

Meeting
09/08/2026

REGULAR MEETING - ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

CITY OF NOVI

Tuesday, September 8, 2026

Council Chambers/Novi Civic Center

41725 Novi Road

Novi, Michigan

BOARD MEMBERS:

W. Clift Montague, Chairperson
Linda Krieger, Member
Mike Longo, Secretary
Joe Samona, Member
Michael Thompson, Member
Marc Jappaya, Member

ABSENT EXCUSED:

Joe Peddiboyina, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Kristin Kolb, City Attorney
Alan Hall, Deputy Community Development
Director
Megan Nardone, Recording Secretary

REPORTED BY:

Melinda R. Womack
Certified Shorthand Reporter

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1 Novi, Michigan

2 September 8, 2026

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4 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right I'd
5 like to call to order the meeting of the Zoning
6 Board of Appeals for Tuesday, September 8th. If,
7 Mike, you can lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

8 MEMBER LONGO: Please stand if you can.
9 (Pledge of Allegiance recited)

10 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Roll call.

11 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

12 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Here.

13 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

14 MEMBER THOMPSON: Here.

15 MS. NARDONE: Member Peddiboyina,
16 absent excused. Member Longo?

17 MEMBER LONGO: Here.

18 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

19 MEMBER KRIEGER: Here.

20 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

21 MEMBER SAMONA: Here.

22 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

23 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Here.

24 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. We have a
25 quorum.

1 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Thank you.
2 Little bit of the rules of conduct. I would ask
3 everybody to put your phone on silent or turn it
4 off, please. We have our cases tonight. We will
5 ask the person presenting the case to come to the
6 podium, present their case. They will have ten
7 minutes if necessary to present their case.
8 Anybody in the audience that would like to talk to
9 a case, please raise your hand to be acknowledged
10 and we will call you up and you will have three
11 minutes to present yours, unless you're
12 representing a big group, and then you can have
13 the ten minutes as well. I think that's the
14 important part. So let's talk about approval for
15 the meeting minutes.

16 MEMBER SAMONA: I have, Mr. Chair, I
17 make a motion to approve the meeting minutes,
18 however, I do want to ask for a modification. I
19 know it's not pertaining to the meeting minutes,
20 and I just had it up, and for some reason it's not
21 pulling up, but I believe it was Willowbrook, the
22 association with the sign. On the action summary
23 it said that, even though the action summary is
24 not the minutes, it said that it carried six to
25 zero. It was actually five to zero because Member

1 Peddiboyina recused himself from that case
2 specifically. So although it's not part of the
3 meeting minutes, I just wanted to make that part
4 of the record. But with that, I make a motion to
5 approve the minutes.

6 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Second?

7 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Second.

8 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right.

9 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

10 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

11 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

12 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

13 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

14 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

15 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

16 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

17 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

18 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

19 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

20 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

21 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion

22 carries.

23 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Thank you. Do
24 we have changes to the agenda.

25 MR. HALL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank

1 you. I would like to move the first case,
2 PZ26-0040 to October's meeting. We didn't have it
3 advertised correctly. We made that correction and
4 it's advertised correctly now. So we'll see it
5 then. Thank you.

6 MEMBER SAMONA: So are we tabling that
7 or is that just being --

8 MR. HALL: It's just getting pushed to
9 next month.

10 MEMBER SAMONA: Oh, okay. I make a
11 motion to approve the amended agenda.

12 MEMBER LONGO: Second.

13 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

14 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

15 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

16 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

17 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

18 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

19 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

20 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

21 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

22 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

23 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

24 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

25 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion

1 carries.

2 MEMBER SAMONA: Member Longo understood
3 what I said that time.

4 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: This is the
6 point in the meeting where we are open to any
7 public comments, not on the cases. Those will
8 come as the cases arise. Are there any general
9 comments that anybody would like to make? Do we
10 have anybody out there that would like to make a
11 general comment? All right. Seeing none, we will
12 get into the public hearings. The first public
13 hearing tonight PZ26-0041 Stephen Chenault. The
14 applicant is requesting variances from Section
15 4.19.1.E.i of the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance to
16 permit a total aggregate accessory structure area
17 of 2,710 square feet, 850 square feet is allowed
18 and will result in a variance of 1,860 square
19 feet. And Section 4.19.1.i to allow a 20 foot
20 tall garage. 14 ft. Maximum is allowed, so that
21 would be a variance of six feet. And Section
22 4.19.1.E.v, which provides that the aggregate area
23 of all accessory buildings shall not exceed the
24 ground-floor area of the principal building on the
25 lot. 1,816 square feet for principal building,

1 total accessory 2,710 square feet, variance to
2 exceed the square footage. This property is zoned
3 One-Family Residential (R-3). Representative for
4 the applicant here? Step to the podium. State
5 and spell your name, and then you'll be sworn in
6 by the secretary.

7 MR. CHENAULT: Stephen Chenault,
8 S-T-E-P-H-E-N, C-H-E-N-A-U-L-T.

9 MEMBER LONGO: Stephen, are you an
10 attorney?

11 MR. CHENAULT: No, I am not.

12 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
13 the truth in this case?

14 MR. CHENAULT: Yes, I do.

15 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Do you have any
17 visual aids?

18 MR. CHENAULT: I do have a couple. I
19 know you guys got a big list. I just got it today
20 in regards to the objections from the neighbors
21 that I saw, unfortunately. With those, just kind
22 of looking at some of the things about eyesores
23 and some of the things. I wanted to address some
24 of that. These are pictures of the neighbor's
25 surrounding areas which full screening. This is

1 the neighbor in the very front. Actually, let me
2 go back here. You can actually take -- this is
3 the map of the surrounding little bit under acre
4 and a quarter. Unfortunately, there's an HOA that
5 surrounds our property. I feel kind of like
6 they're trying to assert the HOA on me, which I'm
7 excluded from that. But when we're looking at the
8 properties that are surrounding us that are having
9 issues with this, looking at the existing
10 screening that is already in place, I went through
11 property by property, which a lot of these have 40
12 foot plus trees already on there. Most of them
13 have planted shrubs and arborvitaes that are ten
14 foot tall plus that are in these spaces that are
15 open. I think the argument too is the setback is
16 too close, and my argument would be their actual
17 homes are closer than the accessory building would
18 be. But I literally have gone through taking
19 pictures of the properties where you can see
20 the -- and I do have a copy if you guys want to
21 pass those around just to see what I'm talking
22 about. I do kind of have a personal inventory of
23 some of the equipment, which it says homeowner,
24 miter saws, tile saws, those kind of things, do my
25 own handyman work around the house and so forth,

1 so that's just looking for extra storage for kind
2 of house space. The kids grown up. We've got
3 bikes. We've got tools. They've got some of the
4 other -- we've got ATVs that all need to be stored
5 inside, trying to clean up our area around our
6 property, get some of the stuff inside rather than
7 being outside, so that's kind of it.

8 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Is that it for
9 now?

10 MR. CHENAULT: It is. I did pull -- so
11 it's not unprecedented in the approvals. I think
12 there's 30 something the Zoning Board of Appeals
13 has approved in regards to variance requests like
14 this. And again, if you guys would like copies, I
15 did make a couple.

16 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right.
17 City?

18 MR. HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
19 Yeah, we do have a couple questions. Do you have
20 a site plan with you that shows the layout of
21 barn?

22 MR. CHENAULT: I do not, actually.
23 That was something I submitted. Sorry.

24 MR. HALL: Put that up right now so we
25 can have some questions about it.

1 MR. CHENAULT: Sure.

2 MR. HALL: So you want to run through
3 that and just kind of explain where your house is,
4 the accessory structure, the barn, just kind of
5 let the board know what it looks like.

6 MR. CHENAULT: So basically the home is
7 almost in the middle of the property looking at
8 the accessory structure towards the back half of
9 the property.

10 MR. HALL: And then what's the setback
11 from back property line to the barn, do you know?

12 MR. CHENAULT: I want to say it's
13 either six or eight feet. That was something I
14 was working with. My mind just went blank.
15 Michael Wall, and he was talking to me about that.
16 Same thing with their actual interpretation of the
17 height is the median height, the 14 feet, so
18 actually saying that was not outside of the realm
19 with how that was designed. And then the setback,
20 we're going to try to abide within that setback
21 requirement that they would have for that size.

22 The one thing to note is like all
23 around is RA for the acreage and that size
24 building would be approved in that area. For some
25 reason we're excluded, even though we're on an

1 acre and a quarter of next door neighbor's on two
2 and a half acres, and I believe that there's a
3 little small church building that's there that's
4 on a couple acres as well, so.

5 MR. HALL: Your property is zoned R3,
6 so have to stick with those requirements. So yes,
7 Mr. Chairman, they're asking for three variances
8 tonight. I'd like to go through them in a little
9 bit of detail just so you understand what the
10 grant is required. One variance is for the
11 aggregate total of all of the accessory structures
12 on the property. They're allowed 850 square feet
13 and he totals at 2,710. The way that number is
14 adjusted is that there's 870 square feet and
15 attached garage that is an accessory structure
16 being that it's attached. There's a 240 square
17 foot second shed on the property, you see a small
18 square by the proposed barn, and the barn is 1,600
19 square feet what he has now. So that totals
20 2,710. He's allowed 850 square feet so he's
21 asking for a variance of 1,860 square foot
22 variance for being oversized.

23 Second variance is the height increase.
24 He's looking for a six foot variance in height
25 increase, 14 foot allowed. The main height is

1 what he's adjusted as a barn. So the half of the
2 roof, you take the half and go down a grade,
3 that's around 20 feet. The full height of the
4 peak of the roof is about 26 feet 9 inches to give
5 you some idea of the size of it. And the
6 structure is about -- I can't remember. It was 30
7 by 50. So that's the size of it. So six foot
8 height variance he's requesting.

9 And the third variance is to allow a
10 total aggregate accessories on the property to
11 exceed the principal building. That's prohibited
12 in our ordinance. You can't have the accessory
13 buildings larger than permitted building. And so
14 the principal building area is 1,816 square feet,
15 the total accessory is 2,710. Permitted in the
16 ordinance. So he's asking for a variance to say
17 that it is permitted.

18 MR. CHENAULT: Can I ask for one
19 clarification on that because our actual home is
20 3,400 square feet. When talking with Mike he said
21 that was within the right so I guess I'm getting a
22 little conflicting --

23 MR. HALL: So it's a footprint is how
24 it works. So it's about lot coverage and as to
25 footprint. So you're 1,816 on the footprint of

1 your principal house, plus the 870 for your
2 garage, so your whole house would be 18 plus. And
3 upstairs, that's just duplicate square footage so
4 that's what is being pertained to.

5 MEMBER SAMONA: Is the footprint
6 included in the garage?

7 MR. HALL: So the principal is not part
8 of the garage, it's an accessory.

9 MEMBER SAMONA: Got it.

10 MR. HALL: So the 870 is accessory, the
11 principal is 1,816.

12 MEMBER SAMONA: Thank you.

13 MR. HALL: So on the garage you have a
14 shed, a smaller shed on the property. What is
15 that used for?

16 MR. CHENAULT: Storage. Hand tools.

17 MR. HALL: And then the barn is for
18 more storage of things?

19 MR. CHENAULT: Like I said, I have two
20 ATVs. I have actually a little work list of just
21 some stuff that I have, miter saws, tile saws,
22 different hand tools, those kinds of things, a
23 1966 Custom 10 pickup truck that I would like put
24 in the garage, those kind of things.

25 MR. HALL: Would you store any animals

1 there like agricultural animals?

2 MR. CHENAULT: No. We just have a dog.

3 MR. HALL: Would you use it for any
4 commercial activities, use it for any kind of
5 lifts or something inside the garage or any kind
6 of stuff that you do?

7 MR. CHENAULT: No. Just hobby type of
8 stuff.

9 MR. HALL: Will you have any lights on
10 the building? Will there be any lights like
11 security lights or some kind of lights that will
12 be around the area?

13 MR. CHENAULT: Probably in front of the
14 garage like a normal garage style light.

15 MR. HALL: And that would be directed
16 down, not toward a neighbor.

17 MR. CHENAULT: Correct. With that, I
18 have no further questions. Thank you, Mr.
19 Chairman.

20 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Correspondence?

21 MEMBER LONGO: Yes. We mailed out 36
22 notices on this. One was returned. There were no
23 approvals. There were ten objections. I'm not
24 going to read all of them, but essentially they
25 talk about the size. The variance is huge. And

1 the business that he's running, it's residential.

2 But those were the comments that people made.

3 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right. Do
4 we have someone in the audience that would like to
5 speak to this case? Yes. Please come to the
6 podium and state and spell your name.

7 MR. WRIGHT: My name is Matthew Wright.
8 M-A-T-T-H-E-W, W-R-I-G-H-T.

9 MEMBER LONGO: Matthew, are you an
10 attorney?

11 MR. WRIGHT: I am not.

12 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
13 the truth in this case?

14 MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

15 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

16 MR. WRIGHT: This is my house right
17 here. This is where he wants to put it right
18 here. His entire grade slopes back towards our
19 property anyway. This building will put a 20 foot
20 wall in my back yard. The pictures were very
21 misleading. There is no 30, 40 foot trees here.
22 We can see directly into his back yard now, but
23 we'll see the whole backside of the barn. There
24 are no other barns in the area. It's going to be
25 completely out of place. And all that water that

1 runs off the roof will run directly into my
2 neighbor's property here and mine here. So we are
3 going to get an extreme amount of runoff, more
4 than we already do. That's the main argument
5 behind it.

6 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Thank you.
7 Anyone else? State and spell your name.

8 MR. STOWE: Hello. I'm Timothy Stowe,
9 S-T-O-W-E, Timothy, T-I-M-O-T-H-Y.

10 MEMBER LONGO: Tim, are you an
11 attorney?

12 MR. STOWE: No, I am not.

13 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
14 the truth in this case?

15 MR. STOWE: Yes, I do.

16 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

17 MR. STOW: I'd just like to read a
18 statement. Hello. I'm Timothy Stowe and my
19 property abuts to the applicants and strongly
20 oppose this zoning variance. I want to thank the
21 board for the notification letter they sent out
22 informing of this proposed zoning variance.
23 Without this letter we have -- we would have not
24 been aware of the attempt to obtain their mission
25 to construct this warehouse pole barn. Granting a

1 variance to build this huge warehouse will
2 negatively alter the character of the area and
3 decrease the value of the surrounding houses. The
4 existing ordinance is not unnecessarily burdensome
5 or is it creating any hardship to the owner. The
6 current multiple storage structures already on the
7 property should be adequate for any residential
8 property. There's no need for this variance, only
9 a want to use this property for commercial
10 purposes. This owner's applicant states the pole
11 barn will use in part for storage to store
12 property maintenance equipment. What will stop
13 him from using this warehouse to support or expand
14 the other two businesses he already operates from
15 this residence. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Thank you.

17 MS. ECOSKIE: Alexa Ecoskie.

18 A-L-E-X-A, E-C-O-S-K-I-E.

19 MR. LONG: Alexa, are you an attorney?

20 MS. ECOSKIE: No, sir.

21 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
22 the truth in this case?

23 MS. ECOSKIE: Yes, sir.

24 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

25 MS. ECOSKIE: I don't have any images,

1 but it would be wonderful to collect the ones you
2 had. The last one is the view from the backyard.
3 You'll be able to see three to four windows that
4 directly look into the backyard of our neighbors
5 here, and I know we haven't met before. I'm
6 Alexa. Nice to meet you guys. So that's my two
7 year old's bedroom, my children's bathroom, my
8 bathroom window. Everyone has the right to their
9 properties. We moved in, it was a big open space.
10 All of us have adjusted our backyards based on our
11 new neighbors moving in a few years ago. I had to
12 buy mulch, build a whole play structure for my
13 kids to accommodate the fence that is currently
14 six foot five inches, which is only supposed to be
15 six foot feet in Novi. There's issues already in
16 the property. The download slope is directly into
17 our backyard so there's already drainage issues.
18 City's out all the time to work on the electric.
19 They have a pool already in this place that drains
20 as well, so that's a big concern of mine as well.

21 I have hobbies as well. I purchased a
22 property in Iosco County where it is legal to
23 build a barn and store my boat and my ATV that my
24 kids use. So while I understand hobbies and
25 items, there's other areas that if you want to

1 have that type of space and those types of
2 hobbies, I agree with our city and protecting the
3 view of our yards. It would be a 20-foot eyesore
4 in my back yard as well in addition to all the
5 dangers that it causes and the issues it's going
6 to cause our homes. It would be very uninviting
7 in our city that we all work really hard to
8 maintain, so thank you.

9 MS. LEONELLI: Rita Leonelli, R-I-T-A,
10 L-E-O-N-E-L-L-I.

11 MEMBER LONGO: Rita, are you an
12 attorney?

13 MS. LEONELLI: No.

14 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
15 the truth in this case?

16 MS. LEONELLI: Yes.

17 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

18 MS. LEONELLI: A structure of the
19 proposed size in a residential area is contrary to
20 the City of Novi's property maintenance program,
21 and I took this off the website. The City of Novi
22 utilizes a property maintenance program to ensure
23 the community remains safe and visually appealing.
24 The goal of the program is to preserve the overall
25 quality of life and economic value of our

1 neighborhoods through collaboration with
2 homeowners. Ultimately, the property maintenance
3 program protects long-term investments while
4 maintaining a high quality of life associated with
5 Novi.

6 So the city's property maintenance
7 initiatives on a six-year cycle, and this year
8 inspections were conducted and homeowners were
9 given notice of violations. We personally have
10 made significant investment in the exterior of our
11 home over the last four years. We had small area
12 of chipping paint on our chimney cap and addressed
13 it as quickly as possible. We want to continue to
14 enjoy our yard looking out over a residential
15 area. A structure this size would give the
16 appearance of a commercial area. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Thank you. Is
18 there anybody else that would like to speak? All
19 right. Then we'll open it up to the board.

20 MEMBER SAMONA: Can I make a quick
21 disclosure before she starts asking a question?

22 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Sure.

23 MEMBER SAMONA: While looking up this
24 property, I'm a Realtor, I looked it up. It seems
25 like the applicant's an employed broker.

1 Different office, same employment broker as me. I
2 don't know the applicant. I just wanted to make
3 that part of the record before so I don't have any
4 bias towards this. Sorry. I didn't mean to
5 interrupt you.

6 MS. KRIEGER: Sir, if you could comment
7 towards their concerns which are legitimate and
8 also if you would be willing to renegotiate what
9 you've got going on your property and we could
10 possibly table this and have a site plan that
11 could be reconsidered because the two-story
12 building, and then in the back, you don't have
13 plans for water swale or a swale for water
14 drainage, plus the height. My question would be
15 is, do you have alternative storage areas where
16 you could go to a storage area and rent a unit for
17 monthly and put storage in there?

18 MR. CHENAULT: I mean with the amount
19 of money that I pay for Novi taxes I wasn't
20 assuming that it was needed to build out somewhere
21 else and purchase another place to rent. The
22 amount of equipment and stuff, back to some of
23 these things were saying are misleading, I kind of
24 back to the screening what they're saying this is
25 going to be an eyesore literally. I wish I would

1 have brought a picture of the front of my
2 property. But back to saying this is misleading,
3 this is six-foot tall fence. These are the
4 arborvitaes that are 12, four, five feet above all
5 the screening literally wraps our property with
6 these people that are complaining that they're
7 going to interfere with their view, literally
8 trying to figure out how putting something on my
9 property is literally screened. Almost all those
10 areas is creating an eyesore.

11 MS. KRIEGER: And then the storage unit
12 that you already have, could you incorporate that
13 into the new building and remove that building?

14 MR. CHENAULT: I'm sure it's something
15 that I could do, I mean remove that small -- I
16 mean it's a very small building.

17 MS. KRIEGER: 20 feet is because you
18 want to elevate the car to get under it.

19 MR. CHENAULT: So the reason why is
20 actually I have like a plow truck and so forth
21 that would need extra storage space. Like our
22 cars right now won't fit in our garage because of
23 the height.

24 MEMBER KRIEGER: And the two stories?

25 MR. CHENAULT: That was just extra

1 storage space was all I was looking for up above
2 because you can basically make the trusses either
3 open so you can slide something up there or you
4 can close it off. Just trying to make more use of
5 the space.

6 MEMBER KRIEGER: Okay. And the water
7 drainage, you have a picture with the backyard, if
8 you could put that back up. And you put up the
9 fence recently.

10 MR. CHENAULT: We've owned this
11 property since 2017, and unfortunately when we put
12 the fence up, we didn't realize it was going to
13 create such a big ordeal with the neighbors,
14 obviously, as you can see. We left the trees,
15 most of those. We actually pulled the fence off
16 the lot line, left some of these large mature
17 trees, didn't cut them back, tried to keep the
18 screening, tried to keep all those things. We've
19 been trying to be good neighbors, but for some
20 reason the fence has created -- unbeknownst to us,
21 we had young children at the time, had a dog that
22 we literally just moved from Canton into the new
23 house. I didn't want my old dog to bite somebody
24 or hurt somebody so we put a fence up, and that,
25 for some reason has created this animosity. We

1 haven't changed the grade on our property, so
2 these existing issues they're talking about
3 grading and water and all that is not something we
4 created. It's just been part of the property that
5 they purchased when they bought their homes, so.

6 MEMBER SAMONA: Can you flip the
7 picture? Thank you.

8 MEMBER KRIEGER: There was another one
9 you had like similar to that one. And when did
10 you install the fence?

11 MR. CHENAULT: 2018.

12 MEMBER KRIEGER: You're thinking of
13 painting it or maintaining it?

14 MR. CHENAULT: Yes, I would like to.
15 I've actually been nervous to get back behind the
16 other side of the fence just because there's been
17 so much animosity for some reason about the fence.
18 Even though we came a foot off of the outside, a
19 lot of the neighbors too, like I said, put
20 arborvitaes right up against them. They put
21 little things hanging on the fence. Like I said,
22 trying to be good neighbors. You see the trees
23 right there, we cut those way back when we put our
24 fence up. They're way over our lot line. Most of
25 the trees are encroaching over. We haven't cut

1 them back. We haven't done any of that. Again
2 they're worried about this structure that's
3 covered with all these trees. And I mean one
4 neighbor that just came up and was talking about
5 literally is in the front yard, it would be
6 impossible for them to see the barn with all the
7 40, 50 foot trees literally probably 300 feet
8 before the structure, so.

9 MEMBER KRIEGER: Have you thought of a
10 different place to put the barn?

11 MR. CHENAULT: I actually think if I
12 were to move it like any of the other places, like
13 if I were to move it on the other side or
14 something like that, it would be more visible to
15 them than the current location that was proposed
16 based off of the screening that they have. If you
17 look at some of these, like these -- I know it
18 sounded like they were trying to act like I was
19 trying to doctor these pictures, but these are not
20 doctored pictures. This is literally over a
21 six-foot fence.

22 MEMBER KRIEGER: That's toward the
23 north?

24 MR. CHENAULT: Correct. That's
25 literally right in front of the little shed

1 building that's right there.

2 MEMBER KRIEGER: My main concern is
3 from the back street that the pole barn at 20 feet
4 two story is up near the neighbor's yard have a
5 concern for the water. And then two, it affects
6 their lighting when the sun's going up and down.
7 So it does have an impact. I'm concerned about
8 that. And then also if you're working on it, if
9 you have lighting in there, electrical, are you
10 going to be working at it all hours of the night?

11 MR. CHENAULT: No. That's not the
12 intension of that at all. I think too talking
13 about shading and so forth, I mean literally the
14 properties that are on -- this is about a quarter
15 of an acre, literally the property between
16 neighbors are going to be probably closer than the
17 setback to the building itself. Most of those
18 homes are two stories as it is. Like I'm trying
19 to get the -- wrap my head around some of the
20 complaints there with that rather than it just
21 being there's still some animosity that we put a
22 fence up and they didn't like that we fenced the
23 property I guess.

24 MEMBER KRIEGER: Thank you.

25 MEMBER SAMONA: Where I stand on this

1 is every property is unique, and I want to briefly
2 touch on the point where you had a list of
3 properties that the board has granted similar
4 variances to. These variances may be, in my
5 opinion, may be appropriate in certain homes or
6 may be feasible in certain homes and in certain
7 areas, but not on every home just because it has
8 that size of a property. I'm going to kind of
9 piggyback off Member Krieger's comment about
10 possibly tabling this. The issue that I have is
11 we have pictures of the -- a design layout of this
12 accessory structure I would like to see, and I'm
13 going to make an assumption that members of the
14 board would like to see is how this is going to
15 look on the property. That way, we can make an
16 informed -- informed decision. You know, I'm a
17 little -- I'm a little taken aback. I don't
18 think -- as it currently stands right now without
19 seeing how this would actually sit on the property
20 and how it would look on the property, I don't
21 care if it's ChatGPT. People have done ChatGPT
22 before. Hey, Chat, take this accessory structure,
23 put it into the lot and show me a picture. I
24 don't care if that's how it is. But as it's
25 presented right now, I think there's too much

1 going on with the size and too many unanswered
2 questions in my opinion to be able to support it
3 as it currently stands. That does not mean that I
4 wouldn't be able to support it if I saw, you know,
5 images like I just mentioned.

6 The other thing, which I'm having a
7 little bit of a hard time with is why is this
8 aggregate, aside from the garage, the aggregate
9 accessory structure, why is this the minimum
10 necessary to do this?

11 One question before I close out my
12 remarks I want to ask Mr. Hall is, are we to take
13 any consideration whatsoever if there's, and I
14 don't want to know if there is, but if there's any
15 business use on the property, is that to be part
16 of our consideration whatsoever?

17 MR. HALL: So the business use is not
18 allowed on residential property. There are
19 businesses that are allowed in residential
20 property that would be considered -- there's a
21 list of them that are home occupations, but it
22 couldn't be a business like a normal business.
23 You'd have to either change the zoning or have
24 some kind of regulation.

25 MEMBER SAMONA: Is that -- however, are

1 we supposed to take that into consideration for
2 anything that's before us as it relates to this
3 property specifically?

4 MR. HALL: You can make conditions upon
5 your approvals. You can say that based on this
6 condition that it wouldn't have these activities.
7 We asked questions already about are there going
8 to be animals in there. Are these going to be
9 commercial in there. You can limit it based on
10 your approval. Another thing you can do too is
11 that there's three variances being requested right
12 now. The last one, number three, is that it's not
13 permitted to be that large. If the applicant were
14 willing go down to the 706 square feet rather than
15 the 1,600, that would put the total aggregate at
16 the 1,816 square feet and not need the third
17 variance.

18 The first two variances are dimensional
19 requests, which can be debated one way or the
20 other. The third one though is actually not
21 permitted in the ordinance, so that's a little
22 different case because it's not -- you'd have to
23 show compelling reason to permit it. That would
24 be a hardship of some sort to say that you need to
25 have this to go outside the ordinance. Does that

1 make sense?

2 MEMBER SAMONA: Sure.

3 MR. HALL: So if he's saying there's
4 something that has to go in the garage that has to
5 be there, and this is the reason why, you can
6 consider that variance. Without a compelling
7 reason for a hardship for number three, that's
8 more difficult to --

9 MEMBER SAMONA: Sure. And I'll guess
10 I'll wrap it up with this. The issue for me right
11 now is not whether it's 706 square feet or 1,800
12 square feet, I want to see how this is going to
13 look on the property. If it was a seven foot by
14 five foot patio, I mean it might be a different
15 story. We're talking about a rather large, rather
16 large unit here. So I would want to see whether
17 706 square feet or 1,800 square feet, I would want
18 to see that, and maybe if you could let us know,
19 is there a business being operated from the
20 property or is it simply like LLCs that had
21 register agent address of the property because I
22 see that all the time. The petitioner is a real
23 estate agent. He could own rental properties, and
24 it could be 123 Main Street, LLC, and it could be
25 registered to his home. It doesn't mean 123 Main

1 Street, LLC is a business with 9 to 5 hours.

2 MR. CHENAULT: And I do own a
3 commercial property in Toledo. I own rental
4 property, so we're on the same page of what you're
5 saying. It's a registered name where all the mail
6 comes and so forth.

7 MEMBER SAMONA: So you don't have
8 customers coming into your house buying product
9 for any of the I believe Safe Printing & Gifts.

10 MR. CHENAULT: Correct.

11 MEMBER SAMONA: So I don't necessarily
12 have a concern about that, but I would like to see
13 how this would be laid out on the property. We're
14 realtors. I don't believe in animosity. We don't
15 take no for answers, but we work to try to find a
16 common ground, but that's where I stand.

17 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right.
18 Anybody else?

19 MEMBER LONGO: Yes. I'd like to expand
20 and just say first of all, I think it would be
21 good to have some illustration of what this looks
22 like. There's some people that are pretty upset
23 about it. I'd like to see what it looks like.

24 Secondly, on the third variance, I do
25 think that's excessive. I think that the third

1 variance is not necessary. We haven't heard any
2 reason to have it that large. So I recommend that
3 we table this till next month, or whenever you
4 want to come back, and consider not having that
5 third variance.

6 MR. CHENAULT: Back to vehicles and the
7 fact that we can't put them in the current garage,
8 I've got a 1966 Custom 10 pickup truck. Some of
9 those vehicles, a trailer with two quads on them,
10 those kinds of things, I mean that's restrictive,
11 and if we're going to put those inside, we're
12 going to have to have some space. And I think
13 again, it's kind of surprising Mr. Hall he was
14 talking with Mike I thought those were kind of in
15 the realm of what we were trying to come up. I
16 can definitely give you the list and we can maybe
17 do a layout and show you where that building is
18 and why it's needed.

19 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: I think quite
20 honestly, I'll interject here, I think that's
21 where we're headed. This is a very massive
22 structure. It's very tall. There needs to be a
23 lot of justification for us to consider, and
24 there's no way that I see that you're going to get
25 through tonight, quite honestly.

1 MR. CHENAULT: I'm okay with tabling
2 and doing the imaging. I just would like
3 clarification on what exactly we're look for for
4 image. I know they have kind of the plans and
5 trying to follow the coloring of the home and
6 match those kind of things.

7 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: This is a
8 massive structure. It's bigger than your house,
9 and I think you need to take a very hard look at
10 the height in justifying that height, which is
11 seemingly to us just looking from the outside
12 excessive and the size, which again, if you
13 brought what you put in there and give a plan, we
14 can talk about it.

15 MR. CHENAULT: Sure.

16 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: But just on the
17 surface sitting here looking at it, it's a very
18 massive structure, and understand all the
19 complaints about this massive structure being put
20 six foot from the property line. So I guess it's
21 up to you. But that's probably the best way to
22 go, and you do a little better preparation on the
23 next.

24 MR. CHENAULT: That's fine for sure.

25 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Is that all

1 right?

2 MR. CHENAULT: Yes.

3 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Mr. Chair, I do have
4 some comments.

5 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Okay.

6 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Mr. Chenault, I
7 appreciate you coming out. However, I am of the
8 opinion I think based on your own statements just
9 looking for extra space, that the failure to grant
10 relief in this situation would just be an
11 inconvenience. I think that the size and the
12 scope of this storage unit doesn't fit the
13 neighborhood just from the overheads based on what
14 I'm seeing, and wouldn't inhibit you from using
15 the property, you know, as it's supposed to be
16 used. I could potentially get behind something a
17 little bit smaller, but like much of the board has
18 already said, I think it's the size and the scope
19 of the structure.

20 MR. CHENAULT: Would it be helpful to
21 show within a mile of this that they're multiple
22 structures that are larger than this?

23 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: No. The idea of
24 showing things that have been granted is
25 irrelevant to this board. Every piece of property

1 is looked at on its own, and because of what
2 happened on that property is special related to
3 that property, has nothing to do with our looking
4 at your property. So no, that would not help at
5 all.

6 MR. CHENAULT: I just wanted to say
7 it's an area where it's not the only structure I
8 guess, so I understand what you're saying.

9 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yeah. Each of
10 these is looked at as an individual piece of
11 property, and the reasons that you have for
12 needing, absolutely needing this variance, and
13 that's the burden of proof, is to prove that you
14 need this variance, otherwise, you can't use your
15 property.

16 MEMBER SAMONA: Alan, in order to be on
17 the October 13th meeting, assuming, I don't think
18 he -- based on our comments, I don't think he's
19 going to go larger, but in order to be on the
20 October 13th meeting, when would he have to submit
21 all that stuff by?

22 MR. HALL: That would be tomorrow to
23 make it for the next meeting. We're probably into
24 November.

25 MEMBER SAMONA: The November 10th

1 meeting.

2 MEMBER THOMPSON: Not to beat a dead
3 horse. We all joined as volunteers, right? If
4 you're going to make a new plan, I would probably
5 make one, I would make one with only one structure
6 on the property to not have multiple sheds and
7 pole barns. It needs to get smaller. In my
8 opinion there needs to be only one secondary
9 structure, to help you out.

10 MR. CHENAULT: When does that all need
11 to be submitted? The 10th should be fine.

12 MEMBER SAMONA: So for the November
13 10th one needs to be submitted by November 1st?

14 MS. NARDONE: October. October 1st.

15 MR. LONG: I move that we table this,
16 yield to the November meeting.

17 MEMBER THOMPSON: Second.

18 MEMBER SAMONA: I think there needs to
19 be a date certain. November 10th, 2026.

20 MR. HALL: Do you mind if we make the
21 motion to postpone rather than table?

22 MEMBER LONGO: No. I don't mind at
23 all. I think that's a good idea.

24 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

25 MEMBER LONG: Yes.

1 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

2 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

3 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

4 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

5 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

6 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

7 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

8 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

9 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

10 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

11 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion

12 carries.

13 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right.

14 We're ready for the second. PZ26-0044. Gary

15 Shaw. The applicant is requesting a variance from

16 Section 4.19.1.E.i of the City of Novi Zoning

17 Ordinance to permit a garage of 1,025 square feet,

18 850 square feet is allowed, so variance of 175

19 square feet. The property is zoned One-Family

20 Residential (R-3). Please state your name and spell it.

21 MR. SHAW: Good evening. My name is

22 Gary Shaw, G-A-R-Y, S-H-A-W.

23 MEMBER LONGO: Are you an attorney,

24 Gary?

25 MR. SHAW: No, I'm not.

1 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
2 the truth in this case?

3 MR. SHAW: Yes.

4 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

5 MR. SHAW: I recently purchased a home
6 in the Meadowbrook Lake subdivision. It was an
7 existing structure that's roughly about 55 years
8 old. We're doing an addition on it, and we're
9 trying to extend the front of the garage forward,
10 which basically we want to use the three walls
11 right here. These three walls are the walls of
12 the existing garage and we're extending the garage
13 forward to basically add some symmetry to the
14 front of the house. What that does, it puts me
15 over the 850 square foot allowable space for the
16 garage. I put a workshop in there, which
17 basically reduces the square footage inside the
18 garage. These drawings have been submitted and
19 approved, and we're starting the construction
20 project. Once we move the garage forward, and we
21 did the design and got the truss drawings, we're
22 going to put in an attic in here that's basically
23 going to house the mechanicals. And with the
24 truss drawings, which are basically right here,
25 this area is the added space we're going to use

1 for mechanicals and for storage. And this area
2 over here is where the stairwell would be. It's
3 an electric staircase that comes. It basically
4 falls inside that workroom and close to the
5 outside wall of the workroom, which would make it
6 obviously cumbersome to get in there. This is a
7 little depiction of where the hatch would be. And
8 the ultimate result would be basically the
9 footprint of the garage would remain the same.
10 However, that workroom that's on the inside of the
11 garage would be eliminated. That's my whole --
12 that way I'd have easier access to the attic
13 through those stairs would be in a confined space.

14 The aesthetics of the home would remain
15 the same. There's no exterior walls that would be
16 moved or changed or elevated, it would just be
17 merely removing the two workroom walls inside the
18 garage.

19 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Does that pretty
20 much cover it for now?

21 MR. SHAW: That's it for now.

22 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: City?

23 MR. HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
24 He's asking for a single variance tonight to allow
25 175 square foot increase in the attached garage.

1 As he said, the footprint is not changing. The
2 exterior of the house would remain the same as it
3 is now. I've got a question for you. Is the
4 floor of the workroom right now the same floor as
5 the garage?

6 MR. SHAW: Yes, it is. The entire
7 garage and the workroom is going to be conditioned
8 space.

9 MR. HALL: So you're not going to
10 change the flooring, just going to remove the
11 walls that are there.

12 MR. SHAW: Correct.

13 MR. HALL: With that, just make the
14 garage larger, but it does go over the 800 square
15 feet so there's a variance for that. With that,
16 thank you, sir.

17 MR. SHAW: I'd like to add, I'm not a
18 mechanic nor do I plan to become one. It's not
19 going to be an oversized garage for cars and
20 things like that.

21 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Correspondence?

22 MEMBER LONGO: Yes. We mailed out 25
23 notices. There were no approvals. There was one
24 objection, which basically has concern about
25 encroachment on the property line. That's

1 essentially what the objection was.

2 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Anyone in the
3 audience care to speak to this case? Seeing none,
4 I will open it up to the board.

5 MEMBER SAMONA: First of all, just for
6 clarification, I think I actually sent this house
7 to a client. When did you purchase it? Four or
8 five months ago?

9 MR. SHAW: Yeah.

10 MEMBER SAMONA: Yeah. I think I
11 actually sent it to a client. I looked at this.
12 I don't have an issue with this. I think you've
13 presented it, you've presented the reasons. I'm
14 satisfied with the reasons. Heck, I don't even
15 have any questions for you. I just wanted to add
16 that in there. I know, everybody's surprised.
17 You understood that.

18 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Anybody else?

19 MEMBER KRIEGER: So the cement truck
20 that's out there was for the garage.

21 MR. SHAW: I'm sorry?

22 MEMBER KRIEGER: On the property today.

23 MR. SHAW: Yeah. That was for the
24 footing for the back of the house, the sun room on
25 the back of the house.

1 MEMBER KRIEGER: Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. JAPPAYA: Mr. Chairman, thank you.

3 Mr. Shaw, no objections. Good luck.

4 MR. SHAW: Thank you.

5 MEMBER THOMPSON: So just to be clear,
6 three of the four walls, the only wall that's
7 being moved is the one that's already under the
8 roof going backwards.

9 MR. SHAW: No. So this is the front of
10 the house, the entrance to the garage right here.
11 These walls back here are the existing walls.
12 We're actually extending the front of the house --
13 the front of the garage with these three walls
14 right here. Right now the front of the garage is
15 right here.

16 MEMBER THOMPSON: Three of the walls
17 are going to stay the same. So you're adding on
18 to the two sides, just moving the front one up.

19 MR. SHAW: Correct.

20 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: It's going to be
21 at the same plane as the other part of the house
22 there? Does it stick out any further?

23 MR. SHAW: No. That's the idea. It
24 comes out the same as the other side of the house.

25 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Mr. Chairman, I do

1 have one question, and this could be directed to
2 Alan and the City. Mike, you got me a little
3 confused now. I just want to confirm, the
4 addition to the front of the garage, that has been
5 approved already. We're just asking to knock down
6 the workshop walls that enclosed within the
7 garage's footprint.

8 MR. HALL: That is correct. The
9 outside walls have already been approved. It's
10 the two inside walls around the workshop are going
11 to be removed to make the garage larger.

12 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Okay. Thank you. My
13 opinion remains unchanged. All right.

14 MEMBER LONGO: I'd like to move that we
15 grant the variance in case number PZ26-0044 sought
16 by Gary Shaw for the garage square foot variance,
17 which is 175 square feet because the petitioner
18 has shown practical difficulty in utilization of
19 the garage. Without the variance, the petitioner
20 will be unreasonably prevented or limited with
21 respect to the use of the property Because of the
22 use of the interior. The property is unique
23 because it was purchased. The petitioner did not
24 create the condition because it was purchased that
25 way. The relief granted will not unreasonably

1 interfere with adjacent or surrounding properties
2 because it doesn't interfere with any property.
3 The relief is consistent with the spirit and
4 intent of the ordinance, because it does not
5 interfere with any surrounding property.

6 MEMBER SAMONA: Second.

7 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

8 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

9 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

10 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

11 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

12 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

13 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

14 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

15 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

16 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

17 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

18 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

19 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion
20 carries.

21 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Next case.

22 PZ26-0046. Dennis and Sally Denoyer. The
23 applicant is requesting a variance from Section
24 3.1.5 of the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance to
25 permit a covered porch with a front yard setback

1 of 24.5 feet. 30 feet is required, so this would
2 be a variance of 5.5 feet. This property is zoned
3 One-Family Residential (R-3). Please state your
4 name and spell it.

5 MR. DENOYER: I'm Dennis Denoyer.
6 D-E-N-N-I-S, D-E-N-O-Y-E-R.

7 MR. MYERS: I'm Frank Myers, F-R-A-N-K,
8 M-Y-E-R-S, working with the client.

9 MEMBER LONGO: Are either one of you
10 gentleman attorneys?

11 MR. DENOYER: No.

12 MR. MYERS: No.

13 MEMBER LONGO: Do you both promise to
14 tell the truth in this case?

15 MR. DENOYER: Yes.

16 MR. MYERS: Yes.

17 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you. Thank you.
18 Said it twice.

19 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Please tell us
20 how we can help you tonight.

21 MR. MYERS: The client has done some
22 major renovations on their property. This is the
23 last phase of the property. This small area right
24 in here denotes the front covered porch that we're
25 proposing on the renovation over here. And as you

1 can see, we're seeking a five and a half foot
2 front yard setback. These are all narrow streets
3 with wide open ditches there. The front yard has
4 quite a lot of setback, but still, nonetheless,
5 we're seeking a little bit of a variance for that.
6 And then this is going to be the -- that's what
7 the property is going to look like the front
8 covered porch on the property. Any questions?

9 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: City?

10 MR. HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
11 They're asking for a dimensional variance tonight
12 to put a roof over an existing porch. The
13 existing porch is six foot by ten foot, is that
14 correct?

15 MR. MYERS: No. This is going to be a
16 whole new porch. The existing porch is only five
17 by four. It's very difficult to get in and out of
18 the house. It's not covered. It's a hazard with
19 ice and whatnot buildup. This is a little bit
20 larger porch to accommodate easier access.

21 MR. HALL: So you're enlarging the
22 porch and then putting a roof over the porch.

23 MR. MYERS: Correct.

24 MR. HALL: Just want to make sure that
25 it's clear. And then the variance, the request is

1 for a five and a half foot variance. Actually the
2 property line is a little bit farther out. It's
3 actually an 11 foot variance is requested. The
4 prior variance of 30 feet is the setback. It's
5 kind of splitting hairs, so it's actually 11 foot
6 variance we're talking about tonight. And with
7 that, I have no further questions. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Correspondence.

9 MEMBER LONGO: So we mailed out 37
10 notices. Two were returned. There are no
11 objections. There are two approvals by some close
12 neighbors. Both approved it. Just approved.
13 That's all they said.

14 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Open it up to
15 the board. Yes.

16 MEMBER KRIEGER: I can't imagine a
17 front porch without a covering on it, so I approve
18 your request.

19 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Anybody else.
20 All right. Motion.

21 MEMBER SAMONA: Mr. Chair, I move that
22 we grant the variance sought in case number
23 PZ26-0046, sought by Dennis and Sally.
24 Denoyer, for an 11 foot front yard setback variance to
25 permit a covered roof over an existing front porch,

1 resulting in a 19 foot front yard setback Because the
2 petitioner has shown practical difficulty requiring the
3 ability to construct a roof over an existing porch to
4 accommodate accessible first floor living for the
5 occupants. Without the variance, the petitioner will be
6 unreasonably prevented or limited with respect to the
7 use of the property Because the existing porch cannot be
8 covered as designed by the project architect without
9 relief from the setback, limiting the applicant's
10 ability to create a weather protected, accessible entry
11 supporting first floor living. The property is unique
12 because of all the preexisting conditions and everything
13 you mentioned. The petitioner did not create the
14 condition because the existing porch's location within
15 the front yard setback predates the applicant's purchase
16 of the property. The relief granted will not
17 unreasonably interfere with adjacent or surrounding
18 properties because the roof addition covers the existing
19 porch footprint without further encroachment. And the
20 applicants have maintained the property's appearance and
21 value, I think, for the last 33 years. The relief is
22 consistent with the spirit and intent of the ordinance
23 because the addition does not increase the porch's
24 footprint or further extend into the setback beyond what
25 already exists And improves the property's

1 accessibility, practicality, and safety.

2 MR. LONG: I second that.

3 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

4 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

5 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

6 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

7 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

8 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

9 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

10 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

11 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

12 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

13 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

14 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

15 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion

16 carries.

17 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right. Next

18 case. PZ26-0047. Shirvanian Office Building.

19 The applicant is requesting a variance from

20 Section 5.2.12 of the City of Novi Zoning

21 Ordinance to reduce the required parking from 32

22 spaces to 26 spaces, resulting in a variance of 6

23 parking spaces. This property is zoned Town

24 Center (TC).

25 MR. SCOTT: My name is Allen Scott, and

1 I am here on behalf of the Shirvanians who can say
2 their own names.

3 MS. SHIRVANIAN: I'm Narine Shirvanian,
4 N-A-R-I-N-E, last name is S-H-I-R-V-A-N-I-A-N.

5 MR. SHIRVANIAN: And I'm Nick
6 Shirvanian, S-H-I-R-V-A-N-I-A-N.

7 MEMBER LONGO: So are any of you
8 attorneys?

9 MR. SHIRVANIAN: No.

10 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
11 the truth in this case?

12 MR. SCOTT: Yes.

13 MR. SHIRVANIAN: Yes.

14 MS. SHIRVANIAN: Yes.

15 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

16 MR. SCOTT: Thank you for having us in
17 tonight. When the documentation speaks about
18 asking for a variance from reducing six spaces,
19 this building, I'll throw it up there, you guys
20 probably have your own documentation. This
21 building exists today. The parking on the
22 property both that's out back and just this little
23 bit out front exists today. So this all exists
24 today. So what you have here is a Novi resident,
25 this man. Novi resident, Novi businessman. He

1 also built this building in 2009. And you can
2 see, back when it was Fonda Street, this man had
3 some faith in Novi and was going to build right
4 next to a swamp that now Novi is Crescent Drive
5 and has made rather importance to the up and
6 coming segment of the street and the master
7 planning there. They want to stay here, but
8 what's happening is first generation is moving the
9 second generation. The first generation was a
10 jeweler and he had his jewelry practice in this
11 entire building. But as he aging he's finding the
12 most important clientele that's important to him
13 and who has deeper pockets, and so he's able to
14 reduce his business to those important clients.
15 So he's only going to maintain this small portion
16 up front where he was the whole building, he's
17 going to maintain this -- perhaps some of you buy
18 your jewelry from this man today.

19 Now, he works so hard that he was able
20 to put his daughter through medical school
21 standing here before you. She now is a doctor.
22 She's currently practicing in Indiana, but would
23 like come back home. She and her husband both are
24 doctors, and they would like to have their own
25 business in the remainder of the footprint here.

1 But just as a point of clarity, like their father,
2 her father, this business, this medical practice
3 will be more of a boutique type practice. For my
4 primary care I was with a fellow quite a while ago
5 and he left the practice that I was seeing to do
6 this very thing, become like boutique or concierge
7 sort of where you could have a doctor kind of on
8 retainer, so if you need to call him at 3 a.m.,
9 they're on the phone or they're at your house,
10 this kind of thing. But that's what they're doing
11 here. So very appointment based, very specific,
12 you know, higher end clientele. So like father
13 like daughter in the same building,
14 appointment-based clientele.

15 That said, the number of spaces that
16 exist on this site today will certainly serve the
17 purposes of both of their businesses operating out
18 of the building. Current ordinance says they need
19 six more spaces, but unlike building a Discount
20 Tire in your backyard like the one gentleman.
21 Oops. Strike that from the record because that
22 will be on the record. This is pretty
23 straightforward and we would -- since it is
24 relief, we need to ask for it. That is what we'd
25 like to ask for, relief from six parking spaces to

1 continue to conduct business in this space in this
2 way.

3 That said, I will immediately give an
4 opportunity and my opinion to gain three spaces.
5 Many communities, Novi being one of them, requires
6 this drop-off type space. The only day a business
7 like this ever needs that is the day they move in
8 and the day they move out. So that said, they
9 could gain one space right there, and if said
10 truck ever pulled up that needed to maneuver its
11 way in there and back into that space, you'd have
12 to vacate a couple spots to do so. So I would say
13 we could gain one more space today right there.

14 Number two, and again, like my friend,
15 Alan, over here, I have a degree in architecture
16 Lawrence Tech as well, I'm familiar with green
17 space and all the requirements. This island
18 though is semi useless. If the island were moved,
19 we could gain two spaces there, and with no
20 hardship whatsoever, we just picked up three where
21 you're asking for six, but we need none. That's
22 kind of my speech. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: City?

24 MR. HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25 Yes, they're asking for a reduction in parking

1 spaces because the new math of the calculations
2 because they put a medical use in an existing
3 building, that's why there's a need for more
4 spaces that's required. So they're asking for
5 reduction of six spaces for that calculation. So
6 we appreciate the offering for three spaces. That
7 will have to be approved by the Planning
8 Department. I'm not sure we can do that in this
9 meeting, but they could definitely take their
10 advice if you could make those work in the future.

11 So just a question. For medical
12 purposes, are you going to have anybody stay the
13 night here?

14 MS. SHIRVANIAN: No.

15 MR. HALL: So it will just be
16 practicing kind of thing, so you're not going to
17 have overnight stays, you're not going to have
18 people needing parking through the night kind of
19 thing.

20 MS. SHIRVANIAN: No.

21 MR. HALL: So do you have any hardship
22 in the sense your business is going to need these
23 six spaces that will be needed?

24 MS. SHIRVANIAN: Not necessarily. We
25 are trying to kind of build a practice that is

1 more patient centered, and so that's why the
2 concept of concierge is coming in where patients
3 don't have to feel rushed. We are hoping to have
4 hour-long appointments, not waiting in the waiting
5 room for hours at a time. So it really -- our
6 goal would be that no one would be in the waiting
7 room, but maximum maybe one patient. And it would
8 be scheduled in a way throughout the day where if
9 it's my husband and I both working at the same
10 time, maybe two patients there, and then a third
11 in the waiting room. If we drove separately,
12 that's two additional cars, maybe a couple
13 employees as well. So really the spots that are
14 already present are more than enough for us.

15 MR. HALL: I asked our Planning
16 Department a similar question and they were saying
17 the same kind of thing. Because of this kind of
18 new model, maybe the zoning ordinance is archaic
19 to what your practice would be. So something to
20 consider when you're looking at the board. So no
21 further questions. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Correspondence.

23 MEMBER LONGO: Yes. We mailed out 28
24 notices. Four were returned. There no
25 objections, and no approvals.

1 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: We have one
2 remaining audience member. Do you have anything?
3 All right. Thank you. Open it up to the board.
4 Surprisingly, Joe has a question.

5 MEMBER SAMONA: Oh, come on. I didn't
6 use my questions the last one, so I'll use mine
7 this time. Actually I don't have a question. I
8 fully support this, and every single case, as
9 we've mentioned, is different and unique.
10 However, there are glaring similarities, and I
11 kind of smiled when you said that the only time
12 that this drop-off is going to be an issue is
13 moving in and moving out, because we had an
14 extremely similar one in June for the one on Ten
15 Mile and Taft. So I wholeheartedly and
16 resoundingly support this, and I think that this
17 is a no-brainer. But if I was a betting man, I
18 would have thought you were a lawyer.

19 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: He is well
20 dressed.

21 MEMBER THOMPSON: For of a question for
22 Alan. So if this goes through, are we rezoning
23 the property?

24 MR. HALL: No, sir.

25 MEMBER THOMPSON: It's just for this

1 particular use.

2 MR. HALL: Just this particular use.

3 And you're saying that because of their arguments
4 that they made tonight that you would allow the
5 six car reduction and spaces.

6 MEMBER THOMPSON: So as their medical
7 practice moves out and urgent care moves in or you
8 change a business.

9 MR. HALL: You would take it to this
10 use. Yeah, I think you would tie it because it's
11 a medical use going on there. I guess if someone
12 came in as a medical use after them it would still
13 hold.

14 MEMBER THOMPSON: My concern there
15 would be an urgent care could have people.

16 MR. HALL: Right. There could be. And
17 the other thing there could be is that we
18 mentioned that they might be able to find three
19 spaces if in the future they do need to find
20 spaces, maybe working on parking on the street,
21 there's opportunities, that way we can do some
22 construction in that regard if the need arises.

23 MS. KOLB: And Mr. Chair, if I may.
24 You can put conditions on variances. So if you
25 want to limit it so that if the use changes to

1 something else not medical, they definitely have
2 to come back because variances do run with the
3 land. So if you limit it by condition, just
4 saying medical use can have -- is allowed to
5 operate without those additional six spaces.

6 MEMBER THOMPSON: Wouldn't we have to
7 have medical and jewelry because there's two
8 businesses under one roof?

9 MS. KOLB: Probably not. Well, right
10 now there's an appropriate number of parking
11 spaces for a jewelry business, so it doesn't
12 impact them.

13 MEMBER THOMPSON: Got it.

14 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 Look forward to welcoming a new medical practice.

16 MEMBER SAMONA: How come everyone grins
17 when I do that?

18 MEMBER LONGO: He only uses five words.

19 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: I guess we're
20 ready for a motion.

21 MEMBER THOMPSON: I move that we grant
22 the variance in case PZ26-0047, sought for by
23 Shirvanian Office Building, for the six parking
24 spots because the petitioner has shown practical
25 difficulty, requiring 32 spaces instead of 26.

1 Without the variance, the petitioner would be
2 unreasonably prevented or limited with respect to
3 the use of the property, as there's no additional
4 room to build fresh parking spaces. The property
5 is unique, being on a angled lot. The petitioner
6 did not create the condition, again, because the
7 lot dimensions. The relief granted would not
8 unreasonably interfere with adjacent or
9 surrounding properties, because about half the
10 property dumps out into the street, with other
11 businesses to the other side. And the relief is
12 consistent with the spirit and the intent of the
13 ordinance, because of the lot shape and no room to
14 expand.

15 MEMBER LONGO: I think that we should
16 put a variance on there that if it changes from
17 medical, it can be reviewed.

18 MEMBER SAMONA: But there's another use
19 there, the jewelry.

20 MEMBER THOMPSON: So the variance
21 granted is subject to medical use only.

22 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: There you go.

23 MEMBER SAMONA: Actually, you know
24 what, I'm going to add one more question. What if
25 the jewelry business were to leave and the medical

1 business stays and the jewelry business becomes a
2 Mattress Firm store, would that affect the
3 variance?

4 MS. KOLB: It would be a change in use.

5 MEMBER SAMONA: Correct, but no, the
6 medical would stay, but the jewelry business would
7 become, I don't care what, a restaurant, something
8 else not related to the jewelry business, would
9 that affect this variance that we're granting?

10 MS. KOLB: How was the determination of
11 the 32 required spaces determined? Was it looking
12 at both businesses or only the medical?

13 MR. HALL: It was only the medical.
14 The total was both businesses, but I think that
15 was handled by the front parking. I think the
16 back parking is for the medical so that became the
17 issue. So I think it was based on medical.
18 Because the medical asked for more, that's why it
19 needed more.

20 MEMBER SAMONA: Would we be able to
21 amend to stay as something along the lines, and
22 I'll defer to the city attorney, something along
23 the lines --

24 MR. SCOTT: Before you make this next
25 proposal, may I also suggest, this man not only

1 has this daughter that he's created in Novi, he
2 also has a son, and the son's working for him. So
3 the son's going to continue the jewelry business.

4 The mattress store and all those other options --

5 MEMBER SAMONA: I'm trying to actually
6 protect him. Can we add in some language as so
7 long as the medical business is still there
8 regardless of what the other tenant is that this
9 is approved? If he did leave the jewelry
10 business, I'm supporting this. I don't want it to
11 affect the medical businesses that they're coming
12 for today. Then they'd have to come back again.
13 It wouldn't necessarily make sense.

14 MR. HALL: Well, that is true. So if,
15 let's say that the jewelry business exited the
16 building and it all became medical, then that
17 space would require some parking at a different
18 rate than a jewelry store would be. And so they
19 could end up needing one more space or something
20 like that, and have to come back for that
21 additional request for that reduction of space, if
22 that's makes sense.

23 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes, sir. Yes.

24 MR. SHIRVANIAN: I just recently put my
25 youngest son, he's 28 years old, I sent him to GIA

1 school in Los Angeles to learn the CAD program for
2 jewelry. So it's not something I want to -- this
3 is something I'm trying to pass to my kids as a
4 legacy from the building. I live in Novi. We
5 moved to Novi in '95 and we thought the building
6 was empty. We built it. Now my son's going to
7 continue the jewelry business, and my daughter's
8 going to continue the medical business. I live in
9 Novi. I own other properties in Novi. I love the
10 City of Novi. We don't want to go anywhere else.
11 The same thing with my son. He's taking over the
12 jewelry business. I think it's going to be
13 something left to my family, you know, hopefully.
14 I was in the jewelry business for 50 years. I
15 started out downtown Detroit in the David Whitney
16 building, you know. But we want to stay in Novi,
17 and it's not something we're going to turn into
18 not a mattress store but even a full complete
19 medical building. It will be of two uses, one,
20 the jewelry will stay and the medical is going to
21 be an addition, you know. It's going to stay.
22 We've been here years, and we plan on staying.

23 MEMBER SAMONA: Is there a specific
24 zoning code for jewelry stores or the stores of
25 that nature?

1 MS. KOLB: I don't think so. I think
2 it just falls under retail.

3 MEMBER SAMONA: Can we say -- I'm going
4 to stop talking right now.

5 MS. KOLB: Because remember, the TC
6 zoning district requires a site plan, so if that
7 were to change to something else, I mean they
8 would have to go through multiple approvals.

9 MEMBER SAMONA: Can we say it's
10 approved and would carry forward only for medical
11 use and so long as the other tenant remains retail
12 or no?

13 MS. KOLB: I don't think you need to.

14 MEMBER SAMONA: Okay. Then I'm going
15 to stop talking for real this time.

16 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

17 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

18 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

19 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

20 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

21 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

22 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

23 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

24 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

25 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

1 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

2 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

3 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion
4 carries.

5 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: The last one.
6 PZ26-0051. La-Z-Boy. The applicant is requesting
7 variances from Section 28-5(b)(1)b of the City of
8 Novi Sign Ordinance to permit two oversized halo
9 illuminated wall signs, sign HL.1 is proposed at
10 128.27 square feet. 65 square feet allowed, so
11 it's a variance of 63.27 square feet. And Sign
12 HL.2 is proposed at 95.73 square feet. 65 square
13 feet allowed. So a variance of 30.73 square feet.
14 This property is zoned Regional Center (RC).
15 Introduce yourself. Appreciate it.

16 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: Christine
17 Podzidowski. C-H-R-I-S-T-I-N-E,
18 P-O-D-Z-I-D-O-W-S-K-I.

19 MEMBER LONGO: Are you an attorney?

20 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: No.

21 MEMBER LONGO: Do you promise to tell
22 the truth in this case?

23 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: Yes.

24 MEMBER LONGO: Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All right. How

1 can we help you?

2 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: So La-Z-Boy has
3 changed their logo, and they want to do the signs
4 with the new logo. They currently had a previous
5 variance for larger signs. I was told they
6 couldn't reuse the variance, so we had to reapply
7 for another one. These signs, these new signs are
8 actually a little smaller than the existing signs
9 on the building, and we're just looking for
10 approval of the new signs.

11 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: City?

12 MR. HALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
13 They're looking for two variances tonight for two
14 different signs, reduction of sizes. As you
15 already said, the one size is, the variance is
16 63.27 square feet, and the other is the variance
17 is 30.73 square feet. So I think the reason why
18 is when you take the signs down, the variance goes
19 with the sign, and so you have to come back with
20 these signs. So it's going to be lit by halo
21 lighting?

22 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: Yes.

23 MR. HALL: Is it going to be any lit --
24 is the letters going to glow too or just
25 backlighting for halo?

1 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: I believe it's just
2 the halo.

3 MR. HALL: It's going to be the dark
4 letters with light behind that, right?

5 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: Yes.

6 MR. HALL: Is the light of the halo, is
7 that white?

8 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: Yes.

9 MR. HALL: Is it going to change colors
10 at all?

11 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: No.

12 MR. HALL: So it won't deteriorate from
13 material in the daytime to nighttime. It won't
14 change the look of the building.

15 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: No.

16 MR. HALL: Will the halo dance or have
17 any kind of animation to it?

18 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: No. It's stationary.

19 MR. HALL: With that, I have no further
20 questions. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Correspondence?

22 MEMBER LONGO: Yes. We mailed out 11
23 notices. One was returned. There were no
24 objections and no approvals.

25 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: I'll open it up

1 to the board.

2 MEMBER KRIEGER: Just to clarify, the
3 signs, the one that's the 128 square feet will be
4 facing the 12 Oaks Mall Road?

5 MS. PODZIDOWSKI: I believe that is the
6 front of the building. That is facing the 12 Oaks
7 Mall Road.

8 MEMBER KRIEGER: That's my only
9 question. I support your request. Thank you.

10 MEMBER THOMPSON: It's a cleaner look
11 and it takes up less space, so I can support that.

12 MEMBER JAPPAYA: I move that we grant
13 the variance in case number PZ26-0051, sought by
14 La-Z-Boy, for two halo illuminated wall signs
15 measuring 128.27 square feet and 95.73 square feet
16 because the petitioner has shown practical
17 difficulty, including limited visibility from Novi
18 Road, the Interstate 96 ramp, and 12 Oaks Mall.
19 Circulation, requiring wall sign area variances of
20 63.27 square feet and 30.73 square feet on the
21 basis of the following: The grant of relief will
22 not result in a use or structure that is
23 incompatible with, or unreasonably interferes
24 with, adjacent or surrounding properties; will
25 result in substantial justice being done to both

1 the applicant and adjacent or surrounding
2 properties; and is not inconsistent with the
3 spirit and intent of this chapter because the
4 signs will replace existing building signage, are
5 smaller than the signs currently on the building,
6 remain proportional to the building, and improve
7 identification without adding a new sign location.

8 MEMBER SAMONA: Second.

9 MS. NARDONE: Member Thompson?

10 MEMBER THOMPSON: Yes.

11 MS. NARDONE: Member Longo?

12 MEMBER LONGO: Yes.

13 MS. NARDONE: Member Krieger?

14 MEMBER KRIEGER: Yes.

15 MS. NARDONE: Member Samona?

16 MEMBER SAMONA: Yes.

17 MS. NARDONE: Chairperson Montague?

18 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Yes.

19 MS. NARDONE: Member Jappaya?

20 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Yes.

21 MS. NARDONE: Thank you. Motion

22 carries.

23 MEMBER SAMONA: Motion to adjourn.

24 MEMBER JAPPAYA: Second.

25 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Any other

1 matters? Everybody good?

2 MEMBER KRIEGER: Education class?

3 MS. NARDONE: We have to schedule that.
4 I'm working on it.

5 MEMBER SAMONA: I'll just add that any
6 of the members that are up for when your term is
7 expiring the first of next year, the end of this
8 year, that I think November something is the last
9 day to submit your I guess new application. So
10 just be sure of that. With that, I make a motion
11 to adjourn.

12 MEMBER KRIEGER: Second.

13 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: All in favor?

14 THE BOARD: Aye.

15 CHAIRPERSON MONTAGUE: Any opposed?

16 Thank you very much.

17 (The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY

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STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) SS
COUNTY OF OAKLAND)

I, Melinda R. Womack, Certified
Shorthand Reporter, a Notary Public in and for the
above county and state, do hereby certify that the
above deposition was taken before me at the time
and place hereinbefore set forth; that the witness
was by me first duly sworn to testify to the
truth, and nothing but the truth, that the
foregoing questions asked and answers made by the
witness were duly recorded by me stenographically
and reduced to computer transcription; that this
is a true, full and correct transcript of my
stenographic notes so taken; and that I am not
related to, nor of counsel to either party nor
interested in the event of this cause.



Melinda R. Womack, CSR-3611
Notary Public, Jackson County

My Commission expires: 06-22-2032

**Meeting
09/08/2026**

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