

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
APPROVED MINUTES
December 3, 2025

The meeting was held at Highland Township Auditorium, 205 N. John St, Highland, MI, 48357.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

David Gerathy, Chair
Michael Borg, Vice Chair
Anthony Raimondo, Secretary
Michael Zeolla, P.C. Liaison
Peter Eichinger
Robert Hoffman
Gary Childs
Chuck Benke, Alternate
Jacob Probe, Alternate

Kariline P. Littlebear, Zoning Administrator
Samantha George, Assistant Zoning Administrator

Visitors: 3

Chair Gerathy welcomed the public to the meeting and reviewed the procedures for addressing the Board, stating that four affirmative votes are required to approve a variance. If a variance is approved, the applicant has one year to act upon the variance.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. CASE NUMBER: 25-23
ENFORCEMENT:
ZONING: RPUD – Residential Planned Unit Developments
PARCEL #: 11-32-101-002
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1604 Turtle Creek
APPLICANT: Jose & Avelia Trevizo
OWNER: Jose & Avelia Trevizo
VARIANCE REQUESTED: A 21-foot variance from the required 100-foot rear yard setback to 79-feet provided.
(Sec. 7.02.C.5.)
This request is for a reduction of the rear yard setback for the construction of a pool and 3-foot cement apron.

Chair Gerathy introduced the case and asked if the applicant was present. Mrs. Littlebear stated that Mrs. Trevizo called to say that she and her husband will be out of town because they thought the meeting was on December 17, 2025. She also stated that her contractor will be out of town on family business starting December 17, 2025, and won't return until after the new year. She asked that her case be tabled to January 21, 2026.

Discussion from the Public:

None offered.

Motion:

Mr. Borg made a motion in Case #25-23, parcel # 11-32-101-002, commonly known as 1604 Turtle Creek, to table the case for the January 21, 2026, ZBA meeting. Mr. Childs supported the motion, and it was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

2. CASE NUMBER: 25-24
ENFORCEMENT:
ZONING: R3 – Single Family Residential
PARCEL #: 11-08-400-009
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 3563 Mantua Farms
APPLICANT: Michael Mantua
OWNER: Michael Mantua
VARIANCE REQUESTED: A 9-inch variance from the 48-inch maximum allowable height to 57-inches provided.
(Sec. 8.09.A.2)
This request is for an increase in the height of a fence in the required front yard.

Chair Gerathy introduced the case and asked if the applicant was present and, if so, to please step up to the podium. Mrs. Littlebear stated that Mr. Mantua is not present, and that she sent him a text message but hadn't received a reply yet. Mrs. George stated that she called him, but it went to voicemail, so she left a message. Chair Gerathy stated that they will move on to the next case to give Mr. Mantua time to arrive.

3. CASE NUMBER: 25-25
ENFORCEMENT:
ZONING: C-1 – Local Commercial
PARCEL #: 11-15-127-003
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 2800 N Milford Rd
APPLICANT: Phillips Signs & Lighting LLC
OWNER: AML Ventures LLC
VARIANCE REQUESTED: A 3-foot variance from the 6-foot maximum allowable height to 9-feet provided.
(Sec. 14.07. Table 14.2)
This request is for an increase in the height of a sign in the required front yard.

Chair Gerathy introduced the case and asked if the applicant was present and, if so, to please step up to the podium. He then asked the Zoning Administrator if there was anything new to add. Mrs. Littlebear stated that there was no public comment sent into the Planning Department prior to the meeting.

Discussion from the Applicant:

Ed Phillips, applicant representative, and Gary Landroche, property owner representative, each

stated that the practical difficulty on this parcel is a public safety concern due to the high vehicle speed on N. Milford Rd, the shrubbery blocking the sign, and the snowplow blocking the sign with snow which causes customers to miss the driveway and have to try to turn around on Milford Rd.

Discussion from the Public:

None offered.

Discussion from the Board:

Mr. Gerathy and Mr. Zeolla each stated that there is no practical difficulty because the owner could remove the hedges that block the sign, and the problem of visibility would be solved.

Mr. Borg agreed about the shrubs but noted that there are other signs in the area that are also taller than 6 feet.

Mr. Eichinger stated that he does not have a problem with this request. While visiting the site, he felt that 9-feet did not seem too tall.

Mr. Hoffman felt that the sign is too low currently and so he is in favor of this request.

Mr. Raimondo stated that the designated speed limit on N. Milford Rd does not constitute a public safety concern. He further stated that the snowplow could be directed to pile snow in a different location along with removing some of the shrubs.

Mr. Phillips stated that he didn't think that the shrubs would be allowed to be removed because the township required a certain amount of greenery along the road in front of businesses.

Mrs. Littlebear stated that the current ordinance for greenbelt landscaping requires one tree per every 30 linear feet of road frontage along with grasses, ground covers, and/or shrubs.

Mr. Zeolla stated that it might be a good idea to table the case so that the Zoning Administrator can review the approved site plan for this property to see if the shrubs are required to be there. He asked that Mrs. Littlebear also review the required number of parking spaces for the site. Then she can report back to the board members before a decision is made.

Motion:

Mr. Zeolla made a motion in Case #25-25, parcel # 11-15-127-003, commonly known as 2800 N Milford Rd, to table the case to the December 17, 2025, ZBA meeting so that Planning staff can review the approved site plan. Mr. Borg supported the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gerathy-yes, Mr. Borg-yes, Mr. Raimondo-yes, Mr. Zeolla-yes, Mr. Hoffman-no, Mr. Childs-yes, Mr. Eichinger-yes, (6 yes votes, 1 no vote). The motion passed and the case was tabled to December 17, 2025.

2. CASE NUMBER: 25-24
ENFORCEMENT:
ZONING: R3 – Single Family Residential
PARCEL #: 11-08-400-009
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 3563 Mantua Farms
APPLICANT: Michael Mantua
OWNER: Michael Mantua
VARIANCE REQUESTED: A 9-inch variance from the 48-inch maximum allowable height to 57-inches provided.
(Sec. 8.09.A.2)
This request is for an increase in the height of a fence in the

required front yard.

Chair Gerathy introduced the case. Mrs. Littlebear stated that Mr. Mantua has not responded to text or voicemail. She explained that the board could table the case to the next meeting or proceed with reviewing the case. She explained that the applicant does not have to be present for the board to proceed.

Discussion from the Public:

Chair Gerathy read into record a letter in support of this request from the following neighbors:

- Rick Clark, 2265 Middle Rd
- Scott Collins, 2311 Middle Rd
- Kristin Palermo, 3248 Mantua Farms
- Janemarie Coleman, 3280 Mantua Farms
- John Hocking, 3182 Mantua Farms
- Kelly Fedeles, 3364 Mantua Farms

Discussion from the Board:

Mr. Borg stated that he was okay with a variance along Middle Rd but was not comfortable with granting one along Mantua Farms.

Mr. Zeolla stated that he has questions for the applicant and does not want to make a decision on this case without the applicant present.

Mr. Gerathy stated that perhaps the case should just be tabled and then the Zoning Administrator would have time to find out why Mr. Mantua had not shown up.

Motion:

Mr. Hoffman made a motion in Case #25-24, parcel # 11-08-400-009, commonly known as 3563 Mantua Farms, to table the case to the December 17, 2025, ZBA meeting. Mr. Childs supported the motion, and it was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

MINUTES:

Mr. Borg made a motion to approve the minutes of November 19, 2025, as corrected. Mr. Zeolla supported the motion, and it was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

DISCUSSION:

ADJOURN:

At 8:20 p.m., Mr. Raimondo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Eichinger supported the motion, and it carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Raimondo
AR/kpl