

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
APPROVED MINUTES  
May 20, 2026

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- **absent**  
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: 1

Vice Chair Borg 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. Vice Chair Borg noted that he is sitting in for Mr. Gerathy due to his absence and the alternate, Mr. Probe, also sat in on this meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. CASE NUMBER: 26-09  
ENFORCEMENT: **Tabled from May 6, 2026**  
ZONING: LV – Lake and Village Residential  
PARCEL #: 11-09-476-024  
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 658 Meadow Dr  
APPLICANT: Timothy & Angela Mikula  
OWNER: Timothy & Angela Mikula  
VARIANCE REQUESTED: A 30-foot variance from the calculated 40-foot front yard setback to 10-feet provided; and  
A 4-foot variance from the calculated 5-foot west side yard setback to 1-foot provided.  
(Sec. 9.02.B.b.)  
This request is for a reduction of the front yard setback and the west side yard setback for the construction of a detached accessory structure.

**Motion:**

Mr. Raimondo made a motion to remove the case from the table. Mr. Childs supported the motion, and it was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

Vice Chair Borg introduced the case, and asked if the applicant was present and, if so, to please step up to the podium.

**Discussion from the Applicant:**

Mr. Mikula stated he had just moved to Highland and realized the existing structure was dangerous, so he removed it. When he applied for a building permit to replace the structure, he was informed a variance was necessary to place a new structure in the same location. He requested to build a 12 x 24 structure, one foot from the property line so that he doesn't block his driveway and 10 feet from the front property line so that it's in line with the neighboring detached accessory structures.

**Discussion from the Public:**

Mr. Borg stated that the public comment letters that were received for this case were read at the last meeting.

**Discussion from the Board:**

Mr. Probe stated he had read the approval letter from Oakland County Health Department and noted that the county had determined that the previous issues were resolved.

Mr. Eichinger stated the septic field is on the east side of the driveway so you can't do anything over there. He also noted that the other detached accessory structures within 500 feet are all lined up.

Mr. Borg stated this house is the only one with an attached garage in the neighborhood.

Mr. Raimondo stated that the neighbor's accessory structure is 10 feet off the front lot line and is 20 feet in length, whereas the applicant is asking for 1-foot off the lot line and a proposed structure of 24 feet in length. He then asked the applicant if he considered reducing the size of the structure to minimize the variance request.

Mr. Mikula said that if he moved the structure over any further it would stick out into the driveway and if it were any smaller then it would be too small.

Mr. Eichinger asked the applicant if it was a pre-built structure. Mr. Mikula stated he looked at both types but wanted the siding and roofing to match so building one would make things match better.

Mr. Probe was concerned about the 1-foot off the property line with the overhang of the garage. He stated that everything would run off the roof and go into the neighbor's yard. Mr. Raimondo stated the neighbor would not live there forever. Mrs. Littlebear reminded everyone that if a 1-foot variance is granted, that would include most of any kind of roof overhang because the ordinance states the eaves are allowed a minimal amount of encroachment.

Mr. Zeolla stated he was fine with the front yard variance and suggested that the existing attached garage simply be enlarged.

Mr. Borg noted that there would be two garages on this property whereas the rest of the neighborhood does not. He further stated that his home with the attached garage is the new standard that the township is moving towards for the Lakes and Village District. Mr. Mikula stated the proposed structure would be a man cave because the house is so small.

Mr. Raimondo stated that on the application, question number 2 was left unanswered and question number 3, the applicant stated this is of a personal nature. Mr. Mikula stated the house is small with no basement or storage spaces. Initially he thought of extending the existing attached garage, but it would encroach on the existing septic field. These reasons are why he chose the size and location for this request.

Mr. Probe asked what the size of the preexisting structure was. Mr. Mikula said it was a 10-foot by 10-foot structure.

Mr. Hoffman suggested that the approval of the 1-foot side yard setback should include the overhang of the structure.

Mr. Zeolla stated that having a preexisting non-conforming structure is not a reason to approve a variance. Ideally non-conformities should be phased out over time, so that properties come into conformance with the current standards.

Mr. Raimondo stated that this is LV lot of record with a current side yard setback of 5-feet, the proposed variance will not alter, harm, or cause any type of hardship, the septic system has been approved by Oakland County.

Mr. Borg noted that the location of the septic system poses a practical difficulty.

**Motion:**

Mr. Hoffman made a motion to approve Case #26-09, parcel # 11-09-476-024, commonly known as 658 Meadow Dr, for a 30-foot variance from the calculated 40-foot front yard setback to 10-feet provided, and a 4-foot variance from the calculated 5-foot west side yard setback to 1-foot provided with a stipulation that the eaves must meet the 1-foot setback, for the construction of a detached accessory structure, Mr. Eichinger supported the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Hoffman -yes, Mr. Probe -no, Mr. Zeolla -no, Mr. Childs -yes, Mr. Eichinger -yes, Mr. Borg-no, Mr. Raimondo-no, (3 yes votes, 4 no votes). The motion failed and the variances were denied.

**MINUTES:**

Mr. Probe made a motion to approve the minutes of May 6, 2026, as corrected. Mr. Raimondo supported the motion, and it was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Zeolla noted that the Planning Commission approved J & J of Highland site plan. He also noted that the Planning Commission started discussing the capital improvements plan as well as the upcoming demolition with Sheetz gas station.

Mrs. Littlebear stated that she has turned her resignation into the township Supervisor so the next meeting of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, will be her last meeting and her last day in the office would be June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

**ADJOURN:**

At 8:11 p.m., Mr. Raimondo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Childs supported the motion, and it carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Raimondo, Secretary  
AR/kpl