



**MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG PLANNING & ZONING BOARD
December 4, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Alabi, Benner, Brusk, Kleckley, Ward, Furst

ABSENT: Barnhart

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning & Zoning Board - Regular Meeting - 11/06/2025

Minutes approved as submitted.

Planning & Zoning Board - Regular Meeting - 11/20/2025

Minutes approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda stands approved.

SWEARING IN OF SPEAKERS

Speakers were sworn in by Mr. Furst.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

App# 2025 - 0598; 8295 Taylor Road SW; Shawna Davis for Early Start Learning Academy, LLC; Conditional Use

Ms. Buathier read the staff report into the record.

Mr. Furst invited the applicant to the podium to speak.

The applicant, Shawna Davis, explained that they are applying to be a licensed child care center at this location, and they are excited to be apart of Reynoldsburg's community and the opportunity to have children and family served with high quality care.

Mr. Furst asked Ms. Davis if she had any objections to staff's condition regarding the number of staff.

Ms. Davis said no.

Mr. Furst opened the floor to the board for questions and comments.

Mr Furst: Seeing how the applicant has signaled that they are supportive of the staff's recommendation, I so move for approval with staff's recommendation as listed in their report. Do I have a second?

Mr. Brusk: Second.

RESULT:	7-0
MOVER:	Furst
SECONDER:	Brusk
AYES:	Ward, Kleckley, Benner, Barnhart, Alabi, Brusk, Furst

App# 2025-0563; 166 Cady Court; James Knox of Suncraft Corporation, Inc. for Richard and Katherine Verhoeven; Variance

Ms. Buathier read the staff report into the record.

Mr. Furst invited the applicant to the podium to speak.

The applicant, Jeff Borovetz from Suncraft, explains that the lot's unusual shape and required 30-foot front setback push the house farther back, resulting in a smaller rear yard than neighboring properties. He argues this creates a hardship and notes that several homes across the street, within the same zoning district, already have roofed rear-yard structures close to their property lines. Because of this, he questions how approving this variance would set a precedent when similar additions already exist nearby.

The homeowner, Richard Verhoeven, explains that when the deck project began in July, his 96-year-old mother was still alive, and they wanted a level, step-free deck to accommodate her mobility. He notes they are not extending farther back than the original concrete patio. He also shares that he has lived in the home for 30 years, spoken with all his neighbors, who support the project, and plans to remain there long-term. While the deck is more of a want than a strict necessity, it

improves accessibility and provides a space for family gatherings and relaxation.

Ms. Kleckley asked if they had brought any other designs with them.

Mr. Borovetz explained that the porch must be located where the back door and family room are, since the other side of the house contains bedrooms and is not suitable for a deck or porch. Due to the lot shape and rear setback line, shifting the structure left or right would not reduce the encroachment. A freestanding deck without a roof would not require a variance and could be built much larger, but the homeowners want a covered porch for weather protection. The only alternative would be reducing the porch roof by about four feet, but that would make it too small to be functional. He argues that the house's placement, pushed far back into the lot by the curved street and 30-foot build line, creates the hardship, and the requested 12×14 porch is modest. He also maintains that approving the variance would not set a precedent because other nearby homes already have rear structures close to their property lines.

Mr. Furst stated that the properties Mr. Borovetz is mentioning are grandfathered in since the code was rewritten a few years ago, and that Mr. Verhoeven's property is subject to the current code. He stated that the board is limited to evaluating variance requests based on specific factors outlined in the city code. After reviewing the application, he currently agrees with staff's recommendation to deny the variance. However, he suggests the applicants could request to table the case and return with a more thorough presentation addressing each variance factor, especially the hardship criterion. He cautions that if the board denies the variance now, the applicants cannot reapply for a year. He emphasizes that the board prefers finding workable solutions rather than issuing denials and wants to give the applicants their best chance.

Mr. Borovetz asked if there is someone that could help them prepare an answer that would satisfy the requirement.

Mr. Benner explained that this is law passed by city council and that they will need their own legal advice as far as interpreting the law and coming up with something to prove their point. He stated this is not something they can help them with.

Mr. Borovetz asked whether the homeowners' ability to reasonably enjoy their property, specifically by having a covered porch like their neighbors, should be considered part of the hardship. He argues that the proposed location is the only viable spot on the home for such a structure and suggests that this limitation supports their case for a variance. He asks if that is proof of hardship.

Mr. Benner stated it is not and that anything already in the neighborhood was held

to standards of a different code at a different time. He stated law change, and that city council changed the law.

Mr. Borovetz asked whether the setback requirement changed citywide and, if so, argues that the hardship stems from the fact that this subdivision was designed before the current, larger rear-yard setback was adopted. Because the lot's shape and size were planned under different rules, he contends the updated setback standard now creates a constraint that makes building a covered porch difficult.

Mr. Benner responded that the applicant's precedent argument is not persuasive because many Reynoldsburg properties were built under older standards, yet the board must apply the zoning law as it exists today. The board cannot reinterpret or change the law, only evaluate whether the variance request meets all required criteria. If the applicants satisfy those findings, the variance can be approved; if not, the board is obligated to deny it.

Ms. Barnhart added that the property is already fully usable for its intended zoning purpose, single-family residential, so wanting a back porch is a preference, not a hardship under the code. She notes that while the desired porch size may be more appealing, a smaller version could be built within the setback without needing a variance.

Mr. Verhoeven acknowledged that the situation may not meet the legal definition of a hardship but explains his reasoning for wanting the porch. The existing patio was the same size as the proposed porch, and he is not trying to expand the footprint, only add a roof. He notes the project was originally intended to benefit his late mother and that, as he approaches age 70, he may eventually need wheelchair access and would like a covered outdoor space. He emphasizes long-term residency, good relationships with neighbors, and their support. He also asks when the setback law was changed.

Ms. Barnhart answered that the code has changed several times in the thirty years that Mr. Verhoeven has lived there.

Mr. Verhoeven stated that when he originally moved into the neighborhood, he followed all HOA rules, including restrictions like no fences. Over time, he's seen neighbors add fences and plastic structures without issue. He reiterates that he simply wants to put a roof over his existing patio to improve his long-term enjoyment of the home, where he has lived for decades and plans to stay. While he acknowledges it may not qualify as a legal hardship, he hopes for the city's support so he can make a modest improvement to his property.

Mr. Furst stated that he thinks the issue is the roof, and if the roof is removed then

they wouldn't need a variance.

Ms. Buathier clarified that the deck is also attached to the house so it has to meet all building setbacks.

Ms. Borovetz asked if the porch is not attached and is freestanding then it would be okay.

Ms. Buathier said that staff would have to review the application, but it would be held to accessory structure standards.

Mr. Borovetz clarified that he was told a porch of the same size would be permissible without a variance if it were freestanding and not attached to the house.

Ms. Buathier responds that the 14×14 deck qualifies as a freestanding accessory structure and therefore follows different setback rules. However, the covered porch is attached to the home, so it must meet the primary structure's setback requirements.

Mr. Borovetz confirmed that this understanding, freestanding vs. attached determining whether a variance is needed, is what he was trying to verify.

Mr. Benner reiterated that the applicants may want to table the request to explore alternative solutions, such as designing a freestanding structure that meets code. If they choose to move forward tonight and the board denies the variance, they will be unable to reapply for a full year.

Mr. Borovetz asked to table it to the January 15th meeting.

Mr. Furst: Hearing that the applicant would like to table this application until January 15th, I so move.

Mr. Benner: Second.

RESULT:	7-0
MOVER:	Furst
SECONDER:	Benner
AYES:	Alabi, Barnhart, Brusk, Kleckley, Ward, Benner, Furst

Mr. Furst: I move that the public hearing for this application remain open until January 15th.

Ms. Barnhart: Second.

RESULT: 7-0
MOVER: Furst
SECONDER: Barnhart
AYES: Ward, Kleckley, Brusk, Benner, Alabi, Barnhart, Furst

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Planning and Zoning Administrator

Chairman