



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island *Zoning Board of Review*

STAFF REPORT FOR:

FILE NO. **2026-07**

APPLICANT: Town of Bristol

LOCATION: 235 High Street (former Reynolds School)

PLAT: 14

LOT: 27

ZONE: Residential R-6

APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE TO:

Construct a ten foot high fence with soundproofing material to enclose existing HVAC units at the rear of the Reynold's School building exceeding the maximum height for a fence in a residential zoning district.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW:

As this application is for a dimensional variance, it does not require review by the Planning Board per Section 28-409(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAFF:

The applicant is proposing installation of a 10 foot high fence on this property located on the westerly side of High Street and the southerly side of Court Street within the R-6 zoning district. The property is improved with a two-story former Reynolds School elementary school, which is currently utilized for municipal offices. The building has been undergoing renovations throughout the past several years, and part of that renovation process was the installation of heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment on the westerly side of the property. This equipment is often placed upon the roof of buildings, but due to the historic construction of the building, the roof would not support the weight of the equipment. Therefore it was placed at ground level to the rear of the building. Throughout this past winter, the Town has received numerous complaints from neighbors regarding the level of sound emanating from these units.

Working with the building's consulting engineer and architect, the Town has proposed a solution to limit negative impacts to neighbors and reduce the level of noise from these units. This includes the installation of a 10 foot high chain link fence with attached sound dampening insulation panels. The sound dampening panels would be mounted to the inside of the proposed fence and would extend just above the 9ft. 4in. height of the existing HVAC units. Section 28-146 of the zoning ordinance permits fences to a maximum height of six feet in a residential zoning district.

This property is located within the Bristol Historic District overlay zone. As such, the proposed fence requires review and approval of the Bristol Historic District Commission (HDC). The HDC has scheduled a review of the proposal for its March 30, 2026 meeting.

3/23/2026

Edward M. Tanner, Zoning Officer



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island
Zoning Board of Review

STAFF REPORT FOR:

FILE NO. **2026-04**

APPLICANT: Kendall Reiss

LOCATION: 469 Wood Street

PLAT: 17

LOT: 156

ZONE: Limited Business (LB)

APPLICANT IS REQUESTING DIMENSIONAL VARIANCES TO:

Construct a 25ft. 2in. x 29ft. 2in. one and one-half story residential dwelling unit addition above an existing single-story commercial building with less than the required front yard, rear yard, and right side yard; and with less than the required number of off-street parking spaces.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW:

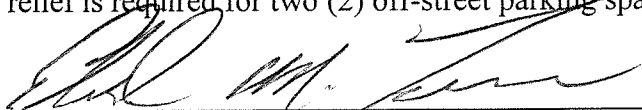
As this application is for dimensional variances, it does not require review by the Planning Board per Section 28-409(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAFF:

The applicant is proposing construction of a one and one-half story addition to the existing single-story commercial building at this property located on the westerly side of Wood Street within the LB zoning district. The existing structure measures approximately 25ft. x 31ft. and is currently utilized by the applicant as a commercial art gallery and studio space. The existing building was reportedly constructed in 1950 and contains approximately 800 square feet of floor area. The applicant proposes construction of a one and one-half story addition above the existing structure. The proposed addition would consist of a single residential dwelling unit containing one bedroom. The LB zone is a mixed use zoning district, and the proposed residential dwelling unit is a permitted use. As proposed, the addition would be located within the footprint of the existing structure and it would be accessed via exterior stairs located on the southerly side of the building.

This property contains 1,512 square feet of lot area. The existing structure is located at or within inches of the front and rear property line, and within approximately one and one-half feet of the northerly right side property line. Remaining portions of the property to the southerly left side are paved and provide off street parking for up to two vehicles. This property is a nonconforming lot in the LB zone. As the property contains only 1,512 square feet (5,000 square feet minimum required), the minimum required property line setbacks are all reduced to 30% per Section 28-221 of the zoning ordinance. Thus, the required minimum front setback is 7.5 feet; rear yard setback is 9 feet; and the side setbacks are 3 feet.

The proposed building addition also requires relief from the requirement for off-street parking per Section 28-252 of the zoning ordinance. The existing art studio use requires one off-street parking space per 300 square feet of gross floor area. Thus, the existing 800 square foot building requires three off street parking spaces. The proposed residential dwelling unit require two additional off-street parking spaces. However, as this property is already nonconforming by parking, additional off-street parking spaces are only required for the proposed addition per Section 28-222(1) of the zoning ordinance. Thus, relief is required for two (2) off-street parking spaces.


Edward M. Tanner, Zoning Officer

3/23/2026



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island
Zoning Board of Review

STAFF REPORT FOR:

FILE NO. **2026-08**

APPLICANT: Geoffrey M. Vicente

LOCATION: Tilbury Drive

PLAT: 153

LOT: 439

ZONE: Residential R-10

APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE TO:

Construct a 30ft. x 30ft. single-family dwelling with less than the required front yard.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW:

As this application is for a dimensional variance, it does not require review by the Planning Board per Section 28-409(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAFF:

The applicant is requesting a dimensional variance to construct a new single-family dwelling at this property located on the easterly side of Tilbury Drive. This property is an undeveloped nonconforming single lot of record containing approximately 6,835 square feet of lot area. As a legal nonconforming single lot of record, this property is subject to reduced dimensional requirements per Section 28-221(a) of the zoning ordinance. Given the lot area of this parcel, I have determined that the dimensional requirements for the R-6 zone apply. Thus, construction of the proposed single-family dwelling is subject to minimum front and rear yard setbacks of 20 feet and minimum side yard setbacks of 10 feet. Recall that the applicant was before the Board in 2025 with a similar application (File #2025-10), but withdrew the application without prejudice in September 2025.

The proposed dwelling is smaller in size than the 28ft. x 40ft. dwelling previously proposed for the lot. The applicant is proposing to locate the dwelling 10 feet of the front property line at Tilbury Drive. A significant portion of this lot has reportedly been determined to consist of freshwater wetlands; and the applicant is proposing to locate the house closer to the street in order to locate the dwelling further from wetland areas. According to the site plan submitted with this application, the dwelling will be located within the flagged wetland area. Jurisdiction for permitting developments in proximity to freshwater wetlands lies with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. The applicant states in this application that RIDEM is reviewing the project and is ready to put their review out for public comment once they know if zoning relief has been granted. The applicant has submitted plans for the proposed dwelling along with a drainage plan prepared by an engineer. The drainage plan depicts foundation drains and roof drains piped to discharge areas within or adjacent to the wetlands, with the limits of disturbance extending 10 feet from the rear of the proposed dwelling.



Edward M. Tanner, Zoning Officer



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island
Zoning Board of Review

STAFF REPORT FOR:

FILE NO. **2026-10**

APPLICANT: The Franklin, LLC

LOCATION: 195 Franklin Street

PLAT: 23

LOT: 31

ZONE: General Business (GB)

APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE TO:

Add an additional 24 outdoor dining seats to an existing restaurant use with less than the required number of off-street parking spaces.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW:

As this application is for a dimensional variance, it does not require review by the Planning Board per Section 28-409(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAFF:

The applicant is proposing to install an outdoor dining area to expand the existing restaurant use at this property located on the northerly side of Franklin Street within the GB zoning district. The existing building on this property is occupied by The Franklin restaurant. Currently, the dining area is located inside the restaurant, with some limited outdoor waiting and table service located on the front porch. The existing commercial restaurant building was reportedly constructed in 1940, and the use of this property as a restaurant dates back several decades.

The property currently accommodates off street parking for up to seven (7) vehicles. Based upon the size of the building and the number of existing seats, I have determined that Section 28-252 of the zoning ordinance requires a minimum of 10 off street parking spaces for the current restaurant use. Thus, the property is currently considered legal nonconforming by parking. As this property is already nonconforming by parking, additional off-street parking spaces are only required for the proposed addition seating per Section 28-222(1) of the zoning ordinance. The additional outdoor seats require one off-street parking space per four seats per Section 28-252(c)(4) of the zoning ordinance. Thus, for 24 new proposed seats, relief is required for six (6) off-street parking spaces.


Edward M. Tanner, Zoning Officer 3/23/2026



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island
Zoning Board of Review

STAFF REPORT FOR:

FILE NO. 2026-11

APPLICANT: Louis A. Cabral
LOCATION: 14 Union Street
PLAT: 15 LOT: 52 ZONE: R-6

APPLICANT IS REQUESTING DIMENSIONAL VARIANCES TO:

Construct a covered front porch addition to an existing single-family dwelling with less than the required front yard; and to demolish an existing 20ft. x 30ft. single-story accessory garage structure and construct a new 24ft. x 36ft. two-story accessory garage structure at a size and height greater than permitted for accessory structures in the R-6 zoning district.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW:


As this application is for dimensional variances, it does not require review by the Planning Board per Section 28-409(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAFF:

The applicant is requesting dimensional variances to construct a front porch addition to the existing dwelling as well as to construct a new 24' x 36' accessory garage structure on this property located on the southerly side of Union Street. The Board granted relief and approved this proposed work in 2023. The applicant is back before you because the previous decision has expired. Below is an excerpt from my last staff report regarding this property...

This property contains nearly 13,000 square feet of land area, and is improved with an existing single-family dwelling and a detached three-stall accessory garage structure. Recall that in spring 2023, the applicant appeared before the Board and was granted dimensional variances (File #2023-08) for a front porch addition on the dwelling as well as the demolition and replacement of the garage structure with a new garage in a similar location; but at a size and height that was greater than permitted for accessory structures in the R-6 zone.

The applicant now proposes to relocate the previously approved accessory garage structure to a location at the south-easterly portion of the property. The proposed garage would also be turned such that the "front" of the structure would face westerly towards the dwelling rather than northerly towards Union Street as originally proposed. The proposed garage is of the same 24' x 36' dimensions as the previously approved structure, and would have a total height of 22' 10" (one inch higher than previously approved). Other proposed changes to the structure including a modified roof design, and a revisions to roof dormer and window locations. The zoning ordinance permits accessory structures in the R-6 zone to a maximum size of 22' x 24' and with a maximum height of 20 feet.


Edward M. Tanner, Zoning Officer 3/23/2026



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island
Zoning Board of Review

STAFF REPORT FOR:

FILE NO. **2026-13**

APPLICANT: Citizens Bank

LOCATION: 1150 Hope Street

PLAT: 106 LOT: 28 ZONE: General Business (GB)

APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE TO:

Install a secondary wall sign at a size larger than permitted on a corner lot.

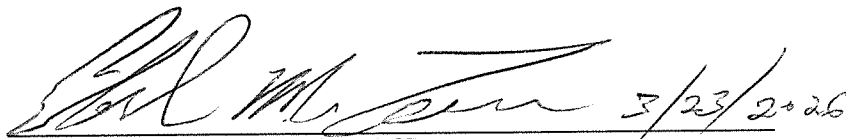
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW:

As this application is for a dimensional variance, it does not require review by the Planning Board per Section 28-409(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAFF:

The applicant is proposing to install secondary wall sign on the existing commercial building at this property located on the easterly side of Hope Street and northerly side of Gooding Avenue within the GB zoning district. This property is improved with a mixed use commercial building that includes a Citizens Bank at its southerly end adjacent to Gooding Avenue. The bank portion of the building has recently undergone renovations, and Citizens Bank now occupies the space. The bank has already installed signage on the property, with a primary wall sign facing Hope Street as well as a sign within the existing freestanding directory sign adjacent to Hope Street. Those signs were approved by the board at their existing locations and dimensions for previous bank tenants. However, Citizens Bank is requesting one additional sign on the south facing wall of the building adjacent to Gooding Avenue. This proposed sign would measure approximately 25 square feet in size and would face towards Gooding Avenue. The sign is considered a secondary wall sign per Article X, Table 1 "Signs by Type and Zoning District" of the zoning ordinance as it faces a second street on a corner lot. The zoning ordinance permits a secondary wall sign to a maximum size of 8 square feet in the GB zoning district.

A review of previous building permits and zoning board files indicates that the bank at this location has changed tenants and names several times over the past few decades. The zoning board had previously approved a second wall sign at this location, but the most recent previous tenant removed that sign and instead had signage on an awning located above the drive thru teller window. Citizens Bank does not propose to replace the awning and is proposing signage on the building instead.



Edward M. Tanner, Zoning Officer