



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

*Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?
Who does not have a voice at the table?
How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?*

Thursday, April 16, 2026

5:00 PM

Virtual

The City of Madison is holding the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting in virtual format.

Written Comments: You can send comments on agenda items to zoning@cityofmadison.com

Register for Public Comment:

- Register to speak at the meeting
- Register to answer questions
- Register in support or opposition of an agenda item (without speaking)

If you want to speak at this meeting you must register. You can register at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/MeetingRegistration>. When you register to speak, you will be sent an email with the information you will need to join the virtual meeting.

Watch the Meeting: If you would like to join the meeting as an observer, please visit <https://www.cityofmadison.com/watchmeetings>.

Listen by Phone: (877) 853-5257 (Toll Free) Webinar ID: 872 7460 3345

Interpretation and Accessibility

Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Peter Ostlind called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Staff present: Zoning Administrator Katie Bannon, Gaby Arteaga, and Cary Olson

Present: 4 - Peter A. Ostlind; Agnes (Allie) B. Berenyi; Angela Jenkins and David P. Waugh

Excused: 2 - Samuel V. B. Fritz and Cliff Goodhart

Approval of Minutes

Berenyi moved to approve the minutes from the April 16, 2026 meeting.
Jenkins seconded the motion.

Jenkins abstained from voting due to being absent from the previous meeting.

The Board approved the minutes 2-0 by unanimous vote.

Public Comment

1. [92605](#) Public Comment (4/16/2026)

There were no public comments.

Disclosures and Recusals

There were no disclosures or recusals.

Petition for Variance, Area Exceptions or Appeals

2. [92604](#) Julia Webster, representative for the owner of 2314 Keyes Ave, requests a front yard setback variance for a detached garage for a single family house. Alder district #13.

Attachments: [2314 Keyes Ave - Application.pdf](#)
[2314 Keyes Ave - aerial.pdf](#)
[2314 Keyes Ave - sanborn.pdf](#)
[2314 Keyes Ave - addresses 200 ft.pdf](#)
[2314 Keyes - PowerPoint.pdf](#)
[2314 Keyes - Staff Report.pdf](#)
[In support of File# 92604 2314 Keyes Ave Garage setback variance](#)

Zoning Administrator Bannon provided an overview of the application. The request is a front yard setback variance for a proposed detached garage on a single-family home lot. The address is 2314 Keyes Avenue, and the property is a through lot with two front yards. Both Keyes Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue are front yards on the subject property. There's an existing shared private right-of-way that runs from Leonard Street to 2314 Keyes. Without this private right-of-way, several other properties on the block would not have access to the rear of their lots for parking purposes. Bannon referred to the Sanborn map and explained that there used to be a railroad spur right-of-way along Commonwealth. The railroad right-of-way was split to become City right-of-way and private property so there is a larger City right-of-way than typical.

The required front setback off of Commonwealth is 20' and the applicants propose a 3' setback for a variance of 17'. Bannon shared plans and elevation drawings for the proposed garage and the approved vision clearance waiver. Bannon also shared photos of the property showing the subject property and the configuration of the unusual block.

Petitioner Julia Webster corrected the size of the garage but otherwise confirmed that Bannon's description of the request was correct. Webster explained that the request places the garage in a way that allows access from Commonwealth while maintaining a reasonable backyard and minimizing impervious surface. Webster explained that the property has a unique condition due to the right-of-way, where there's an unusually large distance between the sidewalk and the property line. Webster stated that strict compliance would push the garage further into the lot, resulting in a long

driveway, increased impervious surface, and reduction in usable backyard space. Webster explained that they have minimized the request by placing the garage somewhat aligned with the neighboring garage.

The Board asked questions and discussed whether the applicant had considered other locations for the garage or a lesser variance request. The Board expressed concerns about whether the request met standards three and four. The chair asked the representative and owner to speak as to how the variance request meets those standards.

Webster explained that for standard four, the difficulty is due to the shape of the property and the lot layout. There is already a large space between the sidewalk and property line. Webster stated it is burdensome to have to meet the 20' setback in the sense of snow removal and maintenance. Webster also stated that it would limit the use of the backyard. Property owner James Haywood added that using the existing setback would double the cost for the project.

Brian Schneirow, owner of 502 Leonard St, spoke in support of the variance request. Schneirow stated that reducing the amount of impervious surfaces would help improve drainage. Schneirow also expressed concerns that the length of the driveway would encourage people to drive fast through an area that the homes use as a backyard. Schneirow stated that granting the variance would mean the houses can keep the contiguous backyard space and present a more consistent look from the street.

Ostlind closed the public hearing.

Jenkins moved to approve the requested variance. Berenyi seconded the motion.

Review of Standards

Standard 1: There are conditions unique to the property of the applicant that do not apply generally to other properties in the district.

The Board found that the variance request meets the standard. The house has two front yards, and the garage is subject to the setback of a front yard. Also, the 15' right-of-way already creates buffering from the sidewalk and streetscape. An additional 20' makes it 35' total.

Standard 2: The variance is not contrary to the spirit, purpose, and intent of the regulations in the zoning district and is not contrary to the public interest.

The Board found that the variance request meets the standard. The intent of the code is to create buffering from the street, and they already have a built in 15' and so are achieving the intent of the regulation.

Standard 3: For an area variance, compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance would unreasonably prevent use of the property for a permitted purpose or would render compliance with the ordinance unnecessarily burdensome.

The Board was divided on whether the variance request meets the standard. On one hand, board members believed there is room to build a garage without a variance. On the other hand, a board member commented that the backyards in this area are already small, and strict compliance would mean losing a

significant portion of that space.

Standard 4: The alleged difficulty or hardship is created by the terms of the ordinance rather than by a person who has a present interest in the property. The Board disagreed about whether the variance request meets the standard. One member argued that the house, unusually, has two front yards, and must adhere to the front yard setbacks. That requirement hems in the buildable space on the lot. Another member disagreed, saying that there are other solutions the applicant can consider and the difficulty is due to where the owner wants to place the garage.

Standard 5: The proposed variance shall not create substantial detriment to adjacent property.

The Board found that the variance request meets the standard. One member found that the request benefits the neighborhood since it takes away having to share the driveway, aligns with the existing neighboring garage, and creates permeable space.

Standard 6: The proposed variance shall be compatible with the character of the immediate neighborhood.

The Board found that the variance request meets the standard. The proposal would be more in tune with the character of the immediate neighborhood than what exists now as there is an existing neighboring garage in a similar location.

The Board voted to approve the requested variance. The motion failed 1-2 by rollcall vote

Yes – Berenyi

No – Jenkins, Waugh

Ayes: 1 - Agnes (Allie) B. Berenyi

Noes: 2 - Angela Jenkins and David P. Waugh

Excused: 2 - Samuel V. B. Fritz and Cliff Goodhart

Non Voting: 1 - Peter A. Ostlind

New Business and Discussion Items

3. [08598](#) Communications and Announcements

The deadline for the meeting on May 21, 2026 is April 23. Arteaga will let the Board know if we have a variance application by then.

Adjournment

Berenyi moved to adjourn the meeting. Waugh seconded the motion. The Board adjourned the meeting at 6:17 pm.