

Meeting Minutes
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Tuesday, May 19, 2026
Ankeny City Council Chambers
1250 SW District Drive, Second Floor, Ankeny, Iowa

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Matt Ott called the May 19, 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, Eric Strom, Brett Walker. Absent: Jeff Baxter arrived late.

Staff: E. Jensen, E. Carstens, J. Heil, L. Hutzell, R. Kirschman, B. Morrissey, and A. Middleton.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2026 REGULAR MEETING

Motion by N.Sungren to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Second by M.Ott. Walker Abstained. Motion carried 3-0-1.

COMMUNICATIONS / CORRESPONDENCE

There was one communication from Renae & Tom Scroggins, 2410 NW Maple Street, in opposition to the variance.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

There were no business items.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

#26-06

Michael and Margaret Holland

for property located at

2326 NW Maple Street

LOT 27 GEORGETOWN PLAT 9

RE: Variance - Fence

Chair M.Ott opened the public hearing.

Margaret Holland, 2326 NW Maple Street, the applicant, summarized her request for a variance to allow them to build a 48-inch fence, 10 feet from the sidewalk. She explained that they are requesting the variance to remain consistent with the location and height of fencing at the neighboring property adjacent to the back of their property. She further explained that they believe the fence, with the variance, will be safer for her dogs and grandchildren.

M.Ott asked for clarification regarding the neighbor's fence: is it 48 inches tall?

M.Holland confirmed that the neighboring fence is 48 inches.

E.Strom asked Holland to clarify whether there is an existing fence on their property at 2326 NW Maple.

M.Holland explained that she does not have a fence. When they purchased the property on May 1st, a chain link fence previously in place had already been removed from 2326 NW Maple.

B.Morrissey presented the staff report, summarizing the applicant's request for a variance to Ankeny Municipal Code Section 191.14(2), that limits the height of fences located within front yard setbacks on corner lots to 42 inches, allowing a 48-inch-tall, wood fence to encroach approximately 21 feet into the required 30-foot front yard setback along the north property line adjacent to NW Georgetown Boulevard at 2326 NW Maple Street.

B.Morrissey further explained that City of Ankeny staff recommends the Zoning Board of Adjustment grant a variance to Ankeny Municipal Code Section 191.14(2), to allow a 48-inch-tall wood fence to encroach approximately 21 feet into the required 30-foot front yard setback along the north property line adjacent to NW Georgetown Boulevard at 2326 NW Maple Street.

The staff position is based on a determination that the decreased front yard setback from the resulting fence 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. He added that a proposed zoning ordinance update, recommended for adoption by City of Ankeny staff, if adopted by City Council later this summer, would make this variance unnecessary. B.Morrissey also recalled that the Zoning Board of Adjustment has approved a number of similar variances in the past.

M. Ott asked for clarification from City of Ankeny staff concerning the height of the neighbor's fence. Is it 42 inches tall, or 48 inches high?

E.Jensen responded that the neighboring property has a permit for a 42-inch fence, granted in 2005, but looking at more updated photographs, it does appear that the original fence has been replaced with a 48-inch wooden fence.

M.Ott asked why City of Ankeny staff's recommendation did not include a landscape buffering requirement, which has often been part of recommendations for approval of similar variances in the past.

B.Morrissey replied that the proposed zoning ordinance update would allow a 48-inch fence in this case without a landscape buffer, and the City of Ankeny staff's recommendation is consistent with the proposed zoning ordinance update.

M.Ott asked for clarification that the proposed zoning ordinance changes would not require a landscaping buffer in this instance.

E.Jensen explained that the proposed ordinance would allow a 4-foot tall fence without a landscaping buffer.

M.Ott asked for final comments.

M.Holland explained that directly behind their property, on NW Cherry Street, there is a 48-inch fence. Across the street, she continued, at 2402 NW Maple, there is a 6-foot fence, which is less than 1 foot from the sidewalk. She reiterated that their goal is to be consistent and respectful of the fencing already in place in the neighborhood.

M.Ott explained that the Board did receive an email from Renae & Tom Scroggins, 2410 NW Maple Street, in opposition to the variance.

Motion by M. Ott to close the public hearing, receive and file documents. Second by B.Walker. All voted aye. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Board Action on Filing #26-06 for property located at 2326 NW Maple Street

Motion by B.Walker that the Zoning Board of Adjustment grant a Variance to Ankeny Municipal Code Section 191.14(2) to allow a 48-inch-tall wood fence to encroach approximately 21 feet into the required 30-foot front yard setback along the north property line adjacent to NW Georgetown Boulevard at 2326 NW Maple Street, based on the Board's determination that the decreased front yard setback from the 48-inch-tall wood fence 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 N.Sungren. J.Baxter, having arrived late, abstained. Motion carried 4-0-1.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, M.Ott adjourned the meeting at 5:20pm.

Submitted by Alexa Middleton, Recording Secretary
Zoning Board of Adjustment