



Andy Schor
Mayor

LANSING BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Regular Meeting
Thursday, August 13, 2026, 6:30 PM
Neighborhood Empowerment Center
600 W Maple Street, Lansing, MI 48906

AGENDA

I. ROLL CALL

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION

A. BZA-4103.26, 1724 W. Rundle Avenue

Public Hearing – In consideration of a variance of 2 feet, 4 inches to the 3-foot side yard setback requirement for a carport on the east side of the house at 1724 W. Rundle Avenue

Motion – To approve a variance of 2 feet, 4 inches to the 3-foot side yard setback requirement for a carport on the east side of the house at 1724 W. Rundle Avenue

B. BZA-4104.26, 2801 E. Michigan Avenue

Public Hearing – In consideration of variances of 1 to the allowable number of wall signs and 23.75 square feet to the size limitation to permit 2 wall signs, totaling 173.5 square feet on the front wall of the collision center building at 2801 E. Michigan Avenue

Motion – To approve variances of 1 to the allowable number of wall signs and 23.75 square feet to the size limitation to permit 2 wall signs, totaling 173.5 square feet on the front wall of the collision center building at 2801 E. Michigan Avenue

V. OLD BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, June 11, 2026

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

IX. ADJOURNMENT

FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS, PLEASE GIVE 24 HOURS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING BY CALLING SUSAN STACHOWIAK IN THE PLANNING OFFICE AT 517-483-4085 OR BY DIALING (TTY 711).

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT/OWNER: Richard & Jessica Pugh
1724 W. Rundle Avenue
Lansing, MI 48910

REQUESTED ACTION: Variance to the 3-foot side yard setback requirement for a new, 10' x 35' detached carport

EXISTING LAND USE: Single Family Residential

EXISTING ZONING: "R-1" Residential

PROPERTY SIZE & SHAPE: 50' x 107' = 5,350 square feet
Rectangular shape

SURROUNDING LAND USE: N: Single Family Residential
S: Single Family Residential
E: Single Family Residential
W: Single Family Residential

SURROUNDING ZONING: N: "R-1" Residential
S: "R-1" Residential
E: "R-1" Residential
W: "R-1" Residential

MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION: The Design Lansing Comprehensive Plan designates the subject property for low density residential land use. W. Rundle Avenue is designated as a local road.

NATURE OF REQUEST

This is a request for a variance to permit a 10-foot wide by 35-foot-long detached carport at 1724 W. Rundle Avenue that would be setback 8 inches from the side/east property line. Section 1250.04.01 (a)(6) of the Zoning Ordinance requires a setback of 3 feet from a side property line for a detached carport. A variance of 2 feet, 4 inches to the side yard setback requirement is, therefore, being requested.

Permitted	Proposed	Variance
3-foot side yard setback	8-inch side yard setback	2 feet, 4 inches

ANALYSIS

Section 1244.06 (c)(1-4) of the Zoning Code sets forth the following criteria for the Board to consider in determining if there is a practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship that warrants approval of the requested variances:

1. The hardship results from the application of this Zoning Code to his or her lot, rather than from some other factor.
2. The hardship is not the result of his or her own actions.
3. The hardship is unique to the lot of the applicant.
4. If the owner of the lot complies with this Zoning Code, he or she can secure no reasonable return from, or make no reasonable use of, his or her property.

The application states:

“If the petition is not granted, we would not have another option for placing a carport or garage on the property to protect our vehicles from inclement weather. Our backyard is a low point and significantly floods 3-5 times per year (we have several pictures we can provide of the flooding). If we were to add a concrete slab in our backyard to accommodate a carport or garage it would impact additional flooding not only to our backyard but to our surrounding neighbors.”

The applicant bases the need for the variance on the inability to provide shelter for vehicles in compliance with the required 3-foot side yard setback as a result of the limited amount of space between the side wall of the house and the side property line and because of a grade change in the back yard that frequently floods thus, makes it an undesirable location for a garage or carport.

The applicant’s request is directly related to the ordinance provision which requires a 3-foot side yard setback for a detached accessory structure which includes a carport. With respect to the second criterion, the bases for the variance are not self-created. The current owners had no control over the placement of the house as they purchased the property in 2010, and the house was constructed in 1952. The applicant also had no control over the site grading in the backyard.

The third criterion involves a determination as to whether there is a unique features of the site that prevents or makes compliance the ordinance unreasonable difficult. It must be found that the “unique feature” makes compliance with the ordinance impractical or unreasonably difficult. By assuring that the practical difficulty is adequate to differentiate it from a claim that could be made by most other property owners, the intent of the ordinance standard is preserved. Correspondingly, the practical difficulty must be more than a matter of mere preference. The limited amount of space in the side yard to accommodate a carport next to the house is not a unique factor that would warrant relief from the ordinance. The topography in the backyard is a unique feature, however, and does make compliance with the ordinance impractical. A structure to provide shelter for a vehicles on residential properties is reasonable. In this case, the applicants are unable to construct a garage or carport as a result of a physical feature of the site that they had no control over, cannot change and is not common of most residential properties in the City.

The 4th and final criterion relates to whether there is a viable use of the property without the variance. This standard is typically applied to use variances, however, which require a much higher threshold than ‘dimensional’ variances such as those that are the subject of this request.

Impact Standards

The Ordinance also establishes four standards under Section 1244.06 (e) that must be satisfied relating to the impact of the variance on the surrounding properties and general public. These standards and the manner in which they relate to the request are as follows:

1. **The use will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the surrounding neighborhood.**

The proposed carport will not be contrary to the appropriate and orderly development of the surrounding neighborhood. The primary intent of the 3-foot side yard setback requirement is to prevent fires from spreading between structures on adjoining properties. The other intent is to preserve adequate space to maintain the property between a structure and the common property line. In this case, since the proposed carport is made of metal and not attached to the house, it will be no more of a fire hazard than if it were a wood structure that met the 3-foot side yard setback. With regard to maintenance, the east side of the carport that will run parallel to the common, side property line will be completely open, thus allowing for maintenance of the grounds.

2. **The use will be of a nature that will make vehicular and pedestrian traffic no more hazardous than is normal for the district involved.**

The variance will have no impact on vehicular or pedestrian traffic in the area.

3. **The use will be designed to eliminate a possible nuisance emanating therefrom.**

The proposed variances will not generate any nuisances.

4. **The use will not interfere with or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent land and structures or unreasonably affect their value.**

Since there is a unique feature of the site involving topography that has created flooding issues in the backyard, that is not common of most other properties in the City, approval of the variance will not set a negative precedent for future request to vary the side yard setback requirement for an open carport.

SUMMMARY & FINDINGS

This is a request for a variance to permit a detached carport at 1724 W. Rundle Avenue that would be setback 8 inches from the side/east property line. Section 1250.04.01 (a)(6) of the Zoning Ordinance requires a setback of 3 feet from a side property line for a detached carport. A variance of 2 feet, 4 inches to the side yard setback requirement is, therefore, being requested.

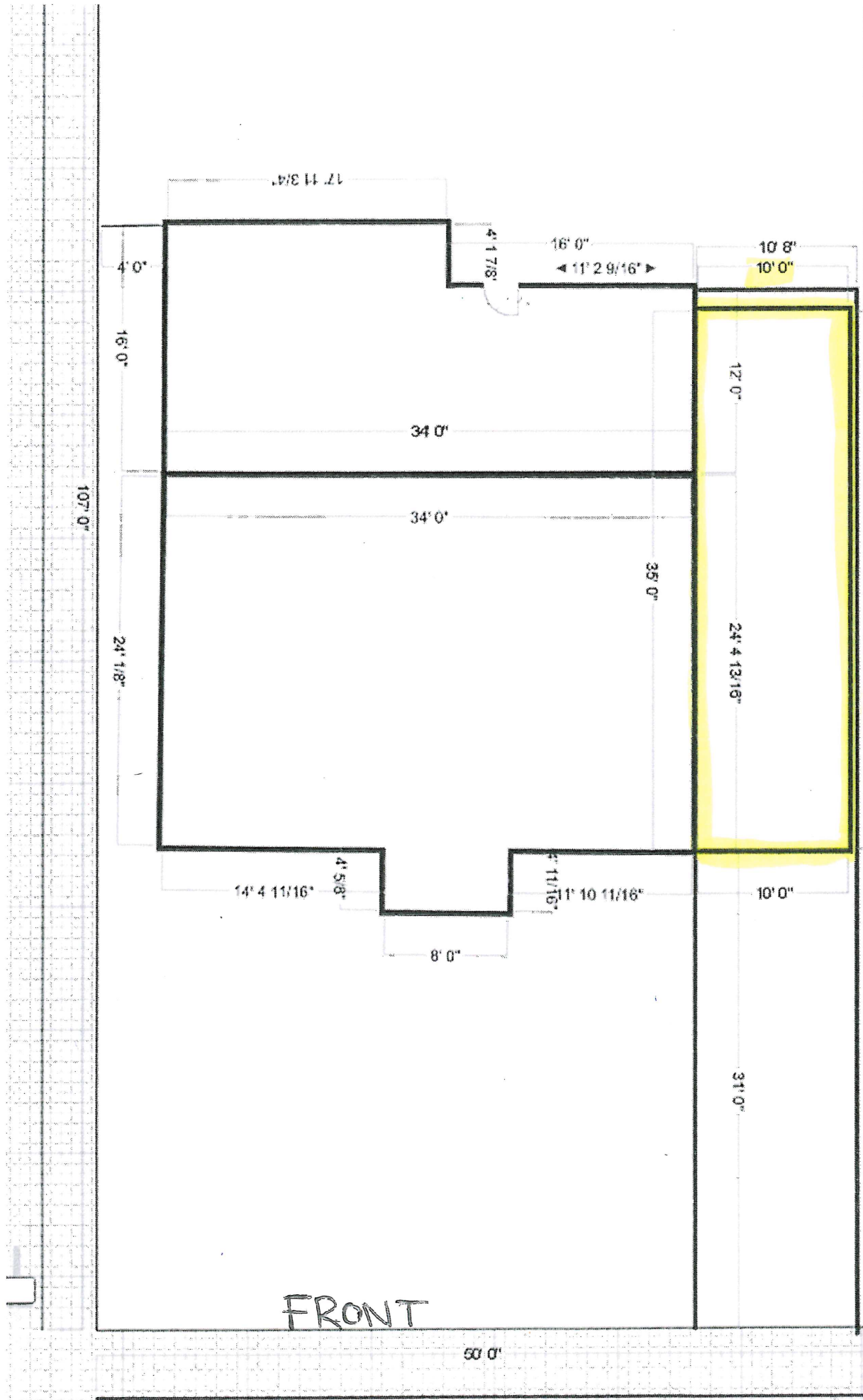
The requested variance complies with the applicable practical difficulty/unnecessary hardship and impact criteria listed in Sections 1244.06 (c) and 1244.06 (e) of the Zoning Ordinance. More specifically, there is a unique feature of the site involving topography in the backyard that warrants relief from the side yard setback ordinance requirement to permit an open carport for sheltering vehicles.

RECOMMENDATION

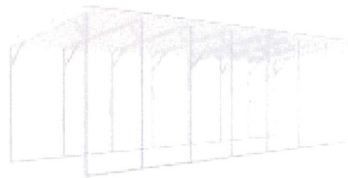
Based on the information and findings described in this report, staff recommends approval of the variance of 2 feet, 4 inches to the side yard setback requirement to permit a carport that would be open along its east side and located 8 inches from the side/east property line at 1724 W. Rundle Avenue, with the condition that the carport does not extend into the front yard any further than the roof over the front porch.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak
Zoning Administrator

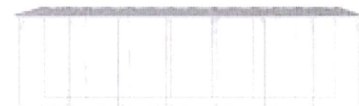
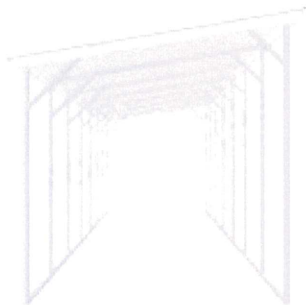


PERSPECTIVE VIEW



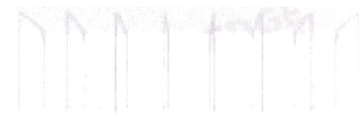
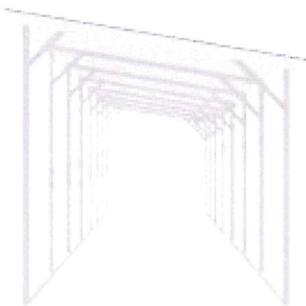
FRONT

LEFT



BACK

RIGHT













GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Phillips Sign & Lighting, Inc.
40920 Executive Drive
Harrison Township, MI 48045

OWNER: Feldman Automotive Group
30400 Lyon Center Drive East
New Hudson, MI 48165

LOCATION: The site is located at the northwest corner of the E. Michigan/N. Howard Street intersection. It is one of 5 parcels that collectively comprise the Feldman Chevrolet vehicle dealership.

REQUESTED ACTION: Variances to the size and allowable number of wall signs on the front wall of the collision center building at 2801 E. Michigan Avenue

EXISTING LAND USE: Feldman Chevrolet Vehicle Dealership/Collision Center

EXISTING ZONING: "MX-2" Mixed-Use Community Center

PROPERTY SIZE & SHAPE: 180,355 square feet - Irregular shape

SURROUNDING LAND USE: N: Commercial (additional Feldman uses)
S: Commercial
E: Freeway/Commercial
W: Commercial (additional Feldman uses)

SURROUNDING ZONING: N: "MX-2" Mixed-Use Community Center
S: Lansing Township Commercial Zoning
E: "MX-2" Mixed-Use Community Center
W: "MX-2" Mixed-Use Community Center

MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION: The Design Lansing Comprehensive Plan designates the subject property as "Community Mixed-Use Center". E. Michigan Avenue is designated as an activity corridor and N. Howard Street is designated as an arterial corridor.

NATURE OF REQUEST

This is a request for variances to permit 2 wall signs, totaling 173.5 square feet on the front wall of the collision center building at 2801 E. Michigan Avenue (Feldman Chevrolet vehicle dealership). Sections 1310.12 (a)(5) & (9) of the Sign Ordinance permit 1 sign on each building wall, the total square footage of which cannot exceed 150 square feet. Variances of 1 to the allowable number of signs on the front (east) wall of the building and 23.5 square feet to the allowable size are therefore, being requested.

Permitted	Proposed	Variance
1 wall sign on each of the 4 walls of the building	2 wall signs on the front (east) wall of the collision center building	1 wall sign
150 square feet of wall signage for the collision center building	173.5 square feet of wall signage on the collision center building	23.5 square feet

ANALYSIS

Section 1244.06 (c)(1-4) of the Zoning Code sets forth the following criteria for the Board to consider in determining if there is a practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship that warrants approval of the requested variances:

1. The hardship results from the application of this Zoning Code to his or her lot, rather than from some other factor.
2. The hardship is not the result of his or her own actions.
3. The hardship is unique to the lot of the applicant.
4. If the owner of the lot complies with this Zoning Code, he or she can secure no reasonable return from, or make no reasonable use of, his or her property.

The applicant bases the need for the variances on the configuration of the front wall of the building and the location of the building on the site. The proposed changes involve removal of the canopy on the front wall of the building where the existing signage is located. The canopy allows the signs to be located next to each other where they can be treated as one sign, the square footage of which is calculated by drawing a rectangle around the outermost parts of the signage. The applicant asserts that the overhead door in the center of the building as depicted on the attachment limits the ability to place the signs next to each other so that they can be treated as one. With respect to the size, the applicant considers that the location of the building on the site necessitates the additional square footage so that it can be identified from the N. Howard Street and E. Michigan Avenue roadways. The subject building is located approximately 200 feet from N. Howard Street and 450 feet from E. Michigan Avenue.

The applicant's request is directly related to the ordinance provisions restricting the signage to 1 wall sign on the front wall of the building with a maximum size of 150 square feet. The request is to permit 2 signs on the front wall of the building totaling 173.5 square feet in area. With respect to the second criterion, the variances could be considered self-created since, according to the application, they are primarily based upon removal of the canopy on the front wall of the building. There is nothing requiring removal of the existing canopy and nothing preventing a new canopy from being installed. In addition, while it would require some reconfiguration of the signs, there is adequate space higher on the wall (above the overhead door) where the signs could be placed closer together to make it 1 wall sign, and the size reduced to bring it within the allowable 150 square feet.

The third criterion involves a determination as to whether there is a unique feature of the site/building that warrant relief from the ordinance restrictions. It must be found that the “unique feature” makes compliance with the ordinance impractical or unreasonably difficult. By assuring that the practical difficulty is adequate to differentiate it from a claim that could be made by most other property owners, the intent of the ordinance standard is preserved. Correspondingly, the practical difficulty must be more than a matter of mere preference. In this case, there is nothing unique about the subject property or the building that warrants the additional signage being requested. While the building is located a substantial distance (450 +/- feet) from E. Michigan Avenue, the subject building is barely visible from that direction. The front wall of the building faces east and although the building is located approximately 200 feet from N. Howard Street, the signage allowed under the ordinance will be clearly visible from that direction, just as it is with the existing signage as evidenced by the attached photographs.

The fourth and final criterion relates to whether there is a viable use of the property without the variance. This standard is typically applied to use variances, however, which require a much higher threshold than ‘dimensional’ variances such as those that are the subject of this request.

Impact Standards

The Ordinance also establishes four standards under Section 1244.06 (e) that must be satisfied relating to the impact of the variance on the surrounding properties and general public. These standards and the manner in which they relate to the request are as follows:

1. **The use will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the surrounding neighborhood.**

The proposed signs are contrary to the intent of the Sign Ordinance. The intent of the Ordinance restrictions is to provide adequate signage to identify businesses while limiting the number and size to decrease visual clutter and prevent signs from becoming the dominant feature of a building. In this case, the proposed signs could be reduced in size and clustered together so that each one is not considered to be a separate wall sign. If the 2 signs were clustered together, they would be considered one sign, and the square footage would be determined by drawing a rectangle around the outermost parts of the signs. The signs would require some reconfiguration and a slight reduction of the square footage. There is nothing about the building that would prevent these changes, thus eliminating the need for the variances and the creation of a negative precedent where future requests to vary the wall sign restrictions are concerned.

2. **The use will be of a nature that will make vehicular and pedestrian traffic no more hazardous than is normal for the district involved.**

The variances will have no impact on vehicular or pedestrian traffic in the area. The signage allowed under the ordinance is more than sufficient to direct customers to the collision center building which is located in the center of the Feldman Chevrolet site. A collision center is a destination as opposed to the type of use where signage is necessary for advertising purposes to attract customers.

3. **The use will be designed to eliminate a possible nuisance emanating therefrom.**

The proposed variances will not generate any nuisances.

4. **The use will not interfere with or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent land and structures or unreasonably affect their value.**

Since there is nothing unique about the site or the subject building that warrants additional signage, approval of the variances could set a negative precedent with regard to similar requests in the future.

SUMMMARY & FINDINGS

This is a request for variances to permit 2 wall signs, totaling 173.5 square feet on the front wall of the collision center building at 2801 E. Michigan Avenue (Feldman Chevrolet vehicle dealership). Sections 1310.12 (a)(5) & (9) of the Sign Ordinance permit 1 sign on each building wall, the total square footage of which cannot exceed 150 square feet. Variances of 1 to the allowable number of signs on the front wall of the building and 23.5 square feet to the allowable size are therefore, being requested.

The requested variances do not comply with the applicable practical difficulty/unnecessary hardship and impact criteria listed in Sections 1244.06 (c) and 1244.06 (e) of the Zoning Ordinance. More specifically, there is nothing unique about the building or site that warrants the additional signage requested by the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information and findings described in this report, the staff recommendation is to deny the requested variances.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak
Zoning Administrator

Building Frontage 70' - East Elevation



20 ft

70 ft

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \left[\begin{array}{c} 51.30' \\ \text{FELDMAN} \end{array} \right] + \left[\begin{array}{c} 42.21' \\ \text{COLLISION} \\ \text{CENTER} \end{array} \right] = 173.5 \text{ Sq. Ft.} \\
 87.1 \text{ Sq. Ft.} \qquad \qquad \qquad 86.4 \text{ Sq. Ft.} \qquad \qquad \qquad 9.1\% \text{ Of Bldg. Facade}
 \end{array}$$

Item #1-R1
TOTAL SIGN AREA: 173.5 Sq. Ft.
(2- Shapes)

Wall Sign
Channel Letters & "FLAG" Panel
Wall Sign
Channel Letters & Capsules

Lead #: P21006808 Job #: _____
PROJECT: Feldman Automotive-Lansing
FILE: Feldman Collision-Wall 1-R1
SITE ADDRESS: 2801 E Michigan Avenue,
Lansing, MI. 48912
LEAD: EP LAYOUT: CG DATE: 6-24-26
REVISION:

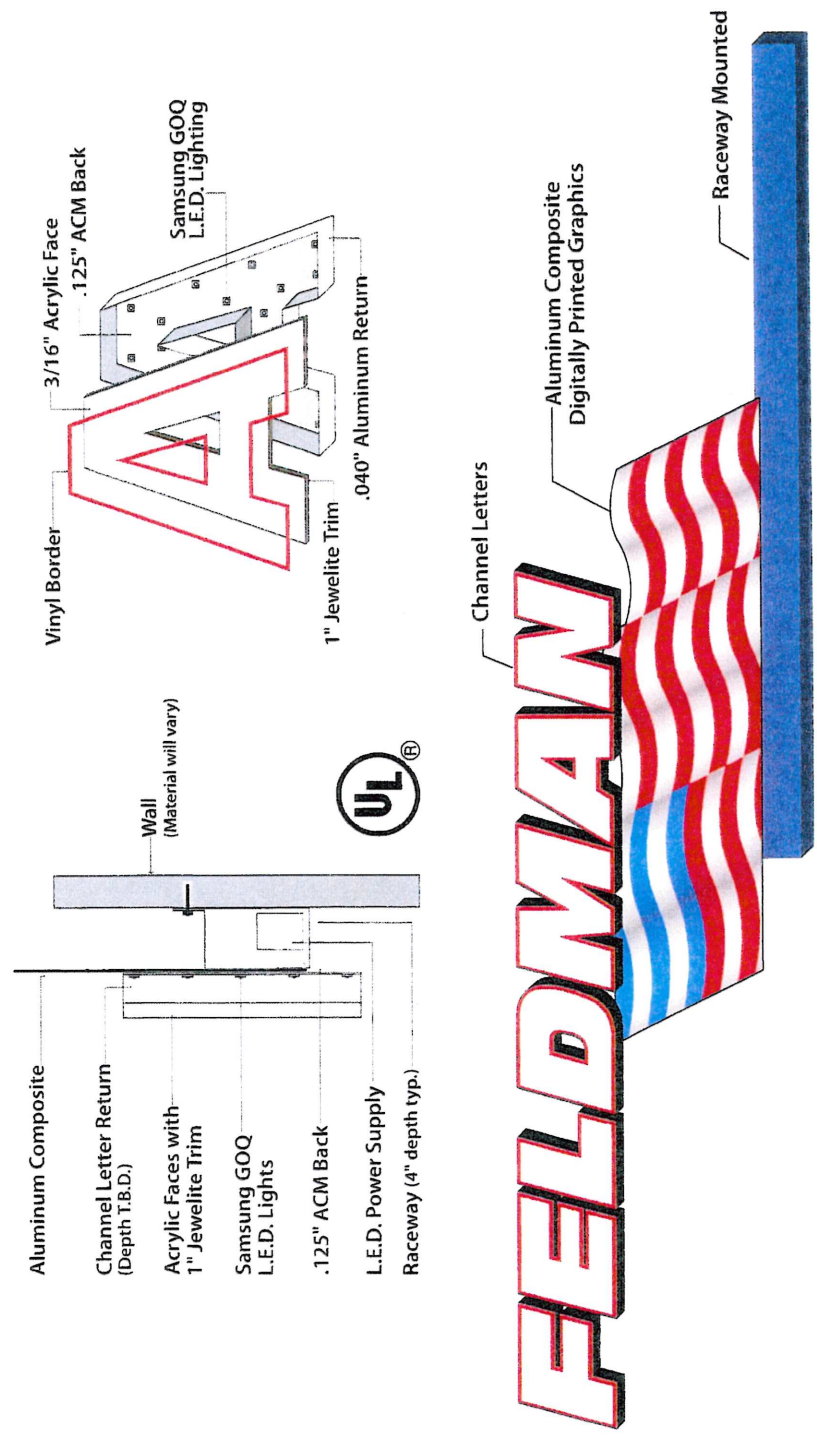
Item #1-R1
TOTAL SIGN AREA: 87.1 Sq. Ft.

Wall Sign
Channel Letters & "FLAG" Panel

Lead #: P21006808 Job #: _____
PROJECT: Feldman Automotive-Lansing
FILE: Feldman Collision-Wall 1-R1
SITE ADDRESS: 3801 E Michigan Avenue,
Lansing, MI. 48912
LEAD: EP LAYOUT: CG DATE: 6-24-26
REVISION: CG 6-30-26



ENLARGED SIDE VIEW



- Qty: 1 Set
- A "FELDMAN"
3" Depth Aluminum
Channel Letters
Acrylic Faces
Vinyl Outline
Jewelrite Trim
Internal LED Illuminaion
 - B 6mm Aluminum Composite
Routed to Shape
Seamed Where Needed
Digitally Printed Graphics
Laminate Overlay
Raceway Mounted to
Wall - Painted
 - C "COLLISION CENTER"
3" Depth Aluminum
Channel Letters
Acrylic Faces
Vinyl Outline
Jewelrite Trim
Internal LED Illumination
Raceway Mounted-Painted
 - D "STRIPES"
5" Depth Aluminum Capsules
Red Acrylic Faces
Jewelrite Trim
Internal RED LEDs
Remote Mounted

Item #1-R1

TOTAL SIGN AREA: 86.4 Sq. Ft.

Wall Sign
Channel Letters & Capsules

Lead #: P21006808 Job #: _____
PROJECT: Feldman Automotive-Lansing
FILE: Feldman Collision-Wall 1-R1
SITE ADDRESS: 2801 E. Michigan Avenue,
Lansing, MI. 48912
LEAD: EP LAYOUT: CG DATE: 6-24-26
REVISION: CG 6-30-26

Qty: 1 Set

- A "FELDMAN"
3" Depth Aluminum
Channel Letters
Acrylic Faces
Vinyl Outline
Jewelrite Trim
Internal LED Illuminaion
- B 6mm Aluminum Composite
Routed to Shape
Seamed Where Needed
Digitally Printed Graphics
Laminate Overlay
Raceway Mounted to
Wall -Painted
- C "COLLISION CENTER"
3" Depth Aluminum
Channel Letters
Acrylic Faces
Vinyl Outline
Jewelrite Trim
Internal LED Illumination
Raceway Mounted-Painted
- D "STRIPES"
5" Depth Aluminum Capsules
Red Acrylic Faces
Jewelrite Trim
Internal RED LEDs
Remote Mounted



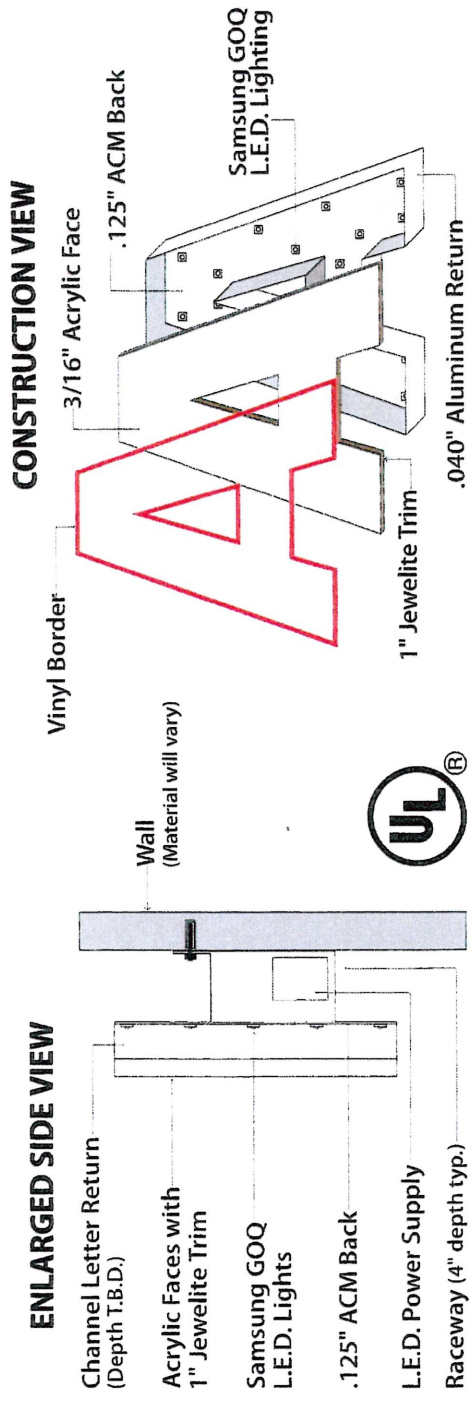
phillips sign
& lighting

40920 Executive Drive, Harrison Twp., MI 48045
586.468.7110
phillipssign.com



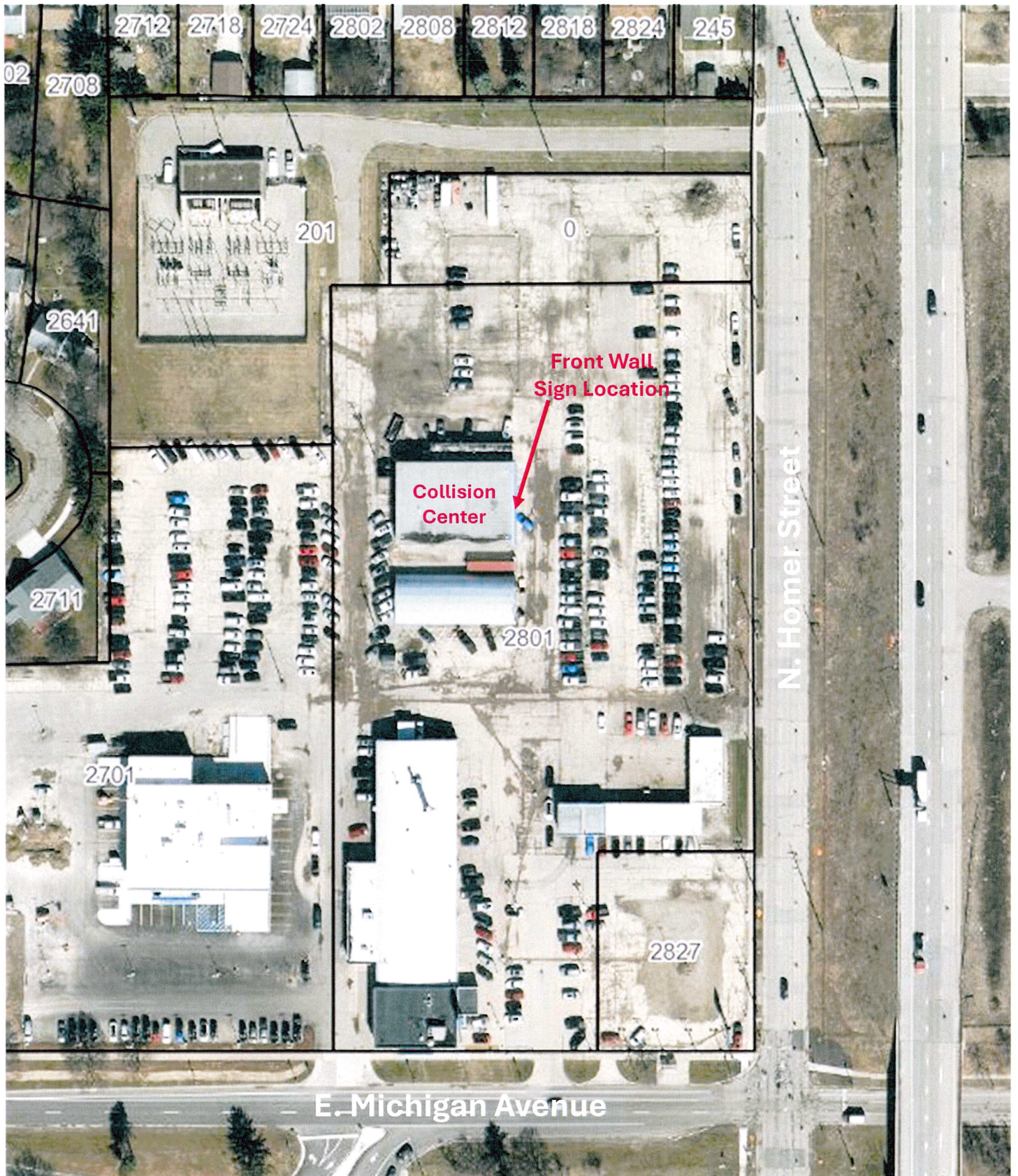
COLLISION - Average Height: 24.5" / Average Width: 24.7" / Stroke: 9.3"

CENTER - Average Height: 15.1" / Average Width: 17.6" / Stroke: 5.6"









**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Thursday, June 11, 2026, 6:30 P.M.
600 W. Maple Street, Lansing MI**

DRAFT

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Alling at 6:32 p.m.

Present: M. Alling, M. Jackson, H. Lowry, M. Rice, S. Robertson

Absent: K. Berryman, B. Fryling, C. Iannuzzi

Staff: S. Stachowiak

A quorum of at least five members was present, allowing voting action to be taken.

II APPROVAL OF AGENDA – The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION

A. BZA-4102.26, 801 S. Holmes Street

Public Hearing – To receive public comment on a request for a variance to permit a “place of assembly” at 801 S. Holmes Street which does not have frontage on an arterial, suburban or activity corridor as required by Section 1243.03 of the City of Lansing Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Stachowiak presented the staff report for the variance request to permit use of the 1,519 square foot, single story building at 801 S. Holmes Street for a live music venue, which is considered a “place of assembly” by Zoning Ordinance definition. She explained that the subject property is zoned “MX-1 Mixed-Use Neighborhood Center, which district permits places of assembly with the condition that the site has at least one property line abutting an arterial, suburban, or activity corridor (Zoning Ordinance, Section 1243.03). She said that the subject property abuts S. Holmes Street and E. Malcolm X Street, both of which are classified as local roads.

Ms. Stachowiak recommended denial of the requested variance. She stated that the issue in this case is not one of practical difficulty involving a unique physical feature of the site but whether the variance could be approved while upholding the intent of the ordinance. She stated that places of assembly are permitted in all commercial zoning districts with the condition that the site has at least one property line abutting an arterial, suburban, or activity corridor. Ms. Stachowiak explained that the intent of this requirement is to concentrate these types of uses in areas that are predominantly commercial and accessed via roadways designed to carry the highest volumes of traffic as opposed to permitting them in residential neighborhoods where they can generate noise and add traffic to roadways that are primarily intended to serve area residents. She said that a variance to

permit a place of assembly and a live music venue, in particular in an area that is almost exclusively residential and is accessed via two local roads, would be completely contrary to the intent and purpose of the ordinance and thus, it cannot be determined that denial of the variance would cause an unnecessary hardship on the applicant. She also said that there are several low-impact commercial businesses that could be established in the building including office retail, and personal service uses such as salons, barber shops and tattoo parlors that would allow for reasonable use thereof.

Ms. Alling opened the public hearing.

Alexandra Saenz, applicant, spoke in support of her request. She stated that she previously had a live music home venue that operated without any issues. Ms. Saenz said that the proposed venue will be alcohol free, will be closed by 10:00 and they will abide by the City's noise ordinance. She also said that the intent is to improve the property and give back to the community. Ms. Saenz questioned why the Fledge is allowed to operate a music venue on a local street. In response to a question from Mr. Jackson, Ms. Saenz said that the current occupancy limit for the building is 99.

Diane Marvin, spoke in opposition to the variance. She said that she lives in the neighborhood and Malcolm X is not a safe street given the volume of traffic and excessive speeds.

Harry Oman, spoke in opposition to the variance expressing concerns about increased traffic on Malcolm X and the noise generated by the proposed live music venue, particularly during weekdays when people are trying to sleep.

Ariella Zanon, spoke in support of the variance. She stated that the building at 801 S. Holmes has been vacant for a very long time and the variance will allow it to be put back into use so that the owner can continue to improve the site. She also said that the musicians will help to manage the venue and ensure compliance with the noise ordinance.

Jessica Hughes, spoke in support of the variance. She said that the area is already noisy because of the freeway and the active railroad line just north of the subject property.

Jimmy Coyer, spoke in support of the variance. He said that he lives next to the bike cooperative and people park on the street all the time as do the patrons of the Avenue on E. Michigan Avenue. He also said that the applicant has already made several improvements to the subject property.

Caleb King, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that he and his band practice in their garage and there have never been any noise complaints.

Andrew Jeglic, spoke in support of the request. He stated that the music venue would not be more disruptive to the neighborhood than the railroad to the north. He also spoke about the art that has been displayed in the building and the ramp that has been installed.

Jacob Bahl, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that the traffic issues being raised are separate from the issue at hand. He said that patrons of the businesses along E. Michigan Avenue park on the side streets without disrupting the residents.

Erin Riley, spoke in support of the requested variance. She stated that the community benefits from the live music venue as it is a sober facility and a place where young people can express themselves in various artistic ways.

Nathan Iverson, spoke in support of the requested variance. He spoke about the benefits of the proposed live music venue and stated that zoning should not interfere with the community art scene.

Ben Ackley, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that the applicant's live music venue is a supportive place for the local art scene and the only venue that is available to people of all ages as it does not permit the sale or consumption of alcohol.

Jennifer Toms, spoke in support of the requested variance. She stated that the music venue provides a valuable resource for local musicians and a safe place for the arts to flourish in the City of Lansing.

Nicholas W. Mere, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that the area does not have a residential feel to it and the traffic and noise concerns are a matter of enforcement by the Lansing Police Department.

Colleen Kelley, spoke in support of the requested variance. She said that she owns the Avenue music venue on E. Michigan Avenue and it does serve alcohol. She stated that having a sober venue provides opportunities for young musicians who would not be permitted in establishments that serve alcohol.

Jackie Jones, spoke in opposition to the request. She spoke about the already high volumes of traffic on Malcolm X Street and the number of school age children in the area. Ms. Jones stated that she is supportive of fostering local talent, but the subject property is just not the right location as it is in a predominantly residential neighborhood.

Cloud Kelley, spoke in support of the requested variance. She spoke about the need for a venue that allows young people to display their musical talents as that is something that is lacking in the City at this time.

Jacob Nevin, spoke in support of the requested variance. He said that it is disingenuous to assume that a live music venue will be disruptive to the surrounding residents.

Diana Camarno, spoke in support of the requested variance. She said that the venue has about 100 people on its biggest night and all leave as soon as it is over. She added that the entire event from people arriving until everyone leaves is between 4 to 6 hours.

Patrick Williams, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that the applicant has made improvements to the property which is good for the surrounding neighborhood. He also said that noise is not an issue as they will adhere to the ordinance restrictions.

Ally Fies, spoke in support of the requested variance. She stated that vacant buildings have detrimental impacts on neighborhoods and vehicles related to residential properties create noise.

Fred McLaughlin, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that some of the zoning ordinance restrictions are simply based on opinion and have no foundation to back them up.

Luke LaFontain, spoke in support of the requested variance. He stated that he is a member of a band and supports having a safe place for young people to display their talents.

Gene Marvin, spoke in support of the requested variance. He spoke about parking, traffic, noise and safety concerns. Mr. Marvin stated that it is just not the right location for the venue.

Seeing no one else wished to speak, Ms. Alling closed the public hearing.

Motion – Mr. Lowry made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rice to approve the request for a variance to permit a “place of assembly” at 801 S. Holmes Street which does not have frontage on an arterial, suburban or activity corridor as required by Section 1243.03 of the City of Lansing Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Rice stated that the Board must make decisions based upon the criteria set forth in the ordinance for evaluating variance requests. He said that authorizing a variance that is contrary to the intent of the ordinance essentially changes the ordinance as it sets a precedent for approval of future requests to vary the standard.

Mr. Jackson questioned whether E. Malcolm X Street is appropriately designated as a local road given the speeds at which motorists travel and the volume of traffic and non-residential uses that it serves. He asked how the road classifications are determined.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the City hired a professional planning firm to develop the zoning ordinance which includes a road classification map. She said that it is determined by traffic volumes, speed limits, the roadway design and the type of traffic that the roadway primarily serves. Ms. Stachowiak said that roads that primarily serve residential traffic are classified as local roads whereas commercial corridors such as Cedar Street, M. L. King, S. Pennsylvania, and N. Grand River Avenue are the types of thoroughfares where places of assembly would be permitted.

Mr. Lowry spoke in support of the variance request stating that an assembly use on the subject property would not be contrary to the intent of the ordinance since E. Malcolm X

may not be classified as such but functions as a major thoroughfare given the volume of traffic and the high speeds at which motorists travel in the area. He said that there have been concerns expressed about the noise that could be generated by the music venue and yet, the area is already impacted by noise from the active rail lines and the freeway to the north. He also said that at one point the City authorized a church on the property which is also a place of assembly and can have the same impact on a neighborhood as the proposed live music venue.

Mr. Robertson stated that there is no support from the neighborhood for the proposed use.

He said that he chose to live in Old Town, which is a commercial/mixed-use area that has entertainment venues and thus, a lot of on-street parking but it is what the residents of that area expect. Mr. Robertson stated that the residents surrounding the subject property did not expect to have a live music venue in their neighborhood when they chose to live in the area.

Mr. Lowry and Mr. Jackson voted yes, and Mr. Rice and Mr. Robertson voted no on the motion to approve the variance.

Ms. Alling passed the gavel to Mr. Rice and made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lowry to table the variance request. On a voice vote, the motion carried 5-0. BZA 4102.26 was tabled.

Ms. Alling stated that she would like input from the other Board members who are not present at this meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS – None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Excused Absences

Mr. Lowry made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to grant excused absences for Mr. Berryman, Mr. Fryling, and Mr. Iannuzzi. On a voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, May 14, 2026

Mr. Rice made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to approve the May 14, 2026, meeting minutes, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

IX. ADJOURNMENT AT 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator