CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS
COMBINED PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD

REGULAR MEETING
(PUBLIC HEARING)
Wednesday, August 26, 2026 at 6:00 PM
The Bessette Building (DPW) – 1280 High Street, Central Falls, RI 02863

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Chair Marenzana called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

II. Roll Call

Chair Marenzana called the roll and the following members were present: John Marenzana, Hugo Figueroa, Dan Klotz, Ann Peckham, and Kevin Marchand. Also in attendance were: Joshua B. Magnone, Principal Deputy Director for Planning, and Joseph P. Baxter, Legal Counsel.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Marenzana led the Board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting Minutes of July 22, 2026

Mr. Magnone requested that approval of the minutes be continued to the next meeting. There was no objection.

V. Public Comment

Chair Marenzana opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. Magnone stated that there were no names listed on the sign-up sheet.

VI. New Business

Mr. Magnone stated that the Applicant for 319 Hunt Street wished to request a continuance and requested that its application be taken out of order as the first item. Mr. Figueroa moved the motion, seconded by Ms. Peckham. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Pursuant to its local and statutory authority as the Zoning Board, discussion and possible votes on Application PZB-2026-09Z:

> Effuahson, LLC, of 40 Toronto Avenue, Providence, RI, represented by Jones Harris, Applicant for 319 Hunt Street (Assessor's Plat 3, Lot 121), proposes to construct an addition to the existing principal garage. The Applicant seeks a Use Variance to expand the legal nonconforming use and Dimensional Variances from rear-yard setback requirements (Art. IV, Sec. 401, R-3 Zone), maximum lot coverage requirements (Art. IV, Sec. 401, R-3 Zone), and from the requirements of Art. IV, Sec. 401.1(B) to permit a total open area of less than 800 square feet on the subject property.

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The Applicant's agent, Jones Harris, appeared before the Board. Mr. Harris requested a continuance due to the inability for his attorney and expert witness to attend the public hearing.

Mr. Marchand motioned to continue the mater to the next regularly scheduled meeting, seconded by Ms. Peckham. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

A. Pursuant to its local and statutory authority as the Zoning Board, discussion and possible votes on Application PZB-2026-08Z:

> Juan Rodriguez, of 901 Roosevelt Ave, Pawtucket, RI, Applicant for 488-494 Dexter Street (Plat 6, Lot 344) seeks Special-Use Permits to provide fewer than the minimum number of off-street parking spaces required and to provide off-site parking (Art. V, Sec. 514.13(b)-(c)).

The Applicant, Juan Rodriguez, and the son of the property owner, Octavio Munoz, appeared before the Board. Both were sworn in by Attorney Baxter.

Mr. Rodriguez explained his request to the Board regarding reduced parking during outdoor events held in the on-site parking lot. He also described an outdoor screen that he proposes to use for entertainment during events and as a sign during non-event periods.

Mr. Rodriguez explained further that he surveyed the nearby street and identified 45 on-street parking spaces.

Mr. Figueroa asked how many parking spaces are located on the subject property. Mr. Rodriguez explained that he provides approximately eight or nine parking spaces. Referring to an aerial image, Mr. Magnone stated that he believes there are approximately 11 or 12 parking spaces, although some may be obstructed by an outdoor tent shown in the image.

Chair Marenzana asked about the size of the outdoor screen mentioned by Mr. Rodriguez. Mr. Magnone responded that the screen was not included on the agenda for discussion. Further, that the Fire Department had previously raised a concern regarding the screen blocking windows, which has since been corrected by lowering the screen. According to Mr. Magnone, he has not been informed by the Zoning Official that the screen is nonconforming.

Mr. Magnone requested that the Staff Memorandum for 488-494 Dexter Street be entered into the record as "Exhibit A." Mr. Marchand moved the motion, seconded by Ms. Peckham. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Magnone presented the Staff Memorandum to the Board regarding the Applicant's request for a special use permit. He stated that the Planning Department is not opposed to the Applicant's request; however, he recommended that, if approved, the special use permit be subject to certain conditions.

Mr. Klotz left the meeting to use the restroom.

Chair Marenzana entertained a motion to approve the Applicant's application with the conditions outlined by Mr. Magnone. Mr. Figueroa moved the motion, seconded by Mr. Marchand. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Klotz returned from the restroom and asked that his vote be recorded in the affirmative.

C. Pursuant to its local and statutory authority as the Zoning Board, discussion and possible votes on Application PZB-2026-10Z:

> Elie Osko, of 6 Cook Street, Lincoln, RI, Owner and Applicant for 42-44 West Hunt Street (Plat 7, Lot 123), proposes to construct a 2-story addition to the existing principal residence. The

Applicant seeks Dimensional Variances from minimum parking aisle width requirements (Art. VIII, Sec. 801.2, 90-Degree Angle).

Attorney Baxter swore in Zack Kelling, of Level Design Group, appearing on behalf of the Applicant.

Mr. Kelling provided a summary of the proposal and of the relief requested.

Mr. Marchand inquired about the nature of the addition, Mr. Kelling responded that it was a two-unit addition at the rear of the existing building.

The Applicant, Mr. Osko, also appeared before the Board and summarized the proposal and requested relief. Mr. Osko added that they added green space on the side of the addition, which further necessitated this relief.

Mr. Marchand raised concerns of whether vehicles would have to back out onto West Hunt Street.

Mr. Kelling stated the turning analysis concluded that vehicles would have plenty of room to pull up and into the garages with the requested aisle width.

Mr. Marchand asked if an emergency vehicle could access the back of the property, Mr. Osko responded that there is plenty of room.

Mr. Magnone requested that the Staff Memorandum for 42-44 West Hunt Street be entered into the record as "Exhibit B." Mr. Marchand moved the motion, seconded by Ms. Peckham. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Magnone presented the Staff Memorandum to the Board regarding the Applicant's request for dimensional variances. He stated that the Planning Department is not opposed to the Applicant's request and discussed the reasoning provided in the Memorandum.

Chair Marenzana entertained a motion to approve the Applicant's request for a dimensional variance from the parking aisle width requirements applicable to the R-3 Zone, as set forth in Article IV, Section 401 of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically, relief of four (4) feet from the required parking aisle width in relation to the garage at the northerly portion of the proposed structure. Mr. Marchand moved the motion, seconded by Mr. Figueroa. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Marenzana entertained a motion to approve the Applicant's request for a dimensional variance from the parking aisle width requirements applicable to the R-3 Zone, as set forth in Article IV, Section 401 of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically, relief of four (4) feet from the required parking aisle width in relation to the garage at the southerly portion of the proposed structure. Mr. Figueroa moved the motion, seconded by Ms. Peckham. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Osko thanked the Board.

D. Pursuant to its local and statutory authority as the Zoning Board, discussion and possible votes on Application PZB-2026-11Z:

Balwant Sandhu, of 4 Bartlett Road, Methuen, MA, Owner and Applicant for 40-42 Fletcher Street (Plat 5, Lot 301) seeks a Dimensional Variance from the requirements of Art. IV, Sec. 401.1(B), to permit a total open area of less than 800 square feet on the subject property.

The Applicant, Balwant Sandhu, and his son, Jaskaran Singh, appeared before the Board.

Both Mr. Sandhu and Mr. Singh were sworn in by Attorney Baxter.

Mr. Sandhu provided a summary of their request for relief, including that the Department of Health found lead on the property, the soil was paved over to remediate lead in the soil, and the property received a conditional lead certificate.

Mr. Magnone provided the Planning Department's summary of facts, including that a City inspector noticed that the entirety of the property was paved, which resulted in a notice of zoning violation for lack of sufficient permeable space.

Mr. Magnone stated that Mr. Sandhu, upon receiving the notice of violation, was very responsive and then promptly filed for the requested relief.

Mr. Magnone continued by stating that the hardship for which the Applicant seeks relief resulted from a prior action of the Applicant, a factor on which the Board is required to make a positive finding. For this reason, along with the other negative findings identified in the staff memorandum and the potential availability of alternative means to mitigate the lead condition in a manner that complies with zoning requirements, Mr. Magnone recommended that the Board deny the Applicant's request for relief.

Mr. Marchand stated the Applicant's dilemma is a "double-sword," as he was told to cover the lead by the State Department of Health, but the City is telling him that he's covered too much.

Mr. Magnone acknowledged the dilemma but highlighted that there are means of covering the lead, while also retaining enough permeable surface to meet the City's zoning requirements.

Ms. Peckham mentioned that she previously owned property where she abated lead in a similar manner and questioned whether the ordinance had changed.

Mr. Marchand asked if a French drain could be installed.

Mr. Magnone mentioned that he believes the zoning ordinance does not contemplate using techniques like that and suggested that the ordinance could be amended in the future. Further adding that the current requirement is minimal and should be made proportional to properties in the future.

Mr. Magnone commented that, due to the Applicant's responsiveness, he anticipates that the Zoning Official will work with the Applicant to find an agreeable solution, as opposed leading with fines.

Mr. Magnone and the Applicant discussed potential mitigation options.

Chair Marenzana stated his understanding of the matter.

Mr. Sandhu stated that they purchased the property with five lead hazard certificates. Further stating that by incapsulating the lead with the asphalt, they do not run the risk of testing positive again.

Chair Marenzana inquired as to whether the Applicant knew of the City's intention to oppose his request ahead of the meeting.

Mr. Magnone responded that all Applicant's receive the staff report prior to the meeting.

Mr. Magnone reiterated Planning's position that the Applicant does not satisfy the applicable standards for relief and that there are alternative methods to mitigate the lead that satisfy zoning requirements.

Chair Marenzana asked if the State submits paperwork to the City when they confirm the presence of lead on a property.

Mr. Magnone responded that he is unsure but presumes that they do notify the City.

Mr. Sandhu stated that any permeable space on the property will likely lead to future lead violations and would disqualify the property from a full lead-safe certificate.

Mr. Marenzana asked if the Board has any further questions.

Mr. Marchand stated that the State should explain the full range of mitigation options to lead violators.

Chair Marenzana entertained a motion to deny the Applicant's request for a dimensional variance from the minimum lot open area requirements set forth in Article IV, Section 401.1(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically, relief of 800 square feet from the required minimum lot open area. Mr. Marchand moved the motion, seconded by Mr. Klotz. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Magnone and Mr. Sandhu discussed next steps and getting in-touch with the Zoning Official.

VII. Adjournment

Chair Marenzana entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Marchand moved the motion, seconded by Mr. Klotz. The vote was taken by a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. There was no objection, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM.

[Approved by the City of Central Falls Combined Planning and Zoning Board on _____]

Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws § 42-46-4, the Board reserves the right to convene in executive session on any of the aforementioned items for one or more of the purposes listed in Rhode Island General Laws § 42-46-5(1)-(10).

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