MERRILLVILLE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
6:30 PM

Chairman Tim Fortier led the Meeting of the Merrillville Board of Zoning Appeals at 6:30 PM to order and then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance at the Merrillville Municipal Complex, 7820 Broadway, Merrillville, Indiana.

ROLL CALL:
Members in attendance were Mr. Jeff Swike, Mr. Kristopher Mellon, Secretary Mr. Pete Guip, Vice Chairman William Byers, and Chairman Tim Fortier.

MINUTES: JUNE 24, 2026
There was motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeff Swike.
There was a unanimous voice vote of 5 – 0 to approve the minutes.

COMMUNICATIONS:
None

COMMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN
Chairman Tim Fortier stated we will call each case by case number and name of petitioner. I would ask that you come forward, state your name and address for public record at which time you will be given the opportunity to present your case accompanied by any professionals that you may have with you. After that we will have a staff report pertaining to each case this evening. We will then have a question and answer period for the Board members. We will open the floor for comments not questions from the audience. If you are desirous of speaking for or against any case presented this evening, please sign in on the registry located in the center aisle. Public comments are limited to three minutes. The Board will then render a decision either for or against, or ask for a deferral for more information, or for reasons which we will state, or the Board will make no recommendation to the Town Council. Will you please at this time silence any electronic devices that you may have with you. Thank you.

OLD BUSINESS
NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Z8V4-0926** **GEN EQUITY PROPERTIES, LLC PETITIONER AND OWNER**
   Located at 3614 West 74th Court
   Request: Variance From Development Standards Approval from Section 21-137 In a R-3, Residential Zoning District to Reduce the Required Rear Setback Thirty (30) Feet to Twenty (20) Feet in a R-3, Residential Zoning District
   Purpose: To Allow a Three-Unit Town Home

   Mr. Dan Gorman and Mary Kate Gorman of 18400 Maple Creek Drive, Suite 200, Tinley Park, Illinois, 60477 presented their petition to the Board. Mrs. Mary Kate Gorman stated that the petitioners would like to change the setback from thirty feet to twenty feet.

   Building Director Sheila Shine read the staff report.

   Vice Chairman William Byers inquired if the proposed 3-unit townhome will have three separate families and is there similar construction adjacent to this property and Mr. Dan Gorman answered yes.

   Chairman Tim Fortier inquired that the petitioner stated that the strict compliance with the thirty feet rear setback requirement would significantly limit the property's development potential and prevent the property from being utilized for its intended and reasonable purpose.

   Mr. Dan Gorman stated that reducing the setback to 20 feet would center the building on the property so it would be more aesthetically pleasing. He stated that there is an

adjacent duplex and an adjacent four-unit condominium on another side. He added that he owns one of the duplexes on the east side of the proposed site.

Mr. Kristopher Mellon inquired about some single-family homes near the proposed site.

Chairman Tim Fortier stated that it appeared that there are single family homes near the proposed site.

Chairman Tim Fortier inquired if the petitioner would be able to establish six parking spots and three driveways with forty-five feet of access.

Chairman Tim Fortier inquired why the petitioner wouldn't change the proposed building to a duplex or a smaller building.

Mr. Dan Gorman stated that he wanted to maximize his footprint int Merrillville and maximize the lot usage.

Vice Chairman William Byers inquired if the petitioner is proposing to keep the trees on the lot and Mr. Dan Gorman answered that he is proposing to keep the trees on the back end of the lot.

Chairman Tim Fortier inquired if there is an ordinance on maintenance of a vacant lot.

Building Director Sheila Shine stated that the owner or developer is responsible for keeping the lot cut.

Vice Chairman William Byers inquired about what type of landscape the petitioner is proposing to have for the lot.

Building Director Sheila Shine stated that the Town has a landscaping ordinance.

Mr. Al Paradzinski of 3617 West 74th Court, Merrillville explained that his property is adjacent to the petitioner's site and he would like the petitioner to maintain the property, he also wanted to confirm that the proposed project would not destroy his asphalt driveway.

Mr. Dan Gorman stated that his project will not affect Mr. Pardzinski driveway.

Mr. Al Paradzinski also inquired if there will be fencing to keep debris from the project off of his property.

Building Director Sheila Shine stated that it will be regulated and that she will notify Mr. Al Paradzinski when the building permit has been submitted to the Planning & Building office.

Vice Chairman William Byers inquired if this petition would need to appear before the Town Council, and Building Director Sheila Shine answered that this petition will not appear before the Town Council.

Mr. Pete Guip made a motion to approve this petition. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeff Swike.
Mr. Jeff Swike, Mr. Pete Guip, and Vice Chairman William Byers voted to approve this petition. Mr. Kristopher Mellon and Chairman Tim Fortier voted against this petition.

2. Z9V5-0926 NOLAN GRAVES PETITIONER & OWNERS
Located at 9361 Sullivan Lane
Request: Variance From Development Standards from Section 21-77(4) in a R-1, Residential Zoning District on 1.75 Acres
Purpose: To Allow a 13'.1" X 32' Storage Shed

Mr. Nolan Graves presented his case to the Board.

Building Director Sheila Shine read the staff report.

Mr. Jeff Swike inquired about Mr. Nolan Graves property.

Mr. Pete Guip inquired about where the petitioner is proposing to place the shed on the property.

Mr. Nolan Graves stated that he is proposing to place the shed 15' to 20' behind his house, one of the two sheds has been removed, the other existing shed will be removed, and there will not be a driveway going to the shed.

Vice Chairman William Byers inquired if there is a setback.

Building Director Sheila Shine stated that there is a 6 feet setback.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Kristopher Mellon made a motion to approve this petition. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman William Byers.
There was a unanimous voice vote of 5 -0 to approve this petition.

OTHER BUSINESS
None

ADJOURNMENT
Mr. Kristopher Mellon made a motion to approve this petition. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman William Byers.
There was unanimous voice vote of 5 – 0 to adjourn the meeting.
The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marie Wilson,
Recording Secretary