

**WINNETKA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
JULY 13, 2026**

Zoning Board Members Present:

Matt Bradley, Chairman
Lynn Hanley
Bob Lind
Mike Nielsen
Michael Ritter

Zoning Board Members Absent:

Mark Haller
Kathryn Leister

Village Staff:

Scott Mangum, Director of Community Development
Ann Klaassen, Assistant Director of Community
Development
Christopher Marx, Associate Planner

Call to Order & Roll Call:

Chairman Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Roll call was taken of the Board Members present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes.

Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to approve the April 13, 2026, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the April 13, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Mr. Nielsen. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

NAYS: None

Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to approve the June 8, 2026, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the June 8, 2026, meeting minutes was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Mr. Lind. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

NAYS: None

Community Development Report.

Mr. Mangum provided the Board with an update on several items since the Board's last meeting. He stated the Village Council denied the special use permit application to install fencing at the Centennial dog beach on June 9. He stated the Village Council approved a minor change to the One Winnetka development on June 16 to allow outdoor dining for the Ballyhoo restaurant tenant space. Mr. Mangum stated the Village Council received a planned development concept plan presentation for 455 Linden Avenue on July 7. He noted the Village Council also introduced an ordinance to generally prohibit short-term rentals of less than 60 days. Mr. Mangum stated former post office site open houses were held in person on June 9 and June 15, and a virtual open house remains available online through the end of July. No questions were raised at this time.

Continued Cases:

a. **Case No. 26-07-V2: 286 Ridge Avenue:** An application seeking approval of a zoning variation to allow construction of a swimming pool at 286 Ridge Avenue. The requested variation would permit the proposed pool to provide less than the minimum required corner yard setback from the north property line along Mt. Pleasant Street. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request. This item was continued from the April 13, 2026, May 11, 2026, and June 8, 2026, Zoning Board of Appeals meetings.

The Applicant was not present. Mr. Marx stated the Applicant had not confirmed whether the matter should proceed or be continued in his absence. Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to continue the matter to the August 10, 2026, meeting. A motion as stated by Chairman Bradley was made by Mr. Ritter and seconded by Ms. Hanley. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

NAYS: None

b. **Case No. 26-15-V2: 1476 Scott Avenue:** An application seeking approval of zoning variations to allow an existing addition to the existing residence at 1476 Scott Avenue. The requested variations would permit the existing addition to (i) exceed the maximum permitted gross floor area; (ii) exceed the maximum permitted roofed lot coverage; (iii) provide less than the minimum required side yard setback; (iv) provide less than the minimum required sum of side yard setbacks; and (v) provide an unarticulated west side building wall. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request.

At the Applicant's request, Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to continue the matter to the September 14, 2026, meeting. A motion as stated by Chairman Bradley was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Mr. Nielsen. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

NAYS: None

New Cases:

a. **Case No. 26-19-V: 555 Walnut Street:** An application seeking approval of zoning variations to allow construction of additions to the existing residence at 555 Walnut Street. The requested variations would permit the proposed additions to (i) exceed the maximum permitted roofed lot coverage; (ii) provide less than the minimum required side yard setback; and (iii) exceed the maximum permitted length of unarticulated building wall. The Zoning Board of Appeals has final jurisdiction on this request.

Mr. Marx summarized the request and identified the property's location, zoning classification, and site history. He stated the 0.21-acre corner parcel is located at the northeast corner of Walnut and Elm Streets, is zoned R-4, and was constructed in approximately 1923; the current owners have held the property since 2017. Mr. Marx noted that in April 2026 the property was approved by the Historic Preservation Commission for a 20% gross floor area bonus for historical and architectural significance. He explained the existing home is nonconforming as to side yard setback, and while the proposed addition would reduce the existing encroachment to 5.45 feet, it would remain nonconforming. Mr. Marx summarized the three requested variations: a roofed lot coverage exceedance of 106.56 square feet (4.24%); a side yard setback of 5.45 feet, a variation of 0.76 feet (12.24%) from the required 6.21 feet; and an unarticulated building wall of 66.85 feet, exceeding the 40-foot maximum by 26.85 feet (67.13%). He stated three additional written public comments were received after the agenda packet was posted and that physical copies were placed at the dais. He asked if there were any questions.

Chairman Bradley asked why the 20% bonus was applied only to gross floor area and not proportionally to roofed lot coverage. Mr. Marx explained that the Village Council's bonus program for historic properties was tied specifically to gross floor area as the primary measure of a home's bulk, and that any other resulting deviation from zoning standards, such as roofed lot coverage, would need to follow the typical variation process. No additional questions were raised at this time.

Chairman Bradley swore in those speaking to this matter. Jeff Harting, the architect representing the property owners (the O'Brien family), stated the owners were unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict and testified on their behalf. He described the project as a modest addition intended to accommodate a family of five while remaining sympathetic to the character and materials of the approximately 100-year-old center-entrance colonial home. Mr. Lind asked how far the proposed building wall would be set back from the property line given the articulation shortfall. Mr. Harting stated the proposed kitchen wall would sit approximately 5.5 feet, and the mudroom wall approximately 6.9 feet, from the side lot line, and that wall articulation through material changes and offsets was pursued to the extent feasible given the constrained side yard. Chairman Bradley asked whether the owners considered a smaller addition to avoid triggering the roofed lot coverage variation. Mr. Harting responded that the family considered, but declined to pursue, a larger garage addition and other reductions in order to limit the scope of relief requested, and that a smaller footprint would have compromised the functionality and proportions of the design. No additional questions were raised at this time.

Chairman Bradley asked for public comment. No comments were made at this time. He then called the matter in for discussion.

Ms. Hanley stated the roofed lot coverage relief is closely tied to the gross floor area bonus already granted to the property and that the side yard and articulation variations represent improvements over the existing nonconformities. She stated she is in favor. Mr. Ritter agreed from an architectural standpoint, noting the additions are consistent with the home's original character, and stated he is in favor. Mr. Nielsen reviewed the request against the Board's standards, noting the requested relief is tied to an existing nonconformity and that the corner lot and center-entrance colonial layout present a unique circumstance, and stated he is in favor. Mr. Lind agreed, noting the record reflects neighbor support for the project, and stated he is in favor. Chairman Bradley agreed with the comments made, noting the side yard setback would improve on the existing nonconforming condition, and stated he is in favor.

Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to approve the resolution for the request as included on page no. 22 of the agenda packet. A motion to approve the resolution for the variations as presented was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Mr. Lind. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

NAYS: None

b. Case No. 26-20-V: 275 Fairview Avenue (Greeley Elementary School): An application seeking approval of a zoning variation to allow installation of a Gaga ball pit at 275 Fairview Avenue. The requested variation would permit the proposed Gaga pit to provide less than the minimum required front yard setback along the east property line (Woodland Avenue). The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request.

Ms. Klaassen stated that information received after the agenda packet was posted, describing a perforated rubber floor matting system to be installed beneath the GaGa pit, eliminated the need for the impermeable lot coverage variation originally included in the request, so the Board would consider only the front yard setback variation. She stated the site is zoned R-5, single-family residential, typical of the

Village's school sites, and is subject to front yard setback requirements on all four lot lines. Ms. Klaassen described the proposed GaGa pit as approximately 14.5 feet in diameter and 2.5 feet in height, to be installed on a rubber flooring mat surface measuring approximately 20 feet by 16.5 feet, located east of the existing asphalt play surface and approximately 5.5 feet from the property line, or 5 feet from the existing fence. She stated installation would require removal of a pear tree, for which Village Forestry approved the removal permit, and that no replacement is required. Ms. Klaassen noted existing play equipment on the site is already nonconforming, situated as close as approximately 7 feet from the property line, and the proposed GaGa pit would sit slightly closer, at 5.5 feet. She stated the Design Review Board was also scheduled to consider the request later that week, and that no public comment had been received. She asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Hanley asked whether the location of the GaGa pit, so close to the fence, raised concerns about balls leaving the property. Chairman Bradley also raised this concern. No additional questions were raised at this time.

Chairman Bradley swore in those speaking to this matter. Lindsay Kopinski, Principal of Greeley Elementary School, stated a prior temporary GaGa pit at the same location did not hold up to student use, and that the school is seeking a permanent installation similar to one at Hubbard Woods School. In response to the Board's question about balls leaving the site, she explained the game is played close to the ground, below ankle height, by students in kindergarten through fourth grade, making it unlikely that balls would leave the enclosed play area. No additional questions were raised at this time.

Chairman Bradley asked for public comment. No comments were made at this time. He then called the matter in for discussion.

Mr. Nielsen stated the impermeable lot coverage concern had been resolved by the proposed rubber matting system and that he is in favor of the setback relief given the location. Mr. Lind agreed the proposed location was appropriate. Ms. Hanley concurred. Mr. Ritter agreed. Chairman Bradley agreed, noting the Village's standards do not translate well to institutional uses such as schools, and stated he is in favor. Ms. Hanley added, as she has noted in connection with similar applications, that she would encourage the Village to consider regulating institutional uses, such as schools, through planned development procedures rather than standard residential zoning.

Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to recommend approval of the request as included on page no. 249 of the agenda packet. A motion to recommend approval of the variation request was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Mr. Lind. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

NAYS: None

New Business:

a. August 10, 2026, Meeting – Quorum Check.

The Board Members discussed their availability.

Public Comment:

No comments were made at this time.

Adjournment:

2 Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Hanley and
3 seconded by Mr. Nielsen. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

4 AYES: Bradley, Hanley, Lind, Nielsen, Ritter

5 NAYS: None

6 The meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.

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8 Respectfully submitted,

9

10 Recording Secretary