

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS DIVISION II

September 9, 2025

Case Number: 2025-DV2-030
Property Address: 157 East 61st Street (approximate address)
Location: Washington Township, Council District #7
Petitioner: Julie Moeller
Current Zoning: D-3 (FF)
Request: Variance of Development Standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for a building addition resulting in an 11-foot rear yard setback (20 feet required).
Current Land Use: Residential
Staff Recommendations: Staff recommends **approval** of this petition.
Staff Reviewer: Michael Weigel, Senior Planner

PETITION HISTORY

This is the first public hearing for this petition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of this petition.

PETITION OVERVIEW

- 157 East 61st Street is a residential parcel currently developed with a single-family residence that has a 2-car attached garage with access from 61st Street. The property is located within the Broad Ripple neighborhood and is bordered by the Central Canal to the southeast and other residential development on each side. The property is also within a floodplain.
- Approval of this variance would allow for a building addition onto the southwestern façade of the existing building with a total square footage of 1029 square feet that would replace the existing deck along that portion of the structure. The addition would allow for two (2) bedrooms and additional space for bathrooms and an expanded kitchen. However, the addition would result in an 11-foot rear yard setback when the Zoning Ordinance would require a minimum rear setback of 20 feet for the zoning district. No other variances of development standards would be required to allow for the proposed development (open space, height, encroachment into stream protection corridor, etc.).

- This property is zoned D-3 (Dwelling District Three) to allow for low or medium intensity residential development with good thoroughfare access, relatively flat topography, and pedestrian linkages. The Envision Broad Ripple neighborhood plan also recommends it for residential development with a density between 1.75 and 3.5 units per acre. The site also falls within the floodway fringe which indicates a 1% chance for significant or shallow flooding in any given year.
- Staff would note that the proposed location of the residential addition would be in a location with significant visual buffering from surrounding properties (see Photos 5 and 6 in Exhibits), and that the irregular shape of the lot would create difficulty in the placement of a building addition that wouldn't require some form of variance relief. The addition location also would not violate relevant recommendations from the Infill Housing Guidelines related to building spacing. Staff recommends approval of the variance request.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	D-3 (FF)	
Existing Land Use	Residential	
Comprehensive Plan	1.75 – 3.5 Residential Units per Acre	
Surrounding Context	<u>Zoning</u>	Surrounding Context
	North: D-3	North: Residential
	South: D-3	South: Residential
	East: D-3	East: Canal
	West: D-3	West: Residential
Thoroughfare Plan		
East 61 st Street	Local Street	50-foot existing right-of-way and 48-foot proposed right-of-way
Context Area	Compact	
Floodway / Floodway Fringe	Yes	
Overlay	No	
Wellfield Protection Area	No	
Site Plan	08/01/2025	
Site Plan (Amended)	N/A	
Elevations	N/A	
Elevations (Amended)	N/A	
Landscape Plan	N/A	
Findings of Fact	08/01/2025	
Findings of Fact (Amended)	N/A	

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Plan

- Envision Broad Ripple (2012)
- Infill Housing Guidelines

Pattern Book / Land Use Plan

- Not Applicable to the Site. Please see Neighborhood Plan below.

Red Line / Blue Line / Purple Line TOD Strategic Plan

- Not Applicable to the Site.

Neighborhood / Area Specific Plan

- The Envision Broad Ripple neighborhood plan recommends that this property and surrounding area be developed with 1.75-3.5 dwelling units per acre. It is not within any Critical Areas as defined by the Plan.

Infill Housing Guidelines

- Infill Housing Guidelines indicate that building spacing should reinforce spacing on the existing block and limit uncharacteristically small or large gaps between houses to allow for maintenance and limit the creation of abnormally wide open spaces.

Indy Moves

(Thoroughfare Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, Greenways Master Plan)

- Not Applicable to the Site.

ZONING HISTORY

ZONING HISTORY – SITE

N/A

ZONING HISTORY – VICINITY

2004DV2013 ; 6027 Gladden Drive (southwest of site), variance of development standards of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to provide for a 491.75-square foot room addition to an existing 2,108-square foot single-family dwelling, resulting in a twelve-foot rear yard setback (minimum twenty-foot rear yard setback required), **approved**.

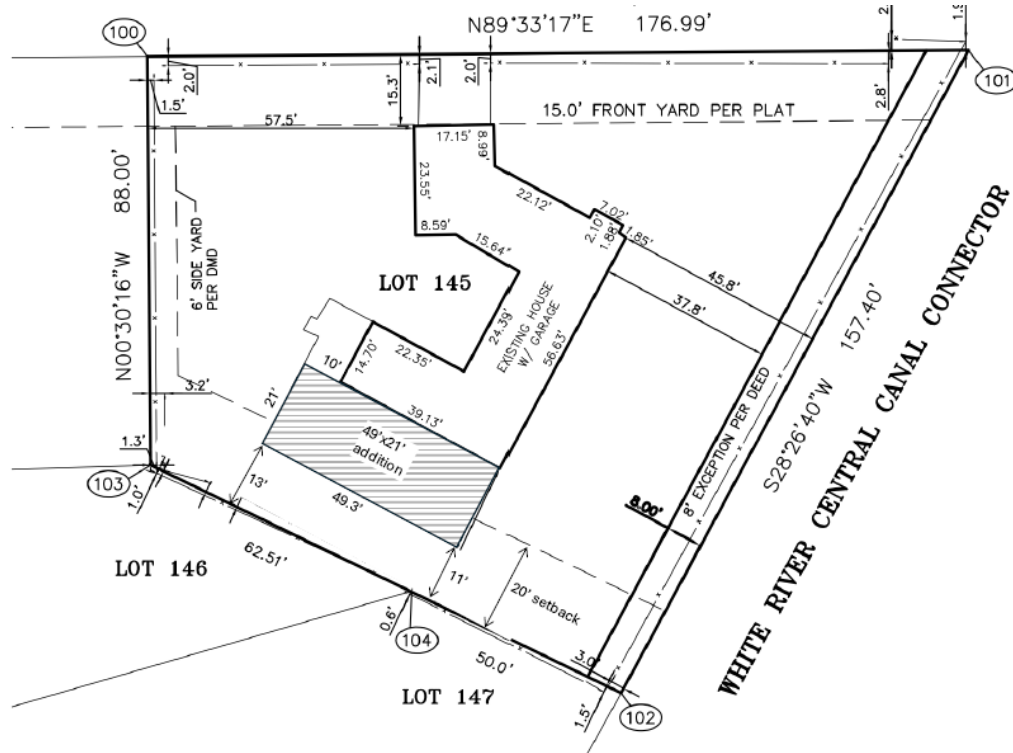
98-V1-45 ; 5914 Washington Boulevard (southeast of site), variance of development standards of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to provide for a 15 by 8 foot room addition to a single-family residence with a side yard setback of 2 feet (minimum 5 feet required), **approved**.

EXHIBITS

2025DV2030 ; Aerial Map



2025DV2030 ; Site Plan



2025DV2030 ; Findings of Fact

1. The grant will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community because:

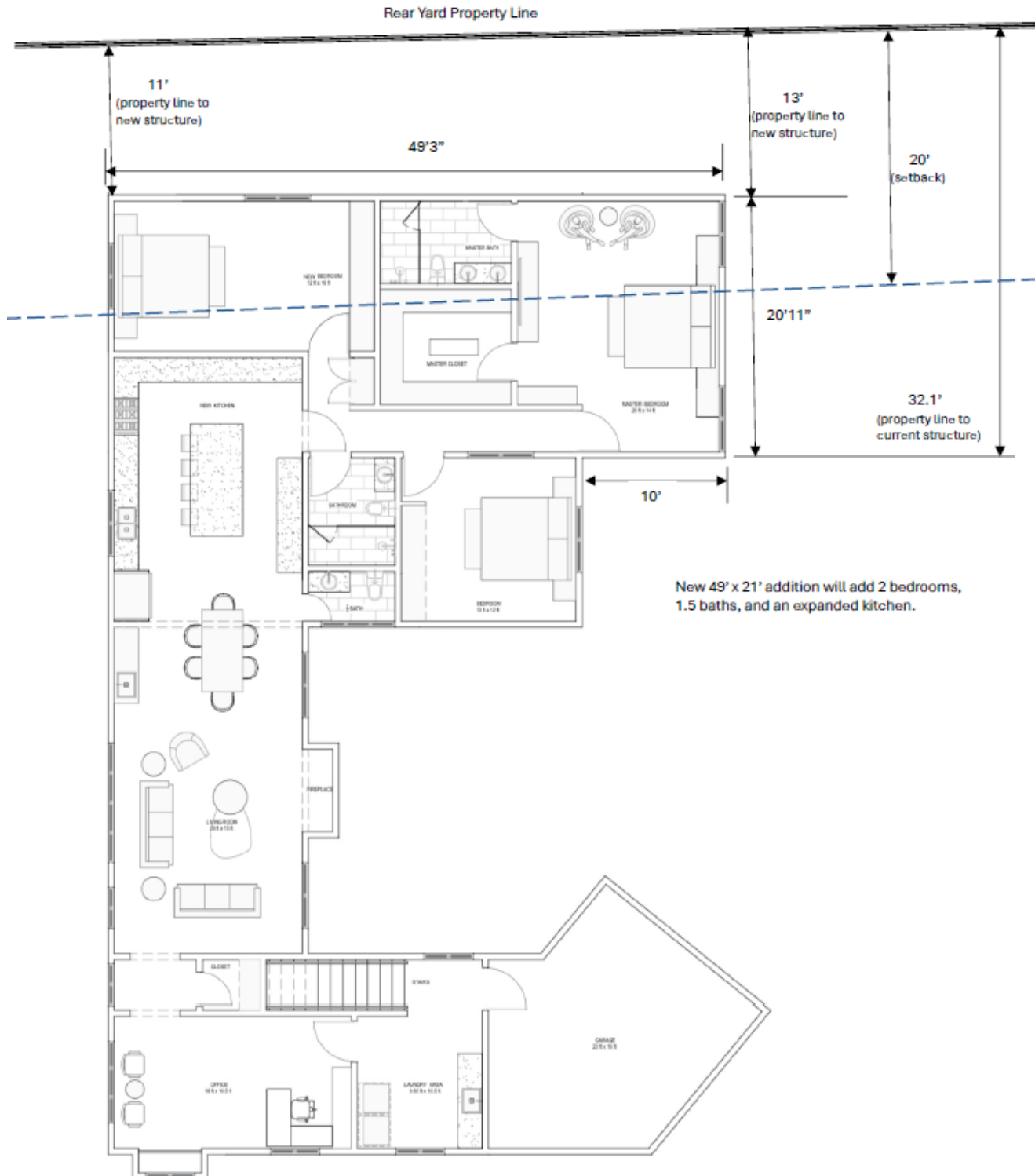
Granting the requested setback variance will not be injurious to public health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the community. The minimal difference in the layout and structure size will not have any impact on these concerns. Going over the existing setback of approx. 7-9 feet in the rear yard will not impact these concerns.

2. The use or value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because:

The use or value of the area adjacent to the property will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner. Lots #146 and #147 are adjacent to the property and the rear of their lots would face the proposed addition. The addition will be marginally visible to adjacent property owners. The addition will also be marginally visible to 61st Street and the Canal. The addition will be designed and all materials will be selected to create seamless integration to the existing home. The values of adjacent properties may be positively affected by the proposed improvement.

3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property because:

The existing property has only 2 bedrooms and 1 bath on the main floor living area. As-is, the property is challenged to maintain its value due to the existing space limitations. There are numerous repairs and upgrades that need to be made as well, further challenging the ability to hold value as a primarily 2 BR/1 BA home. The rear facade of the home is the ideal location for an addition. It is the least visible from any public view; also, it is currently in poor condition and has some 'eyesore' features (a deck and retaining walls in disrepair, unfinished concrete walls). The other elevations of the home have beautiful, important features of the property, including outdoor spaces and large trees. Building in the rear yard does not interfere with any useful patio space and does not require any substantial tree removal.



2025DV2030 ; Photographs



Photo 1: Subject Site Viewed from North



Photo 2: Subject Site Viewed from Northeast (provided by applicant)

2025DV2030 ; Photographs (continued)



Photo 3: Subject Site from Southwest (provided by applicant)



Photo 4: Subject Site from Southeast (provided by applicant)

2025DV2030 ; Photographs (continued)



Photo 5: Project Area Viewed from 61st Street ROW to North



Photo 6: Photo 5: Project Area Viewed from 61st Street ROW to Northwest

2025DV2030 ; Photographs (continued)



Photo 7: Adjacent Property to West

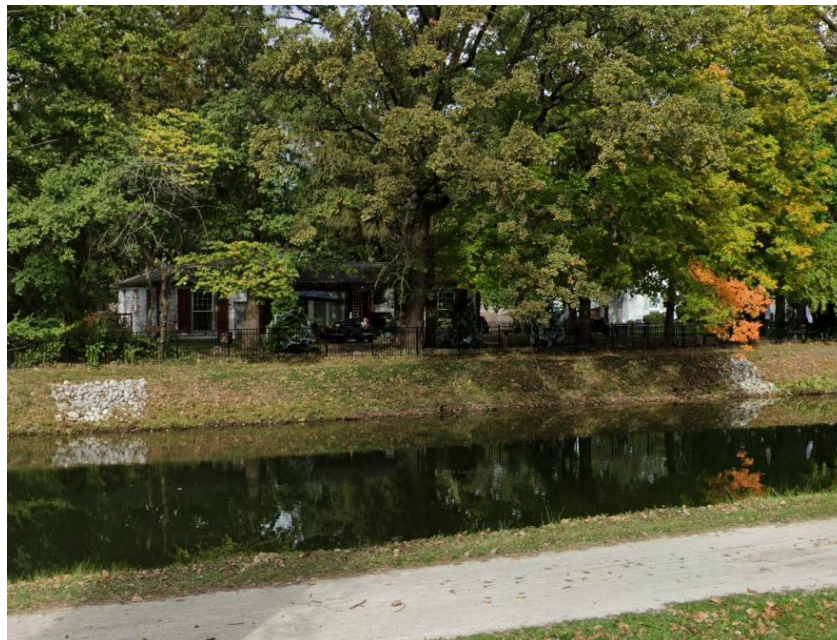


Photo 8: Subject Site Viewed from Canal (taken October 2024)