

Meeting Minutes
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Tuesday, February 17, 2026
Ankeny City Council Chambers
1250 SW District Drive, Second Floor, Ankeny, Iowa

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Matt Ott called the February 17, 2026 regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment to order at 5:00 p.m.

Chair Matt Ott read the Zoning Board of Adjustment Opening Statement.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Matt Ott, Jeff Baxter, Nichole Sungren, Brett Walker and Eric Strom. Staff: E.Jensen, E.Carstens, B. Morrissey, R.Kirschman and J. Heil.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 2026 REGULAR MEETING

Motion by J. Baxter to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Second by M. Ott. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Abstain: B. Walker).

COMMUNICATIONS / CORRESPONDENCE

There were no communications.

BUSINESS ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

#26-02

City of Ankeny

for property located at

EX SOUTHLAWN PLACE REPLAT & BEG 814.05F W &

91.2F N OF E 1/4 COR OF SEC THN N 633F W 150F S

351F SELY TO POB- ABND RR W 543.84F S 759F SE 1/4

NE 1/4 N OF RY SEC 23-80-24

RE: Variance - Maximum Height Allowance

Chair M.Ott opened the public hearing.

The applicant, Don Clark, Director of Municipal Utilities for the City of Ankeny was in attendance to speak regarding the request. He stated that they are requesting a height variance for a new water tower. The tower would be similar to the new tower that has been constructed near the intersection of NW 36th Street and NW Irvinedale Drive and will be a composite tower with a concrete column and a

steel tank able to hold two and a half million gallons of water. He asked the Board if they had any questions.

M. Ott asked if the wrap or logo on this tower would be similar to other towers. D. Clark responded that yes, the tower would have three City of Ankeny logos.

M. Ott asked if the applicant could explain the need for the water tower. D. Clark responded that the need was to add vertical storage of water for the City. The City will need to repaint the southwest water tower in the near future, which will take that tower off-line for a full season. This new tower would help with pressure issues that could arise with the southwest water tower off-line. He also added that this was the third different location that the City considered. The first location considered was where the Senior Center is currently located. The second location was where the current Ash water tower is located, however that site was not large enough. Therefore, the City was looking for a different site that was along the 24" transmission water main along the High Trestle Trail. The development of the site in question would put the water tower in the northwest corner of the site. There will be minimal tree removal.

M. Ott asked if the water tower would be lit at night. D. Clark responded no. However, it will have a red light at the top due to FAA requirements.

The Board asked where the access to the property would be. D. Clark responded that the access would be from the northeast corner of the property, near SW School Street. They are working with the School District to get an ingress/egress easement across a corner of their property so they can pave an access to the site.

B. Morrissey reported that the applicant is requesting a height variance for an unplatted property zoned R-2 and R-1. The property is bordered by the High Trestle Trail to the southwest, Ankeny School District property to the north and single-family properties to the east. The City of Ankeny acquired the property in 2014 and it has been considered a site for this elevated water storage tower for a little over a year due to its proximity to the 24" transmission water main. He explained that a site plan will need to be approved prior to construction. He stated that the height limit in the R-2 zoning district is 45 feet and the request is for an approximately 180-foot tall water tower. B. Morrissey also highlighted some other aspects of the site plan, including a six-foot tall vinyl, chain-link fence that would enclose a portion of the property and some additional landscaping planned along the High Trestle Trail. He reiterated that most of the existing landscaping on the site would remain. Staff recommends that the Zoning Board of Adjustment grant a variance to Ankeny Municipal Code Section 192.04(3)(F) to allow a 180-foot tall, elevated water storage tower on the subject property. Staff's position is that the increased maximum height allowance from the resulting water tower would not impair adequate supply of air and light, would not increase public danger of fire, or diminish property values; and that this request is in harmony with the intended spirit and purpose of the Ankeny Municipal Code.

J. Baxter asked for clarification on the removal of trees. B. Morrissey shared the demolition sheet from the proposed site plan showing what trees were to be removed.

E. Strom asked if there would be any inefficiencies considering the close proximity of this water tower to the water tower on Ash Drive. D. Clark responded that efficiencies will be improved due to the SW

water tower, the Ash water tower and this water tower all planned to be at the same hydraulic rate and same high water elevation level, which results in the three towers working in unison.

Dan Taube, 516 SW Southlawn Drive, Ankeny stated that the utility companies currently use the property to access utilities at the rear of the residential properties. D. Clark stated that the site plan has been shared with MidAmerican Energy and they have not raised this as a concern.

Susan Hart, 528 SW Southlawn Drive, Ankeny asked for clarification of the fencing location. She stated that cars drive through her property to access the trail. She was hoping that a fence would stop this from happening. She also asked about maintenance of the property. D. Clark explained that the City of Ankeny Parks Department handles the City property maintenance.

Julie Erickson, 409 SW Walnut Street, Ankeny stated that she was opposed to the location of the water tower near the Uptown Ankeny neighborhood. She asked if the City considered other sites. D. Clark reiterated the other sites previously considered.

Chair M. Ott left the meeting at 5:32.

Judie Colyer, 522 SW Walnut Street, Ankeny stated that she was concerned about how this proposed project would affect the historical Uptown area and the improvements recently made to the High Trestle Trail.

Scott Edwards, 518 SW Southlawn Drive, Ankeny stated that he was concerned about the accessibility to the utility easements. He also wanted to make sure the City was aware of the geo-wells on the school property.

Laurie Knutson, 514 SW Walnut Street, Ankeny stated that she was concerned that the property would need to be accessed from SW Walnut Street if the School District didn't agree to an easement. She was opposed to a water tower in her front yard.

D. Clark stated that the City has verbal agreement from the School District regarding the easement. He also said that the School District provided the well field locations to City staff.

N. Sungren asked about the location of the water connection. D. Clark indicated that they will need to open cut through the High Trestle Trail, but they will avoid the glow trail.

Motion by J. Baxter to close the public hearing, receive and file documents. Second by B. Walker. All voted aye. Motion carried 4 - 0.

J. Baxter stated that he lives near the northwest water tower and he understands not wanting a water tower in your back yard, but he trusts that the City has chosen the most appropriate location.

E. Strom asked if another Board was reviewing the location based on the residential zoning. E. Jensen stated that City owned facilities are allowed in any zoning district.

**Board Action on Filing #26-02 for property located at EX SOUTHLAWN PLACE REPLAT & BEG
814.05F W & 91.2F N OF E 1/4 COR OF SEC THN N 633F W 150F S 351F SELY TO POB- ABND RR W
543.84F S 759F SE ¼ NE 1/4 N OF RY SEC 23-80-24**

Motion by J.Baxter that the Zoning Board of Adjustment grant a Variance to Ankeny Municipal Code Section 192.04(3)(F) to allow a 180-foot tall, elevated water storage tower on the subject property. The Board's position is that the increased maximum height allowance from the resulting water tower would not impair adequate supply of air and light, would not increase public danger of fire, or diminish property values; and that this request is in harmony with the intended spirit and purpose of the Ankeny Municipal Code.

Second by B. Walker. Motion carried 3 – 0 -1 (Abstain: N. Sungren)

J. Baxter stated that any person desiring to appeal this decision to a court of record may do so within 30 days after the filing of this decision.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion was made by J. Baxter to adjourn the meeting. Second by B. Walker. All voted aye. Meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Submitted by Eric Carstens, Planning Manager
Zoning Board of Adjustment