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**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**

MEETING DATE: Thursday, February 19, 2026

MEETING LOCATION: Council Chambers, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL

CALL TO ORDER

At 7:31 p.m., Acting Chair Chase called the meeting to order. This Commission meeting takes place on-site. Staff was asked to call the roll.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Acting Chair Chase; Commissioners Aronoff, Harmelech, Weisberg, & Zaransky

Commissioner Absent: Chairperson Yablon & Commissioner Treshansky

Councilmember Absent: Center

Student Council Present: Zoe Heller

Staff declared that a quorum was present.

Guests Present: Cal Bernstein, Attorney/Samuels & Bernstein
Ronald Nisson/Petitioner
Tommy Paliter/General Contractor

Staff Present: Hoffmann

Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals – January 15, 2026

Commissioner Weisberg moved to approve the January 15, 2026, regular meeting minutes as drafted. Commissioner Zaransky seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea: Commissioners Aronoff, Harmelech, Weisberg, & Zaransky

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: Acting Chair Chase

Acting Chair Chase declared that the motion passed 4-0.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no Business from the Public.

1 **OLD BUSINESS**

2 There was no Old Business.

3
4 **NEW BUSINESS**

5 1. #VAR-2026-00059

6 Property: 363 Woodland Road Appellant: Debra & Barry Kravitz
7 Zoning District: R5 Address: 363 Woodland Road, Highland Park, IL 60035
8

9 The petitioners and owners, Debra & Barry Kravitz, 363 Woodland Road, Highland Park, IL 60035 request by
10 authority of Section 150.1204(A)(1) of the Highland Park Zoning Code, a variation of provision Section
11 150.711, to encroach into the Established Building Setback/EBS.
12

13 Planner Hoffmann reviewed the proposal:

- 14 • Project Background
 - 15 ○ new addition
 - 16 ○ R5 zoning district
 - 17 ○ built in 1937
 - 18 • Site Location
 - 19 • Aerial View was shown
 - 20 • Plat of Survey
 - 21 ○ 40' building line; non-conforming
 - 22 • Property Photos were displayed
 - 23 • Proposed Work
 - 24 • Elevations were illustrated
 - 25 • Other Comments
 - 26 ○ there were none
 - 27 ○ 8 letters of support
 - 28 • Review
- 29

30 Acting Chair Chase asked if there:

- 31 • were any variances. Planner Hoffmann said none that he saw.
 - 32 • is a definition of the EBS. Planner Hoffmann explained same.
- 33

34 Acting Chair Chase swore in Cal Bernstein, Attorney with Samuels & Bernstein, who offered a history (35
35 year-old ordinance). He said City Staff wanted to preserve front yards. Examples were given on Sheridan
36 Road and Ravinia regarding the EBS. The applicant is looking to upgrade, make their home larger, and
37 modernize it. The second floor is already set back from the first floor. Rooflines line up with the existing
38 second floor. This is less than the floor-area-ratio/FAR.
39

40 Mr. Bernstein referenced the standards from his letter. He expressed the hardship is site context, and the
41 house is existing, non-conforming. There are 8 letters of support from neighbors.
42

43 Acting Chair Chase asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on this matter. There was no one.
44

45 Some ZBA comments for Petitioner are.....

- 46 • Commissioner Zaransky said it's a good plan. Standards are met; makes sense. He is in favor.
- 47 • Commissioner Aronoff said the request is reasonable. He will support it.

- 1 • Commissioner Weisberg said there is no FAR issue. He will support it.
- 2 • Commissioner Harmelech concurred.
- 3 • Acting Chair Chase believes the standards have been met.

4
5 Commissioner Weisberg moved to approve the request as drafted. Commissioner Zaransky seconded the
6 motion.

7
8 On a roll call vote

9 Voting Yea Acting Chair Chase; Commissioners Aronoff, Harmelech, Weisberg, & Zaransky

10 Voting Nay: None

11
12 Acting Chair Chase declared that the motion passed unanimously.

13
14 2. #VAR-2026-00060

15 Property: 1550 Museum Drive Appellant: Ronald Nisson

16 Zoning District: R2 Address: 1550 Museum Drive, Highland Park, IL 60035

17
18 The petitioner and owner, Ronald Nisson, 1550 Museum Drive, Highland Park, IL 60035 request by authority
19 of Section 173.030, of the Highland Park Zoning Code, a variation of provision Section 173.010(C), to exceed
20 the maximum allowable 4' fence-height requirement.

21
22 Planner Hoffmann reviewed the proposal:

- 23 • Project Background
 - 24 ○ exceed fence height to 8'
 - 25 ○ R2 zoning district
 - 26 ○ built in 2018
- 27 • Site Location (3 frontages)
- 28 • Aerial View was shown
- 29 • Plat of Survey (additions/zoning relief was granted in 2025)
- 30 • Property Photos were displayed
 - 31 ○ existing fence is 8'
- 32 • Proposed Work/Site Plan
- 33 • Other Comments
 - 34 ○ there were none
- 35 • Review

36
37 Some ZBA comments for Staff are.....

- 38 • Acting Chair Chase asked if there are other fences in this development.
- 39 • Commissioner Weisberg asked if any neighborhoods have 8' fences. Planner Hoffmann said they are
40 only allowed when properties abut busy roads or are next to train tracks. Other allowable fences are
41 6'.
- 42 • Acting Chair Chase asked if this can attach to the other fence. Planner Hoffmann said yes.
- 43 • Commissioner Zaransky asked if it will be the same material. Planner Hoffmann will defer to the
44 Applicant.

45
46 Acting Chair Chase asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on this matter. There was no one.

1 Acting Chair Chase swore in Petitioner Ron Nisson, owner, who advised he never intended to have a fence.
2 It's due to the person who bought Michael Jordan's property, as photos are being taken of his family. There
3 are 300 cars going there daily. It is no longer a neighborhood. He wants to protect his family and has
4 contacted the police many times. The City has done nothing. Other homes have high fences. Mr. Nisson
5 installed 35 pine trees which is not stopping the problem. It is out of hand. It is not what he spent \$2 million
6 for. The survey is questionable. Neighbors are not happy. Four Greyhound busses were parked in front of his
7 house all night long.

8
9 Some ZBA comments for Petitioner are.....

- 10 • Acting Chair Chase asked:
 - 11 ○ about other fences. Mr. Nisson explained same. He shared Michael Jordan's house has a 10'
12 fence. Mr. Nisson said he has no intention of placing a fence in front on Museum Drive.
13 ○ if an 8' fence is unusual. Mr. Nisson said 350 cars and busses parked on the street are also14 unusual.15 ○ that the standards be addressed. Mr. Nisson said it is not detrimental and is not at the16 corner. He shared everyone's property values have dropped.
- 17 • Commissioner Weisberg asked how many properties are in the neighborhood. Planner Hoffmann
- 18 said 8. Mr. Nisson shared most people have gates that are approximately 8'. Michael Jordan's19 property has a 10' fence. The only way to protect his family is to install a fence.
- 20 • Commissioner Zaransky asked:
 - 21 ○ why not attach the fence?
22 ○ if the fence is L-shaped. Mr. Nisson said he doesn't want to be contained inside. He wants to
- 23 fence the area as proposed because he doesn't want any harm to his grandchildren. This is24 sad for the neighborhood, as it's a great place to live.

25
26 Acting Chair Chase swore in Tommy Paliter, General Contractor, who said this is not a wrought-iron fence.
27 Deer cannot pass through. People slow down and stare; awkward. Police site on Pointe Lane for hours.
28 There is a pool that is not on the rendering. That is the hardship.

29
30 More ZBA comments are.....

- 31 • Commissioner Aronoff commented an 8' fence is tall. The standards are met.
32 • Commissioner Harmelech appreciates the passion. The standards are met. There are 8' fences in this33 subdivision.34 • Commissioner Weisberg said the character of the neighborhood is unusual. He is in favor of this35 simple ask. The standards are met.36 • Commissioner Zaransky said it's an unusual ask. The standards have been met. It makes sense and37 doesn't cause an issue to extend. He asked if the fence could be on the inside of the trees. Mr.38 Nisson said he would like to view the trees. Mr. Paliter said it wouldn't line up with the corner.39 • Acting Chair Chase said it's a residential neighborhood. The 8' fence is an outlier. Mr. Paliter40 explained the neighbor has an 8' wrought-iron fence. A 6' fence was considered. The fence would be41 weaker, as it's hollow inside.

42
43 Planner Hoffman said past variances would have to be researched.

44
45 Commissioner Aronoff moved to approve the variance as submitted. Commissioner Harmelech seconded
46 the motion.

1 On a roll call vote
2 Voting Yea Commissioners Aronoff, Harmelech, Weisberg, & Zaransky
3 Voting Nay: Acting Chair Chase
4

5 Acting Chair Chase declared that the motion passed 4-1.
6

7 **STAFF REPORT**

8 There is no Staff Report.
9

10 **MISCELLANEOUS**

11 There are no Miscellaneous items.
12

13 **ADJOURNMENT**

14 Commissioner Weisberg moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Commissioner Aronoff seconded the
15 motion.
16

17 On a voice vote
18 Voting Yea Acting Chair Chase; Commissioners Aronoff, Harmelech, Weisberg, & Zaransky
19 Voting Nay: None
20

21 Acting Chair Chase declared that the motion passed unanimously.
22

23 Respectfully Submitted,
24

25
26 Gale Cerabona
27 Recorder
28

29 **MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.**