

CITY OF KENT
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING & BUSINESS MEETING
February 16, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Randall Smith
Robert Szygenda
O'livia Kennedy

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

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. **ROLL CALL**

Randall Smith, Robert Szygenda, and O'livia Kennedy were present. Michelle Sahr was absent.

MOTION: Mr. Szygenda moved to excuse Michelle Sahr from the February 16, 2026 meeting. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

III. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

MOTION: Mr. Smith nominated Michelle Sahr for Board of Zoning Appeals Chairperson. Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Szygenda seconded the nomination. The vote carried 3-0.

MOTION: Mr. Smith nominated himself for Board of Zoning Appeals Vice Chairperson. Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Szygenda seconded the nomination. The vote carried 3-0.

IV. **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.

V. **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 participant(s) responded affirmatively.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

**A. BZ26-001 BRYAN MARTINEZ & DONALD ADAMS
731-733 AKRON BLVD**

The applicant is requesting the following variances:

- 1. A variance from Section 1107.15(A) to allow a 16-foot by 17-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must not exceed 24 feet in width.**
- 2. A variance from Section 1107.15(B) to allow a 16-foot by 17-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must be of equal width from the traveled portion of the public portion of the public or private road right-of-way to the driveway terminus.**

Ms. Cyrus presented the staff report. She explained that the property is located within the R-1: Low Density Residential Zoning District and is surrounded by residential uses on all sides. She stated that the applicant is requesting two variances to allow for a driveway bump out in the front yard that has already been created. She stated that the applicant states that the bump out is for additional parking for the tenants as the property is a two family dwelling that has a shared driveway with the neighboring property making it difficult for tenants to maneuver when other tenants are parking in the driveway. She stated that the applicant states that the bump out stops tenants from blocking other tenants and allows them to turn around if needed. She explained that the City of Kent Zoning Code requires two parking spaces per dwelling unit for two-family dwellings. She noted that there is additional parking in a single garage space for each dwelling unit in the rear yard. She stated that the bump out also increases the driveway width from 9 feet to 25 feet in width and the zoning code requires that driveways shall not exceed 24 feet in width.

Bryan Martinez, 1434 Loop Rd., Co-Owner, stated that the main reason that they expanded the driveway was to provide the tenants living there the actual space needed to park their cars. He stated that his tenants only have 3 cars, but the issue is with the many cars next door that they share a driveway with. He stated that he didn't realize that a gravel extension would require approval. He stated that since they have taken ownership of the property, they have received compliments on the improvements and continue to improve the area.

Mr. Szygenda questioned the neighbors parking.

Mr. Martinez stated that the neighboring tenants park on their own side of the driveway but they do encroach on his property.

Mr. Smith questioned why the applicant expanded the driveway in the front yard as opposed to the back yard.

Mr. Martinez stated that there is an existing fence in the back that would have to be removed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Kenneley, 1123 Elno Ave, provided photos and stated that there is a fence on the 733 side of the property but not the 731 side. She stated that she is concerned that all the duplexes on Akron Blvd will install bump outs in the front yard if this one is allowed to remain. She stated that front yard parking is supposedly illegal in the City of Kent. She stated that she doesn't want to see the streets become front yard parking streets. She stated that she would rather see parking in the rear yard. She stated that there is another house on Akron Blvd that is parking in the front yard now as well. She stated that the children in the area play in the front yards and the street and not in the backyards. She stated that she feels that parking in the front yard is a hazard for the children.

Ms. Susel stated that there are two sections in the Zoning Code that prohibit front yard parking and that violations are a civil offense. She further explained that there also is another section in the Traffic and Parking Code that prohibits front yard parking and violations are a criminal offense. She stated that additional parking can be created in the rear yard. She stated that the proposed variances pertain to the Zoning Code sections, which are civil offenses and not criminal offenses.

Mr. Smith questioned the number of parking spaces per dwelling unit for a duplex.

Ms. Cyrus stated that under the current code, a new two-family dwelling would be required to have four parking spaces. She stated that the staff report states that there is a minimum of four parking spaces if the rear yard is considered.

Ms. Susel added that four vehicles can be parked on the property without the bump out. She stated that the shared driveway was known and in existence.

Mr. Szygenda stated that the drawing shows that the driveway is 9 feet wide, which is the owner's portion of the driveway.

BOARD OF ZONING OF APPEALS DISCUSSION

Mr. Smith stated that he did drive by and saw the gravel lot and feels that it is rather unsightly in the front of the house. He stated that he feels that it would be a much better option to have the parking in the back by the garage.

Mr. Sygenda stated that he is concerned that the owner is taking on the burden of what his neighbor has caused because the driveway is wide enough. He stated that he doesn't see the practical difficulty or hardship for the variances. He explained that the hardship is being created by the neighbor not managing parking on his own property.

Ms. Susel added that the neighbors don't have a legal right to the applicants side of the driveway and they are trespassing.

MOTION: *In case BZ26-001 applicant Bryan Martinez & Donald Adams, 731-733 Akron Blvd., Mr. Szygenda moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1107.15(A) to allow a 16-foot by 17-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must not exceed 24 feet in width.*

Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion.

VOTE: *The motion was denied 0-3.*

MOTION: *In case BZ26-001 applicant Bryan Martinez & Donald Adams, 731-733 Akron Blvd., Mr. Szygenda moved that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the applicant's request for a variance from Section 1107.15(B) to allow a 16-foot by 17-foot driveway extension to be installed where the driveway must be of equal width from the traveled portion of the public portion of the public or private road right-of-way to the driveway terminus.*

Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion.

VOTE: *The motion was denied 0-3.*

VII. MEETING MINUTES

A voting quorum for the October 20, 2025 minutes cannot be present. Minutes are saved as Summary Minutes for the record.

The November 17, 2025 Minutes have been moved to the next meeting.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: *Mr. Szygenda moved to end the meeting. Ms. Kennedy seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:25.