

STILLWATER BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Regular MEETING OF April 2, 2026
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OKLAHOMA OPEN MEETING
LAW, THE AGENDA WAS POSTED March 31, 2026
IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING AT 723 SOUTH LEWIS STREET

Members Present:

Bryan Langford-Loftis
Micah Sexton
Rob Lamecker
Mike Woods
Jantzen Harrison

Staff Present:

Tammy Ewing, City Attorney
David Barth, Dev. Serv. Director
Henry Bibelheimer
Ally H Maged, Admin. Assistant

Members Absent:

Guests:

Stephen Gose
Cory Williams

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER.

Chair Langford-Loftis calls meeting to order at 5:31pm

2. Public Hearing.

- a. Receive public comment on a request for a variance (VAR25-08) to Ch. 23 Art. VI Sec. 23-140(d)(2)a.1 Front Yard Setbacks for all property boundaries abutting a right-of-way or road/access easement in Multi-Family Intermediate (RMI) Zoning District at the property addressed as 721 W. 9th Ave.

Henry Bibelheimer, Senior Planner, presents the item.

Mr. Sexton inquired whether the property failed to qualify for an automatic reduction because 9th Street is classified as a collector street. Mr. Bibelheimer confirmed that the street is a collector rather than a local street, the reduction does not apply; explained the hierarchy of street classifications: Local Streets (neighborhoods), Collector Streets (moving traffic to larger roads), and Arterial Streets (large section-line roads); and if the location were a local street with a 100-foot right-of-way, the reduction would be automatic.

Chair Langford-Loftis asked for clarification on the policy change adopted the previous year regarding these reductions. Mr. Bibelheimer responds that the code was amended to include properties 50 feet from the center line and the code update ensured that if one neighbor vacates a portion of the right-of-way, it does not prevent the neighbor across the street from utilizing the automatic reduction.

Chair Langford-Loftis asked about the process of arriving at the variance request and whether the applicant's presence was necessary to explain the different plans previously submitted. Mr. Bibelheimer responded that multiple options were discussed, including moving the building back to meet the 20-foot setback; the applicant determined this would be difficult due to the staircase and structure size; and additionally, moving it back would break the "stagger" of the neighborhood, as existing buildings sit much closer to the street.

Mr. Sexton requested specific setback data for surrounding properties. Mr. Bibelheimer noted that while current code would require a 20-foot setback for new construction, most existing buildings on the block are built close to the property line, with an average setback of approximately 7.4 feet.

Mr. Lamecker asked if a line-of-sight review had been conducted for the intersection of Ramsey and 9th, particularly regarding new front parking. Mr. Bibelheimer clarified that a formal staff review follows the variance process for the permit; and if the variance is granted, the City Manager's office must still approve the parking layout to ensure safety and site requirements are met.

Mr. Lamecker inquired about feedback from neighbors and potential utility issues. Mr. Bibelheimer responded that notices were sent to all residents within 300 feet, and no comments were received and regarding utilities, staff noted that all necessary easements must be dedicated and cannot be built upon, which further restricts the buildable area.

Mr. Sexton asked if upcoming changes in the Chapter 23 update would resolve these types of conflicts. Mr. Bibelheimer mentioned the city is in the early stages of a code update that may include "contextual setbacks" to encourage infill development.

David Barth, Development Services Director, stated that the Comprehensive Plan adopted the previous fall recommends promoting infill through smaller lots and setbacks and noted that higher density is currently necessary to offset high development costs and improve housing affordability.

Chair Langford-Loftis asked if applying the current strict ordinance would contradict the intent of the new Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Barth says that he would not necessarily say it is contrary to the current code but agreed that the city is moving toward allowing builders to be closer to the right-of-way in infill areas.

Ms. Tammy Ewing, Asst. City Attorney clarified the difference between "closing" and "vacating" right-of-way, noting that a property line only officially changes if the land is vacated through District Court.

Mr. Lamecker suggested that until the code is updated, these variance requests will remain a systemic issue for the board. Mr. Barth concurred.

Ms. Ewing noted that the board must consider whether a variance impairs the intent of the current code, which in this case encourages the proposed density.

Chair Langford-Loftis opened the public hearing and asked the applicant to come forward

Mr. Stephen Gose, Gose & Associates 113 E 8th Ave., comes to speak on the following:

- Argued that if they followed standard collector street half-widths, they could theoretically justify a much larger reduction.
- Pointed out that neighboring houses average a 7.5-foot setback.
- Regarding safety, they noted the "site triangle" is measured from the stop sign, which is already positioned past the property line, meaning the building would not obstruct a driver's view.
- The applicant stated they are attempting to honor neighborhood aesthetics while providing high-quality infill.

Mr. Langford-Loftis inquired about the building dimensions and why it could not be moved further south on the lot. Mr. Gose estimated the building at 40 feet by 110 feet; explained that moving it south would require reconstructing an existing staircase on the adjacent building and would again disrupt the visual line of the street; and identified the existing south structure as a non-conforming building.

Mr. Langford-Loftis asked if they could list the other options that were considered. Mr. Gose responded they have looked at moving parking, putting in a drive on the north side, shifting the buildings but believe this design fits best with the integrity of the neighborhood.

Mr. Lamecker asked if the parking count was sufficient for the bed count of both structures. Mr. Gose confirmed the proposal includes 12 parking spaces for 10 beds; noted the project remains under the 40% maximum lot coverage limit and adheres to increased side-setback requirements for multi-story buildings; and concluded that the variance is necessary to balance building size with required parking on a constrained lot.

Chair Langford-Loftis closed the public hearing.

Mr. Lamecker moves to pass this item until they hear the second item. Mr. Harrison seconds the motion.

Roll Call:	Langford -Loftis	Sexton	Lamecker	Woods	Harrison
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Time: 31 minutes

- b. Receive public comment on a request for a variance (VAR26-01) for Ch. 23 Art. VIII Sec.23-210(c) Parking Location Standards in Multi-Family Intermediate (RMI) Zoning District at the property addressed as 721 W. 9th Ave.

Henry Bibelheimer, Senior Planner, presents the item.

Mr. Bibelheimer states that the applicant proposes building 12 public parking spaces in the right-of-way to satisfy the requirement for 9 private spaces; under current code, public spaces only count toward private requirements at a 2:1 ratio; applicant is requesting a variance to allow a ratio of roughly 1.33:1; noted that while these spaces would count toward the development's requirements, they remain public and cannot be reserved or assigned for private use; and the proposal still provides more than one parking space per bedroom (12 spaces for 10 beds).

Mr. Woods confirmed the location of the proposed parking and its placement within the public right-of-way and inquired about the proximity of the lot to local landmarks like the ballpark and dog park. Mr. Bibelheimer confirmed the site is approximately two blocks away and walkable to those amenities but noted that existing public lots already serve those areas.

Mr. Sexton asked if other nearby lots that rely on public parking. Mr. Bibelheimer reported that most residential developments in the immediate area have on-site parking, though a new housing project at 11th and Ramsey is also proposing public parking and stated that there is no significant commercial competition for these spaces.

Chair Langford-Loftis asks if there are any further questions for staff; none respond. Chair Langford-Loftis opens the public hearing and invites up the applicant/representative.

Mr. Stephen Gose, Gose & Associates 113 E 8th Ave., comes to speak on the following:

- Expanded on the projects going on in the vicinity with public parking.
- Also confirms the applicant is aware that these are public spaces which cannot be assigned to tenants.
- The spaces will be built to city standards (six-inch thick concrete), the spaces are dedicated to the city.
- The 50-foot lot width is too narrow for efficient internal parking.
- A 90-degree internal lot would consume the entire width of the property and increase impervious area, leading to higher stormwater runoff.
- Utilizing the street as a drive lane is more environmentally sensitive and efficient for a lot of this size.

Mr. Cory Williams, 621 S Husband, comes to speak on the following:

- Emphasized that in commercial areas, he supports the 2:1 ratio for shared parking, but argued that in this strictly residential, dead-end street context, the higher ratio makes sense.
- Noted that the spaces would be built to full city standards and dedicated back to the public.

Chair Langford-Loftis asks if there are any further questions; none respond. Chair Langford Loftis closes the public hearing and invites staff to present alternatives.

Mr. Bibelheimer presents alternatives, which are:

1. Find that each of the criteria for approval of the request is met. The Board will explain how each criterion is met in order to approve the variance(s).
2. Find that each of the criteria for approval of the request is met by imposing modifications or conditions to ensure that the criteria are met. The Board will explain how the criteria are met to grant partial, conditional, or modified approval of the variance(s).
3. Find that one or more of the criteria for approval of the request is not met and deny the request.
4. Table the discussion to a certain date to allow for additional information to be presented.

Mr. Bibelheimer states staff has reviewed the application, letter of justification and other submitted materials; and the twelve (12) parking spaces proposed will still provide at least one parking space per bedroom given the following:

- A large drainage channel is along the west side of Ramsey Street;
- There currently exists the need for more workforce housing in Stillwater; and
- Ramsey is a dead-end street south of this development;

Staff is recommending approval of this variance request.

Discussion is held regarding the board being comfort with the variance, noting that while the site is near the ballpark, sufficient public parking already exists for those facilities and agreed the 12 spaces are adequate for a residential, non-commercial area.

Mr. Lamecker motions to approve variance VAR 26-01, citing the following findings:

- The application of the ordinance to the particular piece of property would create an unnecessary hardship because the lot was platted in 1953, before modern parking ratios.
- Such conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property involved because the drainage channel on Ramsey Street is a peculiar physical constraint.
- Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good, or impair the purposes and intent of the ordinance or the Comprehensive Plan the project provides needed workforce housing and aligns with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The variance, if granted, would be the minimum necessary to alleviate the unnecessary Hardship because the 12 physical spaces ensure more than one spot per bedroom, meeting the functional needs of the site despite the technical ratio deviation.

Mr. Harrison seconds the motion.

Roll Call:	Langford -Loftis	Sexton	Lamecker	Woods	Harrison
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Time: 21 minutes

Chair Langford- Loftis states they will now return the session to Item A, the setback variance request.

Mr. Bibelheimer reiterated Alternatives:

The Board of Adjustment has the following alternatives of action:

1. Find that each of the criteria for approval of the request is met. The Board will explain how each criterion is met in order to approve the variance(s).
2. Find that each of the criteria for approval of the request is met by imposing modifications or conditions to ensure that the criteria are met. The Board will explain how the criteria are met to grant partial, conditional, or modified approval of the variance(s).
3. Find that one or more of the criteria for approval of the request is not met and deny the request.
4. Table the discussion to a certain date to allow for additional information to be presented.

Staff has reviewed the application, letter of justification and other submitted materials and recommends approval of this request.

Mr. Lamecker noted that the situation is nearly identical to the previously approved parking item, as the lot was platted in 1953 and the proposal aligns with the city's long-term plans; pointed out that the requested 10-foot setback is actually more conservative than the neighborhood average of 7.5 feet; and emphasized that the building would not create line-of-sight safety issues since the stop sign is positioned forward of the structure.

Mr. Sexton acknowledged Ms. Ewing's concern regarding "applicant-created hardship", building a large structure on a small lot ; however, concluded that from a practical standpoint, pushing the building back 20 feet would destroy the visual conformity of the block and expressed a desire to support infill development.

Mr. Lamecker added that the proposal is safer for residents, as it avoids adding a new driveway directly onto 9th Street, helps limit unnecessary non-permeable surfaces that would increase drainage runoff and noted that forcing the applicant to wait 12–18 months for a code update—only to reach the same result—would be an unfair penalty to the owner.

Mr. Lamecker motions to approve variance VAR 25-08, citing the following findings:

- The application of the ordinance to the particular piece of property would create an unnecessary hardship because the 1953 platting and the 100-foot right-of-way on 9th Avenue artificially and unfairly restrict the buildable area.
- Such conditions are peculiar to the particular piece of property because the property is unique due to its age, dimensions, and the existing drainage constraints across the street.
- Relief, if granted, would not cause substantial detriment to the public good, or impair the purposes and intent of the ordinance or the Comprehensive Plan the project remains under maximum allowed density and aligns perfectly with the existing neighborhood character.
- The variance, if granted, would be the minimum necessary to alleviate the unnecessary Hardship because the request is conservative, as it still places the building further back than many neighboring properties.

Mr. Woods Seconded the motion.

Roll Call:	Langford -Loftis	Sexton	Lamecker	Woods	Harrison
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Time: 9 minutes

3. Miscellaneous Items from Staff, Board Members or City Attorney for Discussion and Possible Action:
 - a. Next Board of Adjustment meeting Thursday, May 07, 2026.
4. ADJOURNMENT.

This regular meeting of the Board of Adjustment adjourned at approximately 6:38 p.m.

Prepared by – Alexandria Holle-Maged, Administrative Assistant
Reviewed by - Cindy Gibson, Administrative Services Manager

Approved by: 
Stillwater Board of Adjustment