

**City of Westwood, Kansas  
Planning Commission Meeting  
4700 Rainbow Boulevard  
March 3, 2025 – 7:00 PM**

Commissioners Present: Clay Fulghum  
Ann Holliday  
Samantha Kaiser  
David Kelman  
Scott McCracken  
Mark Neibling  
Sarah Page, Chair

Commissioners Absent: Kevin Breer, Vice Chair  
Emily Keyser

Staff Present: Leslie Herring, City Administrator  
John Sullivan, Public Works Director  
Spencer Low, City Attorney for Planning Commission

**Call to Order**

Vice-Chair Kevin Breer called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM on March 3, 2025.

Herring administered the affirmation of office to Clay Fulghum and Ann Holliday and the oath of office to Scott McCracken. Chair Page invited Commissioner McCracken to introduce himself to his fellow Planning Commissioners.

**Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes**

Chair Page called for modifications or discussion of the March 3, 2025 meeting agenda and January 6, 2025 meeting minutes or a motion for approval. Commissioner Kelman moved to approve the agenda and meeting minutes. Commissioner Kaiser seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearings**

*WE-2025-02 – Application of property owner F. Kaan Akyalcin for a waiver from Westwood Zoning Ordinance Article Nos. 4.3.2.B to allow a third story (maximum allowable is 2 ½ stories), 4.3.2.H to allow the height of the primary structure to exceed that allowed, and 4.3.6.F to allow the front wall of the front-facing garage to not be located entirely behind the front wall of the primary building for a proposed new single-family residence on property located at 2012 W. 47th Ter., Westwood, KS 66205*

Chair Page invited Herring to present the staff report. Herring presented the staff report included in the meeting packet.

Chair Page called for questions from the Planning Commission of the applicant. Commissioner Kelman noted that he feels the zoning regulations should be revisited as it seems to him that the regulations as currently written do not contemplate modern architectural plans being introduced in Westwood.

Chair Page invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission. Kaan Akyalcin shared context to support his preference for accommodating an elevator with access to the rooftop living space. Akyalcin

stated that he is no longer seeking a waiver from 4.3.6.F to allow the front wall of the front-facing garage to not be located entirely behind the front wall of the primary building. He has worked it out with his architect that the garage can be recessed and will reflect that on a plan revision.

Chair Page called for questions from the Planning Commission of the applicant.

Chair Page called for public comment on the application.

Alyson Morris, 2007 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., asked for clarification about whether approval of this application would allow for three story houses to be built anywhere in Westwood. She stated that she doesn't want Westwood blocks to begin looking like the blocks in nearby Kansas City, Missouri where the houses are so massive.

Leni Swails, 2009 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., stated that she likes garages to be deemphasized, she likes smaller homes on her block, and she doesn't feel that the elevator needs to have access to the rooftop. She doesn't feel that the house needs to be as large as it is.

Chris Thomsen, 2013 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., stated the new construction should not be granted waivers from the zoning regulations and should be designed to comply with the zoning regulations as written.

Shannon Thomsen, 2013 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., stated that three stories is too much but that 2 ½ stories – which is permitted by the zoning regulations – is reasonable to her.

Chair Page closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

Chair Page called for discussion amongst the Planning Commission. Commissioner Page asked the applicant whether he could live with the elevator not having access to the rooftop. Akyalcin responded that the elevator height is not creating the issue; it is within the acceptable height maximums.

Chair Page called for discussion amongst the Planning Commission on the request for a waiver from Article Nos. 4.3.2.B. Commissioner Kelman stated that the zoning regulations do not allow for three story houses. He pointed out that there are discrepancies between definitions in the zoning regulations relating to a half story. Discussion and deliberation took place amongst the Planning Commission.

Chair Page called for direction from staff on acceptable actions for the Planning Commission to take. Low suggested that the matter could be tabled to allow the applicant to revise the plans based on the conversation at tonight's public hearing or the item could be denied and the applicant could bring back a revised plan that more clearly meets the zoning requirements.

Motion made by Commissioner Neibling to deny both the application of property owner F. Kaan Akyalcin for a waiver from Westwood Zoning Ordinance Article Nos. 4.3.2.B to allow a third story (maximum allowable is 2 ½ stories) and also to deny 4.3.6.F to allow the front wall of the front-facing garage to not be located entirely behind the front wall of the primary building. Seconded by Kaiser. Chair Page asked for discussion on the motion. Commissioner Fulghum asked whether this application should, in fact, be tabled. Commissioner Kelman restated that the question is whether the Planning Commission would grant a waiver, not necessarily whether definitions and regulations are met. Commissioners Neibling and Kaiser reaffirmed that they move to deny the applications. Motion to deny passes 7-0.

*WE-2025-01 – Application of Wulff Building & Additions on behalf of property owner Kei Kamara for a waiver from Westwood Zoning Ordinance Article No. 4.3.2.G for a front setback encroachment greater than that allowed for a proposed new single-family residence on property located at 4810 Belinder Ct., Westwood, KS 66205*

Chair Page invited Herring to present the staff report. Herring presented the staff report included in the meeting packet.

Chair Page invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission. Kirk Wulff, Wulff Building & Additions, stated that the Westwood zoning regulations don't allow for a front porch that is functional because the zoning requirements effectively allow only a 4' front porch since we also require a certain percentage of the front façade of the house to be situated on the build-to line.

Chair Page called for questions from the Planning Commission of the applicant or staff. Planning Commissioners deliberated on the issues within the zoning regulations and the need to revisit and revise the zoning language to allow for larger front porches without creating issues with other provisions of the zoning ordinance.

Chair Page called for public comment on the application.

Kathy Davis, 2006 W. 48<sup>th</sup> St. asked for verification of the address of this application.

Susan Stanley, 4811 Belinder Ct., asked what consideration to relative scale is given to applications that propose to double the square footage of the size of the existing houses on the same block.

Mike Davis, 2006 W. 48<sup>th</sup> St., stated that if the new construction homes were smaller, they wouldn't need exceptions granted.

Leni Swailes, 2009 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., echoed that if the new construction homes were smaller, they wouldn't need exceptions granted.

Shannon Thomsen, 2013 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., echoed that if the new construction homes were smaller, they wouldn't need exceptions granted.

Ken Patton, 4812 Belinder Ct., referenced written comment he provided to City staff ahead of the meeting. Herring acknowledged that the comments weren't seen nor forwarded until now. Herring read the written comments received and which are included as an addendum to these meeting minutes. He additionally commented that he does not understand how an egress window is an allowed encroachment.

Kristin Kamara, owner of 4810 Belinder Ct., spoke in support of her family's application under consideration. She stated that her family is looking forward to put down roots in Westwood and Westwood View Elementary and that they value building a house that can accommodate their growing family, outdoor space, community interactions around the street, and intergenerational accommodations.

Chair Page called for questions from the Planning Commission of the applicant. None were asked.

Mark Swails, 2009 W. 47<sup>th</sup> Ter., stated that there are public spaces for community to gather and recreate so that private recreational spaces at peoples' homes don't need to be so large.

Chair Page closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

Chair Page called for discussion amongst the Planning Commission. Commissioner McCracken stated that the exception needed to build this house isn't related to the size or massing, it's solely for the front porch. Commissioner Kaiser stated support for the front yard encroachment of the mud room as it adds relief to the house. The Planning Commissioners engaged in conversation about conflicts present within the zoning regulations and a general disinterest in the Planning Commission effectively serving as an Architectural Review Board.

Commissioner Neibling asked staff to comment on whether City regulations govern encroachments like egress windows in the side yard setback. Herring stated that the zoning regulations do not speak to encroachments like egress windows or utility or mechanical structures in setbacks and that staff has not denied permits to-date that include egress window or mechanical equipment encroachments.

Commissioners engaged in further deliberations about the applicant's ability to resolve the need for a waiver and identified conflicts between provisions (i.e. if the entire house is moved back on the lot, the plans would need a waiver from 60% of the front façade sitting on the build-to line).

Motion made by Commissioner McCracken to approve the application of property owner Kei Kamara for a waiver from Westwood Zoning Ordinance Article No. 4.3.2.G for a front setback encroachment greater than that allowed for a proposed new single-family residence on property located at 4810 Belinder Ct., Westwood, KS 66205. Second by Commissioner Fulghum. Chair Page requested a roll call vote. Motion passes 5-2, Holliday and Kelman opposed.

**Presentations – None.**

**Old Business – None.**

#### **New Business**

*FP-2025-01 - Consider application of Wulff Building & Additions on behalf of property owner Kei Kamara to plat property at 4810 Belinder Ct., Westwood, KS 66205*

Chair Page invited Herring to present the staff report. Herring presented the staff report included in the meeting packet.

Chair Page called for questions from the Planning Commission of the applicant or staff. None voiced.

Motion made by Commissioner Kelman to approve the application of Wulff Building & Additions on behalf of property owner Kei Kamara to plat property at 4810 Belinder Ct., Westwood, KS 66205. Seconded by Kaiser. Motion passed unanimously.

**Staff Reports – None.**

#### **Adjournment**

Motion by Commissioner Fulghum to adjourn the meeting. Second by Commissioner Kelman. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

**Upcoming Items**

A. Annual legalities training (April)

B. Election of officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary) (May)

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah Page, Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leslie Herring, Secretary