

**CITY OF KENT  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
PUBLIC HEARING & BUSINESS MEETING  
July 21, 2025**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michelle Sahr  
Randall Smith  
Laura Scarnecchia

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bridget Susel, Director  
Kailyn Cyrus, Zoning and Grants Coordinator

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Sahr called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Michelle Sahr, Laura Scarnecchia, and Randall Smith were present. Robert Szygenda and O’livia Kennedy were absent.

**MOTION: Mr. Smith moved to excuse O’livia Kennedy and Robert Szygenda. Ms. Scarnecchia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**III. PREAMBLE**

The Board of Zoning Appeals, Kent citizens serving without pay, hear evidence at public meetings both in support of and in opposition to an applicant’s request before rendering a decision. Generally, the Board will decide to approve or deny each requested application at the meeting that it hears the testimony. Some decisions may be continued for further review. Once a decision has been made, the case is closed for the Board, as there is no provision in the code for the Board to reopen a case. If the petitioner disagrees with the findings of the Board, there are only two proper procedures. One is to resubmit a revision of the request that is more compatible with the code and the second is to file an appeal in the Common Pleas Court. Anyone interested in appealing a decision of the Board is advised to seek private legal counsel.

**IV. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH**

Ms. Susel instructed members of the audience, wishing to be heard on any of the cases presented at this meeting, to raise their right hand. She administered the oath. The participants responded affirmatively.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. BZ25-002 JULIE MELUCH  
1509 S. WATER STREET**

1. A variance from Section 1107.15(B) to allow a 9-foot by 31-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must be of equal width from the traveled portion of the public or private road right-of-way to the terminus.
2. A variance from Section 1107.15(B) to allow a 30-foot by 18-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must be of equal width from the traveled portion of the public or private road right-of-way to the terminus.
3. A variance from Section 1107.15(A) to allow a 30-foot by 18-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must not exceed 24 feet in width.
4. A Variance from Section 1107.15(C) to allow a driveway to utilize 51% of the required front yard where 40% is the maximum allowable space.

Ms. Cyrus presented the staff report. She explained that the property is located within the R-C: High Density Multi-Family Commercial Zoning District and is surrounded by business non-retail to the north, residential uses to the south and east, and retail uses to the west. She stated that the applicant is proposing to extend the current driveway to service a garage that is located within the rear yard to allow for extra parking as the current driveway only extends to a single car garage. She stated that the applicant states that the driveway extension to the rear yard will allow for easier parking for any future and current tenants. Ms. Cyrus stated that the extension of the driveway creates two unequal portions of the driveway and the Zoning Code states that the driveway must be of equal width from the travel portion of the road right of way to the driveway terminus and limits the maximum width to 24 feet. She stated that the proposed rear concrete pad to service the garage has been enlarged from 25-foot by 18-foot to 30-foot by 18-foot as suggested by the Development Engineer, who stated that the additional concrete would help facilitate the storm water to the backyard drain and away from the neighboring properties. She stated that the extension of the driveway with the previously approved bump-out means that the driveway will use 51% of the required front yard where 40% is the maximum.

Nicholas Meluch, 1533 S. Water St. stated that the amount of front yard concrete would be smaller if the driveway was straight and not curved, however the existing drive apron does not directly align with the garage. He explained that the bump-out is being requested for safety and for people to be able to comfortably turn around without driving over the grass. He stated that while reviewing the project with the Development Engineer, he suggested cutting back the backyard concrete by curving it in more, but the Development Engineer stated that not cutting it back would be better for directing the water to the drain grate, which also has an overflow design in the concrete; the 30-foot width is for garage access and water control.

Ms. Sahr reviewed the drawing and the water control with the applicant.

Mr. Smith stated that he is concerned regarding the size of the front yard bump-out. He stated that he sees the bump-out as strictly being used for turning around and feels that it can be 10-foot wide with possibly a shorter length.

Mr. Meluch stated that the bump-out is for turning around as well as for temporary guest parking.

Mr. Smith confirmed that this is a single family residence.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**BOARD OF ZONING OF APPEALS DISCUSSION**

Mr. Smith questioned if anyone else was concerned about the front yard bump-out.

Ms. Sahr stated that she is concerned however she is less concerned given this is on S. Water St. where on-street parking isn't an option for overflow parking. She added that being on S. Water St. is possibly part of their hardship.

Ms. Scarnecchia stated that she feels that the bump-out works nicely with the property given the narrowness of the lot and the layout.

Ms. Sahr stated that there is a safety concern with the front. She stated that it does seem like a lot of concrete in the back, however she feels that the drainage probably works better this way.

Ms. Scarnecchia stated that with that much concrete, clearly a lot of thought was put into the water flow.

Ms. Susel reminded the Board that the front bump-out was previously approved and that the variance being sought is for the driveway utilizing 51% of the front yard.

**MOTION:**        *In Case BZ25-002, applicant Julie Meluch, 1509 S. Water St., Mr. Smith moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1107.15 (B) to allow a 9-foot by 31-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must be of equal width from the traveled portion of the public or private road right-of-way to the terminus.*

*Ms. Scarnecchia seconded the motion.*

**VOTE:**            *The motion passed 3-0.*

**MOTION:**        *In Case BZ25-002, applicant Julie Meluch, 1509 S. Water St., Mr. Smith moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1107.15 (B) to allow a 30-foot by 18-foot driveway extensions to be installed where the driveway must be equal width from the traveled portion of the public or private road right-of-way to the terminus.*

*Ms. Scarnecchia seconded the motion.*

**VOTE:**            *The motion passed 3-0.*

**MOTION:**      *In Case BZ25-002, applicant Julie Meluch, 1509 S. Water St., Mr. Smith moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1107.15(A) to allow a 30-foot by 18-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must not exceed 24 feet in width.*

*Ms. Scarnecchia seconded the motion.*

**VOTE:**            *The motion passed 3-0.*

**MOTION:**      *In Case BZ25-002, applicant Julie Meluch, 1509 S. Water St., Mr. Smith moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's for a variance from Section 1107.15(C) to allow a driveway to utilize 51% of the required front yard where 40% is the maximum allowable space.*

*Ms. Scarnecchia seconded the motion.*

**VOTE:**            *The motion passed 3-0.*

**VI.    NEW BUSINESS**

**B.      BZ25-009      KEITH BISLER  
                                 146 E. ELM STREET**

**The applicant is requesting:**

1. A variance from Section 1106.10(A) to allow a 7-foot variance where 10 feet is the minimum requirement to allow a subordinate structure to be located 3 feet from the rear property line.
2. A variance from section 1106.10(A) to allow a 7-foot variance where 10 feet is the minimum requirement to allow a subordinate structure to be located 3 feet from the west side yard property line.

Ms. Cyrus presented the staff report. She explained that the property is located within the R-3: High Density Residential Zoning District and is surrounded by residential uses on all sides. She stated that the applicant has started construction of a 16-foot by 10-foot subordinate structure so that the existing subordinate structure can be removed. She stated that the current structure is located approximately 25 feet from each side property line, and approximately 2 feet from the rear property line, however the new subordinate structure is to be located 3 feet from the west property line and 3 feet from the rear property line. She stated that the applicant states that pine trees in the rear yard prohibit the placement of a larger subordinate structure where the current subordinate structure is located. She explained that the City of Kent Zoning Code requires subordinate structures be located at least 10 feet from the side and rear property lines.

Keith Bisler, 146 E. Elm St. stated that he is removing the existing steel shed that is in disrepair and replacing it with a new shed. He stated that he is not putting it in the same location due to issues with the trees and moisture. He stated that he didn't realize that he needed a permit because he already had a subordinate structure. He stated that he could have placed the new structure in the same location as the old one, which was 2 feet off the property lines. He stated that the new location, which is 3 feet away from the property lines, is a better location. He stated that his property has a chain link fence around it.

Mr. Smith questioned where the trees are located on the Google Map.

Mr. Bisler pointed out where a 90-foot pine tree is located and stated that it drops sap all over everything under it. He stated that there are also cherry trees.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**BOARD OF ZONING OF APPEALS DISCUSSION**

Ms. Sahr stated that the location of old structure was grandfathered and so he could have rebuilt in the same location.

Ms. Susel agreed, stating that it was a pre-existing, non-conforming use.

Ms. Sahr stated that the hardship is the shape of the lot as well as the landscaping.

Mr. Smith questioned what size subordinate structure requires a building permit.

Ms. Susel stated that anything over 200 square feet requires both a building and zoning permit, but this request is only 160 square feet and only requires a zoning permit.

Mr. Smith stated that he is having difficulty finding the hardship as the tree is on the opposite side of the lot. He questioned if the structure is movable at this point.

Mr. Bisler stated that it is on blocks.

Ms. Scarnecchia questioned if the lot was wide enough to place the structure 10 feet off the property line as it is a very narrow lot. She stated that there aren't very many locations for a shed on a narrow yard.

Ms. Sahr agreed that the hardship is the old narrow lot.

**MOTION:**     *In Case BZ25-009, applicant Keith Bisler 146 E Elm St., Ms. Scarnecchia moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1106.10(A) to allow a 7-foot variance where 10 feet is the minimum requirement to allow a subordinate structure to be located 3 feet from the rear property line.*

*Mr. Smith seconded the motion.*

**VOTE:**           *The motion passed 3-0.*

**MOTION:**     *In Case BZ25-009, applicant Keith Bisler 146 E Elm St., Ms. Scarnecchia moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1106.10(A) to allow a 7-foot variance where 10 feet is the minimum requirement to allow a subordinate structure to be located 3 feet from the west property line.*

*Mr. Smith seconded the motion.*

**VOTE:**           *The motion passed 4-0.*

**VII. MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting minutes will be presented in the future as there isn't a voting quorum today.

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:     *Mr. Smith moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Scarnecchia seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.***

Mr. Sahr adjourned the meeting at 7:28