



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Amended 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, December 18, 2025

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: 895 1656 2889

Call to Order/Roll Call

Ostlind called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.

Staff Present: Katie Bannon, Gabriela Arteaga, and Cary Olson

Present: 3 - Peter A. Ostlind; Samuel V. B. Fritz and Cliff Goodhart

Absent: 1 - Agnes (Allie) B. Berenyi

Excused: 2 - Angela Jenkins and David P. Waugh

Approval of Minutes

Goodhart made a motion to approve the November 20, 2025 minutes. Fritz seconded the motion. Ostlind noted a typo that needed correction. The motion passed 2-0. Fritz abstained from the vote due to not having attended the November meeting.

Public Comment

1. [91144](#) Public Comment: 12/18/2025

There were no public comments.

Disclosures and Recusals

There were no disclosures or recusals.

Petition for Variance, Area Exceptions or Appeals

2. [91142](#) Charles Gates and Candy Schrank, owners of the property at 5042 Lake Mendota Drive, request a lakefront yard setback variance to build an addition to a single-family house. Alder district #19

Attachments: [5042 Lake Mendota Dr - addresses 200ft.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota Dr - application.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota Dr Staff Report.pdf](#)
[2022 Aerial Photo.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota Dr - aerial.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota - PowerPoint.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota - alder support.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota - 1994 ZBA variance.pdf](#)
[5042 Lake Mendota - 1997 ZBA variance.pdf](#)

Zoning Administrator Bannon explained the request for a lakefront yard setback variance to build an addition to a single-family house. The code determines a lakefront yard setback based on the location of the surrounding principal buildings. In this case, the code applies the method that uses the median setback of the principal buildings on the five developed lots or 300 feet on either side, whichever is less. Using that method, the minimum lakefront yard setback for this property is 98.5 feet. Bannon shared the site plan that shows the existing property and conditions. The detached garage is closer to Lake Mendota Dr., and the house is closer to Lake Mendota.

The entire existing house is already within the lakefront yard setback. The petitioners propose an addition with a setback of 35.5 feet and request a variance of 63 feet. Bannon shared renderings and plans showing the existing home and the proposed expansion. Bannon also shared photographs of the property, property slope, and neighboring property.

Petitioners Chuck Gates and Candy Schrank confirmed that Bannon's description of the request was accurate. Petitioners explained that the main goal of their planned house improvement project is to reduce their carbon footprint by super insulating. Gates shared they are replacing all the windows and adding insulating foam. They propose a 247 square footage addition to supplement the low square footage of the existing house. Petitioner stated that the addition does not add to the footprint of the house, has minimal visual impact, and uses no additional green space. Gates added that their property is unique because it sits at the bottom of a steep hill, has mature oak trees, and has an indigenous effigy mound. Therefore, the applicants request a lakefront yard setback variance.

Chris Hacker, their contractor from Chads Design Build, added that it is one of

the earliest lakefront homes and predates the current zoning code.

The Board asked questions.

Ostlind closed the public hearing.

Fritz moved to approve the requested variance. Goodhart 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 request meets this standard. The existing house is already entirely within the setback. There are also site challenges due to the elevation profile of the lot and existing lot features, including an effigy mound.

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 request meets this standard. The intent of the lakefront yard setback is to establish uniformity to the adjacent properties, but in this case the house is already in the setback. Further, it seems there's an aspect of preserving viewsheds and limiting bulk. The project adds some bulk to the top of the house, but the placement of the house, with regards to surrounding houses, mitigates the additional bulk. The height of the house only changes by one to two feet.

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 found that the request meets this standard. The applicants would need to either apply for a variance or physically move the property's location to make any changes to the property. The effigy mound on the property provides additional restrictions.

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 found that the request meets this standard. The ordinance calculates this setback using a relative measure of the surrounding properties. However, the house existed before the ordinance.

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

The Board found that the request meets this standard. The existing house and addition are significantly downhill from the neighboring houses. The variance will not have a detriment to adjacent property.

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

The Board found that the request meets this standard. The addition would be in line with the character of the eclectic neighborhood.

The Board voted 3-0 by unanimous vote to approve the requested variance.

3. [91143](#) Kevin Sorg, representative of the owner of 5125 Lake Mendota Drive, requests a height variance for an addition to a detached garage for a single-family house. Alder district #19

Attachments: [5125 Lake Mendota Dr - application.pdf](#)
[5125 Lake Mendota Dr - addresses 200ft.pdf](#)
[Accessory Building Height Measurement.pdf](#)
[5125 Lake Mendota - PowerPoint.pdf](#)
[5125 Lake Mendota Dr - aerial.pdf](#)
[5125 Lake Mendota Dr Staff Report.pdf](#)

Bannon explained the application is to add an addition to a detached garage. The variance request is to exceed the maximum height for an accessory structure. The zoning code measures accessory structures differently than principal buildings. With accessory structures, the code only measures from the front side at grade up to the midpoint. The maximum accessory structure height is 15 feet. The petitioners propose a height of 23.7 feet for a variance request of 8.7 feet. Bannon showed photos and plans of the existing site, including its significant slope. Other than the front side, used to measure height, the rest of the garage is almost completely below grade.

The petitioner's representative, Todd Evans from Bachmann Construction, added comments. Evans stated that the proposal's goal is to make the home more accessible for the owners. They want to remove the concrete cap, build up the grade of side walls, and add eight-foot second floor walls for an elevator. Evans stated that the height change would not impede anyone's view.

The Board asked questions, and Bannon clarified the way the code measures height.

Chair Ostlind closed the public hearing.

The Board discussed the information. Members of the Board expressed concerns that the application does not meet standard 6. Fritz made a motion to re-open the public hearing. Goodhart seconded the motion.

The Board asked additional questions. They recommended that the applicant reconsider the garage's appearance, as it currently looks too commercial, and return at a future meeting.

Goodhart made a motion to refer the request to another meeting on or before March 12, 2026. Fritz seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 by unanimous vote.

Discussion and Action items

4. [91145](#) Statement of Interest (SOI) filing reminder
- Gaby discussed the Statement of Interest (SOI) and provided Board members with a reminder of the deadline.
5. [08598](#) Communications and Announcements

Gaby noted that the Board has a case for the January 15, 2026 meeting.

Adjournment

Fritz moved to adjourn the meeting. Goodhart seconded the motion. The Board adjourned at 6:31 pm.