1
APPLICANT: Italy American Construction – John Cialone
OWNER: Keith and Beth Steslicki

Background
Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult explained that when a building permit application was submitted for the proposed detached garage, staff determined that the combined garage floor area would exceed the maximum permitted by 78 square feet. She noted that the applicants intend to convert the existing 300 square foot attached garage into living space during a second phase of construction, which would bring the property into compliance. The proposed detached garage would provide storage during the transition.

Applicant Presentation
John Cialon, Italy American Construction, 8401 North Telegraph, Dearborn Heights, appeared on behalf of the property owners. He confirmed that the homeowners intend to convert the existing attached garage into living space and have submitted a permit application for that work.

Mr. Cialone explained that four residents and four vehicles occupy the property. Additional storage is needed for household belongings, teaching supplies, lawn equipment, and other items. The home is constructed on a slab and has neither a basement nor a crawl space for storage.

The homeowners wish to construct the detached garage first, relocate items from the existing garage, and subsequently complete the conversion. The new garage would also help reduce vehicle parking in the driveway and on the street.

Board Discussion
Chair Irvin asked for confirmation regarding the proposed construction sequence. Mr. Cialone reiterated that the detached garage would be constructed first, followed by relocation of stored items to the new garage. The conversion of the existing attached garage into living space would occur next, subject to permit issuance.

Member Rich asked how long both garages would remain in use before the conversion. Mr. Cialone estimated approximately six months to one year.

Member Khan asked when construction of the detached garage would begin. Mr. Cialone stated that construction was anticipated before mid-November, weather permitting.

Public Comment
Chair Irvin opened the meeting to public comment. No members of the public indicated they wished to speak.

Member Rich reported that an affidavit of mailing was on file, two notices were returned as undeliverable, and no other public correspondence had been received.

Chair Irvin closed Public Comment and brought the matter back to the Board for deliberation and/or a motion.

Member Rich asked City Attorney Mendelsohn whether the variance could be time-limited because the nonconforming condition was expected to be temporary.

City Attorney Mendelsohn explained that the Zoning Ordinance already requires a variance to be acted upon within one year unless a building permit is issued, after which the permit's applicable time limits govern.

Member Rich expressed concern that, if the existing garage were never converted, the 78 square foot variance could remain with the property indefinitely. He sought a condition ensuring that the variance would not continue after the conversion.

City Attorney Mendelsohn advised that the variance could be conditioned upon completion of the project in accordance with the submitted plans and could be extinguished upon completion of the garage conversion.

MOTION by O'Connell, supported by Rich, In the matter of ZBA Case 6-26-5785, that the petitioner's request for:

1. A 78-foot variance from sections 34-5.1.2.D of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 528 sq. ft. detached accessory structure to be installed, adding to the existing 300 sq. ft. of accessory building for a total of 828 sq. ft. where a maximum of 750 sq. ft. total accessory sq. ft. is permitted.

Be **GRANTED,** based on the petitioner's submissions, petitioner's presentation before the Zoning Board of Appeals, information provided in the staff packet to the Board for this appeal, public comments, and the following findings:

1. Compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance would unreasonably prevent the petitioner from using the property for a permitted purpose or would render conformity with the ordinance unnecessarily burdensome. *The home is built on a slab without a basement and has limited options for storage. The existing property owner has a need for more storage, especially for items that cannot be safely stored in the home.*

2. That granting the variance requested would do substantial justice to the petitioner as well as to other property owners in the district or that a lesser relaxation than that relief applied for would give substantial relief to the owner of the property involved and be more consistent with justice to other property owners (reasonable alternatives?) *A lesser variance would not give substantial relief to the petitioner in that a smaller variance would render the additional garage space unusable. Further, if the property owner converts the existing attached garage into a livable space, the items currently in the attached garage will need to be stored elsewhere during construction. The neighboring property owners would be better served by having the loose items properly stored in the new detached garage.*

3. That the petitioner's plight is due to the unique circumstances of the property. *The unique sizing of the yard and features of the home create unique circumstances.*

4. The problem is not self-created. *The configuration of the property and features of the home were existing or created by previous owners.*

With the following conditions:

1. ***The detached garage must be constructed in accordance with the submitted revised plans dated July 16, 2026.***
2. ***The variance will extinguish upon completion of the project pursuant to the plans submitted to the City, or alternatively, abandonment of the project.***

MOTION passed unanimously by voice vote.

C. ZBA CASE: 10-26-5796
LOCATION: 32200 W. 12 Mile
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-10-454-003
ZONE: RA-2
REQUEST: In order to install a 5-foot-high chain link fence in the front yard setback, the following variance is requested:

1. A 28-foot setback variance from Sections 34-3.1.5.E and 34-5.12.1.D.i of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 5-foot-high chain link fence within the front yard, located 7 feet from the W 12 Mile Road right-of-way, where a minimum 35-foot front yard setback is required for properties within the RA-2 District.

CODE SECTION: 34-3.1.5.E, 34-5.12.1.D.i
APPLICANT: Michael Hall, RCI Contracting Services
OWNER: St. Fabian Parish

Background
Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult explained that the property contains a baseball field used by St. Fabian Parish and its associated private school for youth activities. The field has existed for many years and is partially located within the front yard setback. A temporary fence currently occupies the approximate location of the proposed permanent fence. The applicant requests permission to install a 5-foot-high chain link fence 7 feet from the road right-of-way, adjacent to the sidewalk.

Applicant presentation
Michael Hall, RCI Contracting Services, 4999 McCarthy Drive, Milford, explained that the baseball field has existed for approximately 35 years. The proposed fence is intended to improve safety by preventing baseballs from reaching the sidewalk and W. 12 Mile Road. Placing the fence at the required 35-foot setback would reduce the field dimensions below those necessary for regulation games.

Mr. Hall noted that other nearby properties have fencing closer to the roadway, although he acknowledged that different zoning requirements may apply. He noted that increased use of the baseball field and general school safety concerns prompted the request.

Board discussion

Member O'Connell questioned whether the temporary orange snow fence was removed annually. Mr. Hall said that it was initially removed, but he believed it had remained in place for the last two years.

In response to further questions, Mr. Hall confirmed that the new fence would be black painted galvanized chain link. Member O'Connell observed that the permanent black fence would be more aesthetically pleasing than the temporary orange fencing.

Chair Irvin asked about the ages of children using the field. Mr. Hall responded that the field serves students through eighth grade. He estimated the distance from home plate to the proposed right field fence at approximately 210 feet.

Chair Irvin suggested protective capping along the top of the proposed fence as a safety measure. Mr. Hall said that capping had not been discussed but agreed it was worth considering.

Vice Chair Vergun cautioned that the front yard setback requirements also protect property owners against potential future road expansion. A fence placed near the roadway could eventually require removal if W. 12 Mile Road were widened. Mr. Hall acknowledged this possibility and noted that the financial impact of removing a fence would be limited.

Public comment
Chair Irvin opened the meeting to public comment. No members of the public indicated they wished to speak.

Member Rich reported that an affidavit of mailing was on file, eleven notices were returned as undeliverable, and no public correspondence had been received.

Chair Irvin closed Public Comment and brought the matter back to the Board for deliberation and/or a motion.

MOTION by Rowland, supported by O'Connell, in the matter of ZBA Case 10-26-5796, that the petitioner's request to install a 5-foot-high chain link fence in the front-yard setback with the following variance:

1. A 28-foot setback variance from Sections 34-3.1.5.E and 34-5.12.1.D.i of the Zoning Ordinance to construct a fence in the front yard setback within 7 feet of the 12 Mile right-of-way, where a minimum 35-foot front yard setback is required.

Be **GRANTED** based on the petitioner's submissions, the petitioner's presentation before the Zoning Board of Appeals, information provided to the Board in the staff packet for this appeal, public comments, and the following standards, findings, and determinations:

1. Compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance would unreasonably prevent the petitioner from using the property for a permitted purpose or would render conformity with the ordinance unnecessarily burdensome. *The new fence is replacing a temporary non-conforming fence at the same location. Moving the fence to a location that complies*

with the zoning ordinance will significantly reduce the usable area within the fenced area and would render a portion of the existing baseball field unusable.

2. That granting the variance requested would do substantial justice to the petitioner as well as to other property owners in the district or that a lesser relaxation than that relief applied for would give substantial relief to the owner of the property involved and be more consistent with justice to other property owners (i.e., are there reasonable alternatives?) *Granting the variance would give substantial relief to the church and school, allowing a functional playfield for the students. The location of the proposed fence is not near residential homes. (All located at the north property line.) Further, the new fence will be screened from other residents by the other site features and existing vegetation.*

3. That the petitioner's plight is due to the unique circumstances of the property. *The property is a church and school that offers standard opportunities for youth sports, including baseball. The configuration of the property and features of the site are existing.*

4. The problem is not self-created. *The configuration of the property and features (church and school) of the site, including a ball field near the street, are existing.*

With the following condition:

1. ***The fence must be constructed in accordance with the submitted site plan and elevations received by the Zoning Office on August 7, 2026.***

The Board discussed whether to condition approval of the variance on removal of the fence if future roadway improvements, utility work, or other public infrastructure needs required its removal. Following discussion of the City's authority to address such circumstances and the absence of any known plans to widen W. 12 Mile Road, the Board proceeded with the motion as originally presented, without adding the proposed condition.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The Board discussed whether the motion should be amended to allow protective safety capping along the top of the fence, as the feature was not included in the originally submitted plans. City Attorney Mendelsohn advised that a motion to reconsider would be necessary to modify the approval. Chair Irvin requested reconsideration to incorporate the safety feature in the motion.

MOTION by Rowland, supported by O'Connell, in the matter of ZBA Case 10-26-5796, that the above motion be reconsidered, in order to add the option for the applicant to include:

2. ***A safety product – commonly known as a chain link fence safety top cap – may be added to the top of the fence.***

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

D. ZBA CASE: 10-26-5798
LOCATION: 30500 W. 13 Mile Rd

PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-02-376-001
ZONE: RA-1
REQUEST: In order to retain a 6-foot-high, black-vinyl coated chain link fence in the front and exterior side yard, the following variances are requested:

1. A 40-foot setback variance from Sections 34-5.12.1.D.i and 34-3.1.4.E of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 6-foot-high chain link fence in the front yard, located 0 feet from the W. 13 Mile Road right-of-way, where a minimum 40-foot setback is required.
2. A 35-foot setback variance from Sections 34-5.12.1.D.i and 34-3.1.4.E of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 6-foot-high chain link fence in the exterior side yard, located 5 feet from the Greening Road right-of-way, where a minimum 40-foot setback is required.

CODE SECTION: 34-5.12.1.D.i, 34-3.1.4.E
APPLICANT: Mark Adams Jr. – Oakland County Parks and Recreation
OWNER: Oakland County Parks and Recreation

Background
Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult explained that the applicant sought to replace an existing chain link fence along W. 13 Mile and Greening Roads. Because the original fence had been removed, its legal nonconforming status was lost, and the permit request was denied due to the proposed location. The replacement fence had already been installed in the same location before obtaining the necessary approvals. The applicant was seeking variances to retain the fence in its current location.

In response to a question from Member Reames, Director Kettler-Schmult confirmed that the City does not require fencing around golf courses, although fencing is common for security and operational purposes.

Applicant presentation
Mark Adams, Oakland County Parks and Recreation, Engineering and Development, 2800 Watkins Lake Road, Waterford, explained that the original fence had existed since at least 2002 and had deteriorated significantly. The replacement fence was installed in the exact location of the original fence. Compliance with the required setbacks would place the fence within the golf course and necessitate redesigning the adjacent fairway. He noted that the property has no neighboring residential properties that would be adversely affected by the fence location. He acknowledged that the contractor had proceeded with installation before obtaining the required permit approvals.

Public comment
Chair Irvin opened the meeting to public comment. No members of the public indicated they wished to speak.

Member Rich reported that an affidavit of mailing was on file, two notices were returned as undeliverable, and no public correspondence had been received.

Chair Irvin closed Public Comment and brought the matter back to the Board for deliberation and/or a motion.

MOTION by Reames, supported by Vergun, in the matter of ZBA Case 10-26-5798, that the Petitioner's request to retain a 6-foot high, fence in the front and exterior side yard with the following variances:

1. A 40-foot setback variance from Sections 34-5.12.1.D.i. and 34-3.1.4.E of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 6-foot-high chain link fence in the front yard, located 0 feet from the Thirteen Mile Rd. right-of-way where a minimum 40-foot setback is required.
2. A 35-foot setback variance from Sections 34-5.12.D.i and 34-3.1.4.E of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 6-foot-high chain link fence in the exterior side yard, located 5 feet from the Greening Road right-of-way, where a minimum 40-foot setback is required.

be **GRANTED** based on the petitioner's submissions, the petitioner's presentation before the Zoning Board of Appeals, information provided to the Board in the staff packet for this appeal, public comments, and the following standards, findings, and determinations:

1. Compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance would unreasonably prevent the petitioner from using the property for a permitted purpose or would render conformity with the ordinance unnecessarily burdensome. *The new fence is replacing the existing non-conforming fence at the same location. Moving the fence to a location that complies with the zoning ordinance will significantly reduce the usable area within the fenced area for the golf course.*

2. That granting the variances requested would do substantial justice to the petitioner as well as to other property owners in the district or that a lesser relaxation than that relief applied for would give substantial relief to the owner of the property involved and be more consistent with justice to other property owners. *The proposed fence will be in the same location as the previous non-conforming fence, so it is not expanding the footprint of the fence.*

3. That the petitioner's plight is due to the unique circumstances of the property. *The property is located on a corner lot, and requiring a 30-foot side yard setback on the side of the property along Greening Street would considerably reduce the size of the rear yard contained within the fence. The proposed fence will be in the same location and have the same footprint as the existing fence.*

4. The problem is not self-created. *The configuration of the property and features of the site, including the non-conforming location of the installed fence, are existing on the site. The previous non-conforming fence was old and in need of replacement. Petitioners are not expanding the existing non-conforming fence location but rather are requesting permission to retain the new fence that occupies the same location and footprint as the previous fence.*

With the following condition:

1. The fence must be constructed in accordance with the submitted site plan and elevations received by the Zoning Office on September 2, 2026.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 8, 2026

MOTION by Khan, supported by Reames, to amend and approve the September 8, 2026 meeting minutes as follows:

- P. 3, first bullet point, amend to read: ~~Director Kettler-Schmult prepared a memorandum identifying~~ *Planning and Community Development Director sent a memo to the City Manager that identified . . .*
- P. 3, third bullet point, amend to read: ~~Director Kettler-Schmult issued a memorandum to City Engineer Dawkins~~ *Planning and Community Development Director issued a memorandum to the Staff Engineer . . .*
- P. 13, last full paragraph, next to last line, eliminate extra word "had," so that the phrase reads: *petitioner had not*

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT
None

7. ADJOURNMENT
Motion by Rich, supported by Rowland, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Brian Rich, Secretary

/cem