

MINUTES OF THE KINGSPORT BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS (BZA)

October 1, 2026 Regular Meeting

Noon

Montgomery-Watterson Boardroom, City Hall

Members Present:

Lora Barnett
Josh Taylor
Wes Combs
Joe White
Bill Sumner

Members Absent:

Hoyt Denton
Calvin Clifton

Staff Present:

JoAnn Williams
Ken Weems
Jessica McMurray

Visitors:

Mike Singleton	Brian Vance
Marge Fowler	Andrew Harper
Benson Lai	Mike Lawson
Marcy Vance	

Planning Chairman Sumner called the meeting to order at 12:04pm.

Planning Chairman Sumner explained the meeting procedures.

Mrs. JoAnn Williams conducted the swearing in ceremony for those wishing to speak during the regular meeting. All visitors were sworn in.

Public Hearing:

Case BZA26-0250 – The owner of property located at 203 Gustavis Avenue, Control Map 012N, Group C, Parcel 001.00 requests a 788-square-foot variance from Section 114-133(2) to exceed the maximum allowable square footage for accessory structures. The property is zoned R-1B, Residential District.

Staff noted that the applicant requested that this item be withdrawn from consideration by the Board of Zoning Appeals, as they no longer wish to proceed with the request. Staff also noted that notification letters regarding the withdrawal request were mailed to the abutting property owners.

Case BZA26-0253 – The owner of property located at 3567 Wesley Road, Control Map 077I, Group A, Parcel 015.00 requests a special exception from Sec. 114-191(c)3 to allow a portion of the property to be used as a residential home and to Sec. 114-191(c)7 to allow a professional sign business to operate on the property. The property is zoned P-1, Professional Office District.

Mr. Brian Vance, the property owner, presented the case to the Board. Mr. Vance stated that he currently operates a professional sign business on the property while also using a portion of the property as a residential dwelling. He explained that, under the current configuration, the property is not in compliance with the zoning regulations applicable to the Professional Office (P-1) District. As a

result, the applicant is requesting a special exception from the Board to allow both uses to continue on the property.

Staff noted that the existing situation is not ideal; however, in an effort to work with the applicant, staff identified comparable uses that are permitted by special exception within the P-1 District. Specifically, staff likened the residential use to a group home, which is permitted by special exception, and the professional sign business to incidental retail or service uses intended primarily for building occupants, which are also permitted by special exception in the P-1 District. Staff acknowledged that the applicant is not operating a group home and that the sign business does not meet the zoning code's definition of an incidental retail or service use. However, staff determined that the uses are sufficiently similar to those permitted by special exception to warrant placing the request on the Board of Zoning Appeals agenda and allowing the Board to consider a potential remedy that would permit the current uses to continue.

The Board asked the applicant to provide additional information regarding the operation of the business, including the level of traffic and the frequency of customers visiting the property. Mr. Vance stated that the business does not generate significant traffic and explained that a showroom is located at the front of the building where customers can view the products and services offered by the business.

Neighboring property owner Mr. Mike Lawson spoke in favor of the proposal. Mr. Lawson stated that the property had previously been the site of numerous homeless encampments. He expressed his appreciation for the improvements made to the property, noting that the site is well maintained and that he is pleased to see the building occupied and cared for.

Mr. Andrew Harper, representing the Holston Hills neighborhood, also spoke in favor of the proposal. Mr. Harper stated that the property is well maintained and that having the building occupied and individuals residing on the property has contributed to a safer and more positive environment for the surrounding neighborhood.

Staff reiterated that the requested special exception represents the least intrusive option for the adjoining neighborhood while allowing the applicant to continue the existing uses. Staff further noted that, if the special exception request were denied and the applicant were required to pursue rezoning to the B-3, Highway-Oriented Business District, such a change could have broader implications for the neighborhood in the future. Staff explained that the B-3 District permits a wider range of commercial uses, which could potentially result in more intensive uses on the property if the current sign business were to cease operations.

Chairman Sumner, seeing no one wishing to speak further on the item, closed the public hearing.

Case BZA26-0255 – The owner of property located at 2109 Alamo Place, Control Map 045G, Group B, Parcel 039.00 requests a 572-square-foot variance from Sec. 114-133(2) to exceed the maximum allowable square footage for an accessory structure and allow for the construction of a two-car detached garage. The property is zoned R-1B, Residential District.

Mr. Mike Singleton, the property owner, presented the case to the Board. He stated that he is proposing to construct a detached garage in the rear yard of the residence; however, the proposed structure would cause the property to exceed the maximum allowable square footage for accessory structures.

The Board clarified the nature of the request, asked whether any calls or concerns had been received from neighboring property owners, and confirmed with the applicant that sufficient space is available in the rear yard to accommodate the proposed garage.

Staff clarified that the requested variance represents the difference between the maximum allowable accessory structure square footage of 1,100 square feet and the combined square footage of the accessory structures currently located on the property and the proposed garage. Staff also stated that no calls or concerns had been received from neighboring property owners regarding the request.

Mr. Singleton confirmed that the location of the proposed garage has been staked on the property and that sufficient space is available to construct the structure as proposed.

Chairman Sumner, seeing no one wishing to speak further on the item, closed the public hearing.

BUSINESS:

Staff stated for record, the next application deadline is October 15, 2026 at noon, and meeting date Thursday, November 5, 2026 at noon.

The board reviewed the September 1, 2026 regular meeting minutes.

MOTION: made by Mr. Wes Combs, seconded by Mr. Joe White to approve the Kingsport Board of Zoning Appeals minutes for September 1, 2026.

VOTE: 5-0 to approve the minutes.

Adjudication of Cases:

Case BZA26-0253 – The owner of property located at 3567 Wesley Road, Control Map 0771, Group A, Parcel 015.00 requests a special exception from Sec. 114-191(c)3 to allow a portion of the property to be used as a residential home and to Sec. 114-191(c)7 to allow a professional sign business to operate on the property. The property is zoned P-1, Professional Office District.

The Board confirmed that the request qualifies as a special exception, as confirmed by staff. The Board noted that the property is surrounded by TVA property and has historically experienced very low traffic. Members discussed that allowing the property to be occupied would be an improvement for the surrounding neighborhood by providing an on-site residential presence. The Board also noted the positive support expressed by neighboring property owners.

The Board discussed limiting signage on the property, particularly to avoid the use of electronic message boards. Staff noted that electronic message boards are not permitted within the P-1 zoning district but indicated that establishing limitations on the signage could be beneficial.

MOTION: Made by Mr. Wes Combs and seconded by Mr. Joe White to approve the special exception to allow a portion of the property to be used as a residential dwelling and to allow a professional sign business to operate on the property, with signage limited to its current configuration and appearance.

VOTE: 5-0 to approve the request.

Case BZA26-0255 – The owner of property located at 2109 Alamo Place, Control Map 045G, Group B, Parcel 039.00 requests a 572-square-foot variance from Sec. 114-133(2) to exceed the maximum allowable square footage for an accessory structure and allow for the construction of a two-car detached garage. The property is zoned R-1B, Residential District.

The Board noted that the hardship is attributed to the irregular shape of the lot and the elevation of the property.

MOTION: Made by Mr. Joe White and seconded by Ms. Lora Barnett to approve the request as presented.

VOTE: 5-0 to approve the request.

Public Comment:

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica McMurray

Jessica McMurray
Development Coordinator