Columbia Charter Township
Zoning Board of Appeals
Meeting Minutes
April 30, 2026 at 7:00pm

Call to Order
Columbia Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals meeting called to order by Chairperson Hollis Jeffreys at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call
Members Present: Robin Tackett, Kathy Church, Diana Potts, Scott Rogers (Alternate), and Hollis Jeffreys.
Members Absent (excused): Jerry Shay.
Staff Present: Brittany Stein, Zoning Manager.

Approval of Agenda
Motion by Robin Tackett to approve the agenda as presented, support by Diana Potts.
On a voice vote; Motion Carried. Agenda approved.

Call to the Public – Public Comments
None.

Two variance requests this evening.
Variance Request – Public Hearing: (Agenda Item: 6.a.) (V26-003)
Public Hearing for **8442 N. Shore Dr.** (William & Karen Bixler) (Tax ID #: 000-19-17-327-009-01) was called to order by the Chairperson. Wiliam & Karen Bixler (applicants) are seeking a variance from the zoning requirements under Article 3: Table 3-4 for a new single-family two-story dwelling on an approximately 4,360-square foot property. The existing dwelling is intended to be razed. The first floor of the dwelling will have 1,244-square feet of living space, the second floor 941-square foot of living space with a screen room and deck on the rear of the home. The dwelling will be setback 12-foot from the north front property line, requiring a 13-foot variance. The Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance requires a 25-foot front yard setback.

Builder representative (Chad Nestor) for RL Baker Construction spoke at this time. The current home's foundation is compromised as it sits and is unable to add a second story. The property is a nonconforming lot. Chairperson Jeffreys asked about the two grinder pumps. What will be the proximity? Chad stated that they will be further away.

Brittany Stein Columbia Charter Township Zoning Administrator spoke at this time. The subject property is approximately 4,360 square feet in size and fronts onto N. Shore Dr. to the

north and Clark Lake to the south, with single-family dwellings to the east and west. There is an existing non-conforming two-story single-family dwelling on the parcel that has 1,400 square feet of living space on the first floor and 690 square feet of space on the second floor, which is intended to be demolished. If approved, the variance request would permit a new single-family two-story dwelling on an approximately 4,360-square foot property. The existing dwelling is intended to be razed. The first floor of the dwelling will have 1,244-square feet of living space, the second floor 941-square foot of living space with a screen room and deck on the rear of the home. The dwelling will be setback 12-foot from the north front property line, requiring a 13-foot variance. The Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance requires a 25-foot front yard setback, Article 3: Table 3-4. Staff recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals Approve the variance requests based on the findings as stated in the staff report.

Public Comments:
Mel Earley (8272 N. Shore Dr.) spoke in favor of granting the variance and had a question of the time frame of when they will start and projected completion. Chad stated that they would start in the summer if variance is granted and it will be completed in around a year.

One piece of correspondence:
Shari Walicki, 8462 N. Shore Dr, 8441 N. Shore Dr. in favor of granting the variance.

The board closed to public comment at this time. Board discussion.
Motion made by Scott Rogers, supported by Kathy Church: to APPROVE variance application V26-003 at 8442 N. Shore Dr. to permit a new single-family two-story dwelling on an approximately 4,360-square foot property. The dwelling will be setback 12-foot from the north front property line, with a 13-foot variance. The variance meets standards one (1) through seven (7) of Section 16.7(B) of the Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance and a practical difficulty does exist on the subject site when strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance standards is applied as discussed at tonight's meeting and as presented in the staff report.
Roll Call Vote: R. Tackett – Yes; D. Potts – Yes; S. K. Church – Yes; Rogers – Yes; H. Jeffreys – Yes.
Motion Carried. Variance Approved.

Second variance request.
Variance Request – Public Hearing: (Agenda Item: 6.b.) (V26-004)
Public Hearing for Heart O' The Lakes Church at **7031 Jefferson Rd.** (Tax ID #: 000-19-23-301-001-03) was called to order by the Chairperson. Heart O' The Lakes Church (applicant) is seeking a variance from the zoning requirements under Article 3: Table 3-4, footnote 4, special road setbacks for a new 21,955-square foot parking lot to add 42 parking spaces on-site. The proposed parking lot will be setback 40-foot from the centerline of Jefferson Road, requiring a 50-foot variance. The Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance requires a 90-foot setback from the centerline of Jefferson Road.

Cyle Young, Lead Pastor for Heart O' The Lakes Church. Spoke at this time. They do not have enough parking. They have 3 services to try to accommodate all the parking but due to growth in attendance they are requesting a variance.

Eric Patterson, VP TeraFirma Landscape, Ann Arbor MI, spoke at this time and presented a design for the proposed parking lot. He stated they will mitigate any water issues they have and plan to make best use of property and safety for parking. It will not impede views or affect pedestrian or vehicular egress/ingress.

Chairperson Jeffreys asked the question, what will be the entrance to the building from this proposed parking lot? It was stated that they will be opening up existing entrances.

Brittany Stein Columbia Charter Township Zoning Administrator spoke at this time The subject property is approximately 9 acres in size and fronts onto Jefferson Road to the north and with single-family dwellings surrounding the site. There is an existing approximately 22,000-square-foot church/religious building on-site which is not intended to be increased at this time, and there is an existing 45,000-square-foot parking lot on the parcel which is suitable to park up to 108 vehicles. If approved, the variance request would permit a new 21,955-square foot parking lot to add 42 parking spaces on-site. The proposed parking lot will be setback 40-foot from the centerline of Jefferson Road, requiring a 50-foot variance. The Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance requires a 90-foot setback from the centerline of Jefferson Road, Article 3: Table 3-4, footnote 4, Special Road Setbacks. There is not a practical difficulty with the property. The request for variance is based on preference to have a parking lot in the front yard area. The property is 9 acres in size and 4.5 acres is vacant undeveloped area. There is ample space on the existing property which could be used for an expanded parking area, without the need for a variance. There is no practical difficulty with the property or special condition with the lot. The variance only applies to the property described in the variance application. The proposed parking lot which would be in the front yard area may not be in harmony with the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance including the intent of the RS and AG zoning district. This parking lot may impact public health, safety and welfare in general and vehicular and pedestrian circulation, due to it being proposed close to a public road. Development of a new A paved parking lot should meet all requirements of the zoning ordinance. The proposed parking lot could have an impact on maneuvering vehicles entering and exiting the parking lot onto Jefferson Road. The parking lot should not cause any effect on surrounding property and property values and shall not negatively impact development and use of any neighboring property. This use is unique to RS and AG zoned districts, because churches are a special land use. No, development of this parcel has been in place for many years, and the use is not intended to change. The footprint of the building is not proposed to change. The intent is to create additional parking for an established use. Adding a parking lot does still require site plan review. Staff does not find that there is a practical difficulty with the property where a parking lot variance is proposed. With having a large amount of undeveloped land, a compliant parking area could be constructed on the parcel without the need for a variance.
Staff recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals Deny the variance requests based on the findings as stated in the staff report.

Diana Potts asked about future plans for church and church parking? Pastor Cyle stated they have future plans of adding onto the church and parking.

Two pieces of correspondence:

1.) Kristen HIll 500 Case Rd. in favor of granting the variance.
2.) Thomas & Becky Morehead, 7022 Jefferson Rd. in favor of granting the variance.

The board closed to public comment at this time. Board discussion.
Motion made by Hollis Jeffreys, supported by Diana Potts: to DENY variance application V26-004 at 8442 N. Shore Dr. to permit a new single-family two-story dwelling on an approximately 4,360-square foot property. The dwelling will be setback 12-foot from the north front property line, with a 13-foot variance. The variance does not meet standards one (1) through seven (7) of Section 16.7(B) of the Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance and a practical difficulty does not exist on the subject site when strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance standards is applied as discussed at tonight's meeting and as presented in the staff report. a new 21,955-square foot parking lot to add 42 parking spaces on-site. The proposed parking lot will be setback 40-foot from the centerline of Jefferson Road, requiring a 50-foot variance.
Reminder that a Yes vote is a vote to Deny.
Roll Call Vote: S. Rogers – Yes; K. Church – Yes; S. H. Jeffreys – Yes; R. Tackett – Yes; D. Potts – Yes.
Motion Carried. Variance Denied.

New/Old Business
Approval of the Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes
Motion by Diana Potts to approve March 10, 2026, Zoning Board of Appeals minutes as submitted; support by Hollis Jeffreys.
On a voice vote; Motion Carried.

Public comments.
None.

Adjournment
Motion made by Hollis Jeffreys to adjourn the meeting; support by Robin Tackett.
On a voice vote; motion carried.
The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Tackett
Columbia Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeal Secretary