

PLANNING, ZONING & BUILDING COMMISSION

CITY HALL

December 9, 25

The City of Cortland Planning, Zoning & Building Commission met on Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:50 P.M. at the City Administration Building, 400 N. High Street, Cortland, Ohio. In attendance were the following board members: Chairman Donald Fatobene, Brian Hodor and Robert Wilson. Also present were Mayor Deidre Petrosky, Law Director Patrick Wilson and the following individuals:

Julie Kailer	1400 Mahoning Ave	Youngstown
Nancy Reed	424 Hawthorne	Cortland
Sharon DeFrancis via phone	151 S High St	Cortland

Chairman Don Fatobene called to order **43-25 Public Hearing at 6:50**. The purpose of this hearing is to consider a variance request at 151 S. High St. to allow a sign height of 15' which exceeds the 12' maximum and to allow 40 sq. ft. which exceeds the 32 sq. ft. max at 151 S. High St. There was no one in attendance to speak for the variance.

Atty Patrick Wilson: Who are we expecting, someone from the Foundation, the sign company?

Mayor Petrosky: I'm not sure.

Robert Wilson: This is the animal place.

Atty Patrick Wilson: Yes, it sits way back off the road, it used to be Dr. Foster's office.

Mayor Petrosky: Yes, they need two variances, one for the height and...

Don Fatobene: The sign already exists.

Mayor Petrosky: They will need to change the face plate on the sign.

Atty Patrick Wilson: Christine, you notified all the people listed right? The owner as well as...

Christine Dorma: Yes, with a letter and I reminded the sign company.

Don Fatobene reached out by phone to the foundation head for this property.

Don Fatobene: I'm going to put you on speaker. I am at the City of Cortland public meeting. Just give an overview of what they are looking to do. I told them that you are using the existing signpost and you are replacing the sign itself.

Sharon DeFrancis: Yes, the plastic part, I can send you a picture of what the logo looks like.

Don Fatobene: No, we have that.

Sharon DeFrancis: White sign with black lettering, the metal sign is stained all black. We had the painters paint it when they were there because it was rusted.

Don Fatobene: The reason for the variance is simply because the existing sign is there and you are going to use that.

Sharon DeFrancis: Yes, the existing sign is there and it lights up. The electrician tried it and it and it stills lights up from before.

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Don Fatobene: This is the public hearing portion. When we get to the regular meeting at 7:00, I'll call you back.

That was Sharon DeFrancis, The Glen and Jean Harnett Private Charitable Foundation is what she is the head of. Jean Harnett was a cat lover and left, as part of her estate, a sum of money for a project like this.

Atty Patrick Wilson: I actually created that foundation.

Don Fatobene: Oh, did you really?

Atty Patrick Wilson: Yes. We need a representative at the Public Hearing to talk about what the request is.

Don Fatobene: Is it acceptable to do it by phone?

Atty Patrick Wilson: Let's take a pole of the board members that are present. Gentlemen, do you have any objection to this matter going forward with the representative having appeared by telephone?

All three members did not object to the proponent being present via telephone.

Atty Patrick Wilson: Is there anyone else that would like to speak in favor of the variance? No.

Don Fatobene: Is there anyone to speak against the variance? No.

Atty Patrick Wilson: And so that the board is aware, once the ownership changes, the variance leaves and then they'd have to get a new one.

Don Fatobene: Yes. For part of the record, communication was sent out to all of the adjoining landowners letting them know of the meeting, the Public Hearing. Can I get a motion to close the Public Hearing.

A motion was made by **Brian Hodor** and seconded by **Robert Wilson**.

Roll Call: Don Fatobene, yes; Robert Wilson, yes; and Brian Hodor, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

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The City of Cortland Planning, Zoning & Building Commission met on Monday, December 8, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. at the City Administration Building, 400 N. High Street, Cortland, Ohio for a Regular Meeting. In attendance were the following board members: Curt Moll, Frank Daugherty and Robert Wilson. Also present were Mayor Deidre Petrosky, Law Director Patrick Wilson and the following individuals:

Julie Kailer	1400 Mahoning Ave	Youngstown
Nancy Reed	424 Hawthorne	Cortland
Sharon DeFrancis via phone	151 S High St	Cortland

Chairman Donald Fatobene welcomed the attendees to the regular meeting and asked for a roll call.

Roll Call: Brian Hodor, here; Robert Wilson, here; Curt Moll, absent; Frank Daugherty, absent; and Don Fatobene, here.

Chairman Fatobene asked for a motion for the approval of minutes from the November 10th meeting.

A motion was made by **Brian Hodor** and seconded by **Robert Wilson**.

Roll Call: Donald Fatobene, abstain; Robert Wilson, yes; and Brian Hodor, abstain.

Don Fatobene: With only one member that was here at that meeting, do we need to table that for the next meeting?

Atty Patrick Wilson: Yes, there are not enough votes to approve it. Table it and we will have to remember in January to do it.

Don Fatobene: Moving on; there is no old business, moving to new business. **39A-25 Discussion on the vacation of Blake Blvd. to the east of Sunshine Ave.**

A motion was made for 39A-25 by **Brian Hodor** and seconded by **Robert Wilson**.

Don Fatobene: Is there someone here that would like to discuss what you are looking to do with this? No.

Christine Dorma: He told me that he didn't know if he would be able to make it because he closes the store at 7. I thought that he was going to make an exception.

Atty Patrick Wilson: I think that store is in Boardman. The thing that we can do with this is to stop putting it on the agenda. If he wants to vacate Blake, then he can file a petition to vacate it. Don, you are going to sign some deeds approving the swap of some properties that he needed before he was going to come back to us. I suggest that we table it and Christine won't put it back on the agenda until someone asks us.

Don Fatobene: I think that's the best way to do it. Moving on, **44-25 Variance Request** - to allow a sign height of 15' which exceeds the 12' maximum and allow 40 sq. ft. which exceeds the 32 sq. ft. max at 151 S. High. We had a public hearing at 6:50 tonight. The party did not show but we contacted them by phone, which I'm going to do again. (Don Fatobene called Sharon Defrancis.) I need you to state your name and your address and tell us what you are looking to do with the variance.

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Sharon DeFrancis: My name is Sharon DeFrancis, I am the Board President for Animal Resource Center, the building at 151 S High St. in Cortland next to Sparkle. We want to take the existing sign frame and replace it. It was Dr. Foster's and has been gone for; I think Mrs. Foster said 5 years. I want to replace his part of the sign with our new logo and light it up just like it was before. Basically, use the same sign. From what I understand, it is off a little by the height and size.

Don Fatobene: Does anyone have any questions for Ms. DeFrancis?

Sharon DeFrancis: So far everybody says that they love the building. I think that it is going to be a great new addition to Cortland if we could just get a good staff hired. Our holdup is, trying to get a staff in there that knows what they are doing.

Don Fatobene: Okay, that's good. If there are no questions, can I get a roll call?

Roll Call: Robert Wilson, yes; Don Fatobene, yes; and Brian Hodor, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Don Fatobene: The next item is **45-25 Pole Sign** – Animal Resource Center, 151 S. High - 15ft. high, 40 sq. ft. Can I get a motion on this one?

A motion was made by **Robert Wilson** and seconded by **Brian Hodor.**

Don Fatobene: Sharon once again, briefly tell us that you are using the existing sign. We need to have it on record.

Sharon DeFrancis: We are going to use the existing sign that was there for Dr. Foster which has not been used for the last five years or so. We are going to replace it with our new logo and basically the same pole, we just had it painted black to make it look nicer and not so rusty.

Don Fatobene: Any questions for Sharon?

Atty Patrick Wilson: So that you know what you are voting on, the standard allowed under the Cortland Zoning regulations is 32 sq. ft.; this sign exceeds this by 8 sq. ft. You are being asked to vote to the variance of the square footage of the pole sign.

Don Fatobene: A roll call please.

Roll Call: Donald Fatobene, yes; Robert Wilson, yes; and Brian Hodor, yes.

Sharon DeFrancis: Thank you. Is there anything that I need to pick up to get my sign guy to go ahead?

Atty Patrick Wilson: \$25.00 per permit. 1 permit, \$25.00.

Sharon DeFrancis: I will let him know, thank you.

Don Fatobene: I know that is a little unusual, but I know that they want to get this done. That we could contact them and get it off of next month's agenda, that is very good. Moving on, **46-25 Wall Sign** – 214 W. Main, L. Calvin Jones, 33 sq. ft., LED lighting. Can I get a motion on this please.

A motion was made for **46-25** by **Brian Hodor** and seconded by **Robert Wilson.**

Don Fatobene: Is there somebody here to speak on this? Come up and please state your name and address.

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Julie Kailer: My name is Julie Kailer, I work for Jenkins Signs at 1400 Mahoning Ave., Youngstown, Ohio.

Don Fatobene: Everyone has the pictures in our packets. The brackets are already there, correct?

Julie Kailer: Yes, we are using the existing brackets. They currently have a Mayflower sign up that is channel letters. We are making it a box shape but it is taking up the same amount of space that way we can reuse the brackets, not putting more holes into the building.

Robert Wilson: Is it backlit?

Julie Kailer: Yes, it is internally lit with LED. We are going to use the existing power that is at the site. It's pretty much taking off channel letters, putting a cabinet on, and hooking it back up for them.

Don Fatobene: Thank you, any other questions? No, can I get a roll call please.

Roll Call: Brian Hodor, yes; Robert Wilson, yes; and Don Fatobene, yes. MOTION APPROVED.

Discussion of payment was had.

Don Fatobene: Is there anyone else that would like to bring something in front of the board?

Nancy Reed: Nancy Reed, 424 Hawthorne. I am here about the flooding issue on Walnut Creek. I've been to some of the City Council meetings and basically, there is a lot going on there so I thought that I'd come here to see if I should come here or go to the County. My property butts up to Walnut Creek, some of it even goes on to the other side. The flooding back there; it used to be the 13th hole of the golf course, has always set extremely low. When water is flowing from the north heading south, that side sits lower than my property so it normally ponds over in that area. My neighbors and I have noticed that up the street here, there were 2 lots. I looked up on the Trumbull County Auditor's site that they have sold, but I guess they are trying to combine the 2 lots. There has also been a part of a strip off (Rt) 5, it looks like an easement to the Walnut Resources that owns that little area so that they have access to that low area. This raises concern for us because any disturbing of that property, if they were looking at developing it, could impact not just me, but all my neighbors and also Tournament Trail which you all know how bad the flooding is in there. I've been there for 25 years and have recorded video and still pics of all the water flow. It is unreal sometimes and this past Spring was pretty wet. About 3 years ago, like I said I sit higher on Hawthorne, my basement got flooded. The water came up that high and it had nowhere to go. The City Service Department came out. I asked them to drop a camera to look at the storm drain; it wasn't the storm drain. What it looked like was the water from the streets, the storm drain is in my front yard. It looked like it couldn't flow, like it was being blocked. I had storm water come up around the footers and actually come up through my drains and it flooded about 6 inches. On the other side, they got flooded again. I don't know where I'm supposed to start with this. My biggest concern is preserving the existing properties around that area. I know that not all property can be developed. I want to bring it to your attention. My neighbors should have come with me but they didn't. Where do I start with this? I know that a lot of stuff comes through here, approving lot changes and things like that. I've been watching it from the old golf course, how the lots are being changed and developed and that's fine but this is a different situation.

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Mavor Petrosky: Can you tell us the address, plat number, or some description of the property that you are talking about that is being combined? Do we know of any right now?

Nancy Reed: You know the house that is being built up the street here on 5 going out of town? I'm kind of right over across the way because Hawthorn Trail is right there. I can see 5 from my back.

Robert Wilson: The house is under construction right now. They are working on the walls.

Nancy Reed: Yes, what is it that you want to know? They have 2 lots, can I just show you? (She approached the board and showed them.) This is the big property behind me that floods. These are the 2 lots and it shows 'combine pending'; these 2 used to be separate. They are building a home there and it looks as though they gave them access off 5 into this space. My concern is, now that these 2 lots, well they're combining them basically is what they're doing.

Don Fatobene: As far as the combining of the lots, did that come before us?

Christine Dorma: I can't remember but they would have to.

Don Fatobene: I don't remember that.

Brian Hodor: We've had so many over...

Atty Patrick Wilson: A replat would have come though.

Brian Hodor: Right. Is it Alvarez? I remember his.

Don Fatobene: He had a different one that we did, off of Robbies Run. That is the only one that I can remember off hand.

Christine Dorma: He is also building a house up on N. High but it's not combined. Are you talking about the one up by Fairway?

Nancy Reed: It's right before Fairway. If you look before where Fairway turns, it's those 2 lots.

Mavor Petrosky: And then, did they go to Soil and Water?

Nancy Reed: My question is, what's my next step?

Don Fatobene: As far as flooding goes, that would not come before this board but...

Nancy Reed: The flooding has been ongoing for twenty plus years. My concern is that there has been changes, even my lot number has changed on that county site. There are some things going on that either the city is not aware of that the county is doing maybe. I'd like to know who I need to go and talk to. Robert gave me the Trumbull County Storm Water District to start with.

Mavor Petrosky: Trumbull County Soil and Water right down here on Main St.

Robert Wilson: I gave her the one in Vienna; I used them before. They sent out representatives. They actually put stakes in the ground, mark off topographical heights, and map out everything that should be happening if it's working well. Furthermore, if that property were to be developed, that would take the biggest impact. If someone puts

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one house in the middle of it, the impact isn't huge but if someone put six houses in there...

Nancy Reed: Or condos, our concern is, are they going to throw condos back there? I know what the flow of water will do.

Don Fatobene: I know that is not in their plans at this point.

Nancy Reed: Thank goodness, not at this point but when I see changes... You just don't know what people's plans are.

Robert Wilson: Keep in mind, if someone is going to do something like that, they are going to be required to have an Engineer's Study on Soil and Water. They couldn't even move dirt until that's done.

Nancy Reed: How do we know that's being done? Is it posted somewhere and how do we find out?

Mayor Petrosky: No, it's not posted anywhere. We are going to have to go back and look at our records and see if something came through here. Once we figure this out and if he is already building, we will contact Trumbull County Soil & Water. They need to be looking at all of these house plans before they are being constructed.

Nancy Reed: I agree. It is almost landlocked there. You can look at the Tournament Trail Condos and Ainsley built straight behind me, he is on 5, then there are a couple of other homes and then you have Fairway. If you look out my back yard, you see nothing but homes, then you have that easement now. What's going to come in there?

Robert Wilson: Just so you know, that's not an easement. It's just property boundaries, it's just frontage.

Nancy Reed: So, what does that mean? It wasn't like that a year ago, it wasn't mapped that way.

Robert Wilson: It means that they must have bought the property from one of those landowners.

Nancy Reed: So, the intent is? Why would they buy that strip?

Robert Wilson: I don't know.

Nancy Reed: See where I am going with this, to get access to that area. I don't know what the plans are. You have met with the residents of Tournament Trail after that flooding happened. Did anything get discussed as far as going forward with that?

Mayor Petrosky: We are in the process of doing a few things. We started with the smoke testing and now we are going to have to do dye testing. We are going to have to have another study done because the study that they did 20,25 years ago were not good options. I've been talking to Chris Tolnar of GPD, he lives north of our problem. If he gives us suggestions it will only make the flooding worse up north. This is a larger problem than just the City of Cortland. We are going to have to begin working with the County Commissioners. I think that they are going to have to start retaining water north. One of the plans was 20 to 30 acres of retention basin. We don't have that kind of land here that we can buy. So, we are going to have to work up north.

Don Fatobene: Contact the owner of Walnut Resources, he'll tell you.

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Nancy Reed: I don't know who the owners are. I'm talking about that property that sits behind me.

Atty Patrick Wilson: The owner is Steve Lewis.

Nancy Reed: He is a local developer, the managing partner of Walnut Run Resources. (She was given his phone number.) I understand that some of that can be developed and that's good. You had mentioned Vienna, is it okay if I go to the one here in town?

Robert Wilson: Yes, storm water is what you are looking for.

Mayor Petrosky: After the meeting, give Christine your phone number. We can check into what is going on, call you back and let you know.

Don Fatobene: Does anybody else have anything to bring before the board tonight?

Brian Hodor made a motion to adjourn, seconded by **Robert Wilson.**

Roll Call: Brian Hodor, yes; Robert Wilson, yes; and Don Fatobene, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Meeting Adjourned: 7:23 pm

Chairman

Date

Secretary