



**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**JANUARY 27, 2026 AT 7:00 PM**

VILLAGE HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
200 E. WOOD STREET  
PALATINE, IL 60067-5339  
(847) 359-9050 [www.palatine.il.us](http://www.palatine.il.us)

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**7:00 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wood Called the meeting to order at 7:02PM

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Bettenhausen moved for approval of the minutes, Commissioner Kolososki seconded the Motion.  
Motion is approved by voice vote

A. PZC Minutes: 01-13-2026

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Bettenhausen
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kolososki
<b>AYES:</b>	Jan Wood, Cindy Roth Wurster, Tim Schubert, Kevin Cavanaugh, Eric Friedman, Rodney Bettenhausen, Robert Kolososki
<b>NAYES:</b>	None

**IV. PUBLIC HEARING**

A. 311 E. Northwest Highway

1. Special Use Amendment to permit the expansion of an existing Medical Office(Physical Therapy).

**SU-000236-2025 – 311 E Northwest Highway – District #6**

Notice was published in the Journal & Topics on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 and mailed to the owners of the surrounding properties.

**Petitioner's Exhibits:**

1. **Special Use Application**
2. **Floor Plan**

3. **Business Plan**
4. **Plat of Survey**
5. **O-116-23 – 315 E Northwest Highway – SU**
6. **Public Notice**

**Background:**

Staff (Mr. Auer) provides background on the request. The petitioner proposes to expand an existing physical therapy office into a previously unoccupied tenant space.

**Sworn in petitioner:** Lisa Fischer, 315 E. Northwest Highway.

Ms. Fischer states that the practice is seeking additional floor space. There will be no change to hours of operation, number of clients served, services offered, or staffing levels.

Commissioner Roth-Wurster asks whether the hours of operation will change.

Ms. Fischer confirms there will be no change to hours, no increase in treatment beds, and that the request is solely to add floor space.

Commissioner Friedman asks whether patients have expressed any difficulty with parking.

Ms. Fischer states that there have been no parking issues and that there is ample available parking.

Staff (Mr. Auer) provides additional information. Medical office uses require Special Use approval for floor plan review in this zoning district. The expansion will not increase employee count, client volume, or hours of operation. The adjacent space was previously a business use, and staff finds no negative impact on parking.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Medical office uses are permitted in the subject zoning district following Special Use review. The submitted business plan has indicated that the expansion will not increase the level of staffing, clients, or hours of operation. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the proposed Special Use amendment, subject to the following conditions: 1. The Special Use shall substantially conform to the Business Plan and Floor Plan submitted by the Petitioner, except as such plans may be changed to conform to Village of Palatine Codes and Ordinances.

**There were no further questions. The public hearing was closed.**

**Commissioner Cavanaugh Made a motion to approve subject staff's conditions; seconded by Commissioner Roth-Wurster**

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Kolososki states that, particularly with the baby boomer population, there is a clear need for additional physical therapy services.

Commissioner Roth-Wurster notes that the petitioner is returning for an expansion of an existing business, is pleased the practice is doing well, and states that the request

meets the standards.

Commissioner Friedman comments that the request is straightforward, that the intensity of the use does not change from the prior approval, and that the expansion is reasonable.

Chairman Wood notes that she has operated a business in the same plaza for over 25 years and has not experienced parking issues. She states it is good to see a successful business expanding, providing more space for equipment, and that there is ample parking on that side of the plaza. She concludes that the request meets the standards, with no negative impact on health, safety, or welfare. Standards are met.

Chairman Wood summarized that this request has met the standards and was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0. This item will tentatively go to Village Council on Monday February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Cavanaugh
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Roth-Wurster
<b>AYES:</b>	Jan Wood, Cindy Roth Wurster, Tim Schubert, Kevin Cavanaugh, Eric Friedman, Rodney Bettenhausen, Robert Kolososki
<b>NAYES:</b>	None

B. 158 N. Maple Street

1. Variation for a fence to be set back 3 feet from a side lot line abutting a street abutting a side yard, instead of the minimum required 5-foot setback.
2. Variation not to install landscaping material between the fence and the lot line abutting a public street.

**VAR-000234-2025 – 158 N Maple St – District #6**

Notice was published in the Journal & Topics on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 and mailed to the owners of the surrounding properties.

**Petitioner's Exhibits:**

1. **Variation Application**
2. **Proof of Ownership**
3. **Spot Survey**
4. **Site Plan and Fence Elevation**
5. **Petitioner Narrative & Landscaping Plan**
6. **O-088-24 – 152 N maple – SU**
7. **Letter of Opposition**
8. **Public Notice**
9. **Statement of Hardship**

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## 10. Letters of Support

### **Background:**

Staff (Mr. Auer) provides background on the request. The petitioner is requesting a variation to allow a 6-foot-tall fence in a side yard abutting a street. Mr. Auer explains that the original plans did not include landscaping. Landscaping has since been added to the proposal, and therefore a variation for landscaping is no longer required. However, the landscaping variation remains listed on the staff report because it was included in the public notice. Landscaping will not be part of the Commission's vote.

**Sworn in petitioner:** Christopher Thomas, owner, 158 N. Maple Street.

Mr. Thomas states that he is requesting common-sense recognition of the unique conditions of his lot. He explains that the sidewalk is set behind the curb and that, combined with required setbacks, results in a 20-foot setback from the street. This creates a significant hardship, as approximately 1,000 square feet of usable yard space cannot be effectively used. He conducted an audit of the block and found that eight homes have fences, four of which are 6-foot privacy fences. He states this is consistent with surrounding single-family homes. He notes that his home is directly impacted by headlights from multi-family housing across the street, with vehicle headlights shining directly into his patio and living areas. A 6-foot privacy fence would mitigate this issue. He adds that the proposed landscaping meets a high standard and respectfully requests approval based on the facts presented. Mr. Thomas presents photographs showing headlights from the adjacent multi-family development shining into the rear windows of his home.

Commissioner Friedman asks where the photos were taken and where Mr. Thomas was located within the house.

Mr. Thomas states the photos were taken while he was seated at the dining room table, noting that both the dining and living rooms are directly impacted. Chairman Wood expresses some confusion regarding the request and asks why the additional two feet of relief is necessary, stating that approval would be more straightforward if the relief were reduced.

Mr. Auer explains that a 6-foot fence with a 5-foot setback (including landscaping) — is permitted without council approval.

Chairman Wood comments that it seems like a significant amount of work for a two-foot difference and asks why it is so important.

Mr. Thomas explains that the backyard is narrow, includes a patio, and that the difference between four feet and six feet of usable space would make a meaningful difference for his children.

Commissioner Cavanaugh raises concerns about the proposed vegetation, noting that a tree shown in the parkway could potentially obstruct sight lines near Maple Avenue and worsen visibility. He asks whether the tree is necessary.

Mr. Thomas responds that the parkway tree would be a Village-planted tree and that the specific species and placement would be determined by Public Works.

Mr. Auer confirms that the tree would be outside the scope of this request.

Commissioner Cavanaugh reiterates concerns about sight lines to the east.

Mr. Auer notes that Public Works and Engineering have established standards for tree placement.

Commissioner Kolososki states that a solid fence would help block intrusive headlights from the condos and townhomes and believes a privacy fence is appropriate. He encourages the petitioner to pursue the additional two feet and comments that the yard would be beneficial for the family.

Chairman Wood discusses the headlight issue and suggests that window treatments such as blinds or curtains could potentially address the concern.

Mr. Thomas states that he researched traffic volumes from the adjacent condominium driveway and found approximately 10–14 vehicles per hour during peak periods. He describes the traffic and headlights as intrusive. He explains that the family initially considered an open fence but changed course due to traffic volume and intrusiveness. He notes that they have been working with the Village on this request for some time. He also states that the street experiences heavy commuter traffic related to nearby train access during morning and evening hours, with vehicles speeding to catch trains, creating additional safety concerns.

Chairman Wood asks about the neighboring property to the west and whether the fence would affect sight lines.

Mr. Thomas states that the neighboring property does not have a fence but has arborvitae planted to address ingress and egress concerns and to screen views along the sidewalk.

Commissioner Schubert asks about snow removal and how it is currently handled and how it would be handled with the fence in place.

Mr. Thomas states he is not certain how plowing would change but assumes snow would be pushed toward the sidewalk.

Sworn-in Petitioner: Stephanie Thomas, 158 N. Maple Street.

Ms. Thomas states that when they previously lived at 227 Wood Street, the condominium development piled snow onto what was then a vacant lot for several years and that this practice has since stopped.

Commissioner Schubert asks whether snow is shoveled toward the street or into the yard.

Ms. Thomas states that snow is shoveled into the yard.

Mr. Thomas agrees and adds that the children enjoy having more snow in the yard. Commissioner Bettenhausen asks whether the petitioner would consider alternatives to a 6-foot privacy fence, such as a patio screen, a shorter fence, or a picket fence.

Mr. Thomas states that traffic, headlights, security, and privacy are all factors and that a 6-foot privacy fence best addresses those concerns.

Commissioner Bettenhausen suggests that a 5-foot board-on-board fence might be sufficient.

Mr. Thomas responds that pedestrian sight lines are typically around five feet and notes significant foot traffic from non-neighborhood residents due to the nearby train depot.

Commissioner Kolososki asks whether the petitioner has dogs.

Mr. Thomas confirms that he has two dogs.

Mr. Chairman Wood references photos submitted by the petitioner showing fences on

nearby properties, noting a mix of privacy and picket fencing.

Mr. Thomas states that the photographs represent properties within a one-block radius of his home.

Chairman Wood asks whether there are privacy fences on corner lots in the area.

Mr. Thomas states that there are corner lots with fencing, including 2-foot and 6-foot fences at the rear.

Mr. Auer provides additional information regarding fencing regulations, setback requirements, and code standards, and reviews corner-yard fence height limitations. for staff to determine that the fence will align with the character of the locality - staff evaluated fences in the nearby area. Staff observed that the majority of fences in corner lots are open-style fences and are below 6 feet in height. Ultimately, the proposed 6-foot-tall solid fence does not align with general character of the surrounding area.

Commissioner Cavanaugh asks whether there are Village standards regarding fence-to-fence connections, noting a neighboring 4-foot picket fence and asking whether a gap would be required.

Mr. Auer states he cannot answer definitively at this time and that it would require further review.

Ms. Thomas states that their property is one of only two single-family homes along Wood Street and that their lot is uniquely impacted by multi-family development entrances and headlights. She notes that ordinance provisions were intended to address headlight impacts.

Chairman Wood asks Staff whether a combination of a shorter fence height with a different setback would be more acceptable.

Mr. Auer states that Staff does not support the current application due to inconsistency with surrounding fencing but would reevaluate if the proposal were revised.

**Staff Recommendation:**

The petitioner is proposing to construct a 6-foot fence set back 3 feet from a side lot line abutting a street abutting a side yard. While Staff acknowledges that there are varying uses in the nearby area (e.g. single-family residential home bounded on two sides by multi-family developments), the proposed 6-foot height and solid fencing elevation are dissimilar from some of the established fencing elements in the area. The proposed fence does not share qualities with corner yard fences in the surrounding area and does not satisfy the minimum standards for a variation. Therefore, Staff recommends denial of the requested Special Use. If the proposed height and fencing elevation opacity were revised after the Commission hearing - Staff would reevaluate its recommendation and present to the respective authority. If the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends approval, Staff recommends the following conditions:

1. The Special Use shall substantially conform to the Site Plan and Elevations submitted by Chris Thomas, petitioner, except as such plans may be changed to conform to the Village's Codes and Ordinances.
2. A final landscaping plan shall be submitted in a manner acceptable to the Director

of Planning & Zoning.

Commissioner Friedman asks whether any action is required regarding landscaping.

Mr. Auer states that the motion before the Commission pertains only to the fence variation to allow a 3-foot setback instead of the required 5-foot setback.

Commissioner Cavanaugh asks about the process if a 5-foot fence were proposed instead.

Mr. Auer states that it would require reevaluation and further review by the appropriate authority.

Mr. Thomas asks whether the fence ordinance accounts for unique parkway conditions.

Mr. Auer states that parkways are not included in setback calculations as parkways are outside of property boundaries.

**There were no further questions. The public hearing was closed.**

**Commissioner Cavanaugh Made a motion to approve subject staff's conditions; seconded by Commissioner Koloski**

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Schubert states that traffic related to train commuters is a safety concern and that headlights are intrusive. He finds the additional two feet and proposed landscaping reasonable and supports the request.

Commissioner Koloski supports the request, citing the property's adjacency to multi-family uses, traffic volume, safety, and privacy concerns, and notes the petitioner's dedication to improving their home.

Commissioner Roth-Wurster states she struggles with fence requests generally, particularly on corner lots where safety considerations apply. She notes that the home previously received setback relief during construction and expresses concern that the request could alter neighborhood character. While acknowledging the unique circumstances, she does not feel sufficient justification has been provided and does not support the request.

Commissioner Friedman notes the unique location adjacent to multi-family housing and a high-volume driveway, stating that the conditions limit enjoyment of the yard. He believes the proposed fence with a 3-foot setback would be an improvement over existing conditions and supports the request.

Chairman Wood discusses neighborhood character, noting that most nearby fences are picket-style. She finds a 6-foot solid fence visually impactful and would be more comfortable with an open-style fence. She acknowledges the petitioner's efforts and the uniqueness of the site but remains conflicted.

Commissioner Roth-Wurster notes that in other cases, fencing with differing heights at each side of the lot has been used to address similar concerns.

Commissioner Bettenhausen states that a 6-foot solid fence appears harsh compared to surrounding examples and suggests a 5-foot board-on-board fence with landscaping as a more appropriate solution.

**Chairman Wood summarized that this request has met the standards and was approved by a vote of 4-3. This item will tentatively go to Village Council on Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Cavanaugh
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kolososki
<b>AYES:</b>	Jan Wood, Tim Schubert, Eric Friedman, Robert Kolososki
<b>NAYES:</b>	Cindy Roth Wurster, Kevin Cavanaugh, Rodney Bettenhausen

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one came forward

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>MOTION APPROVED BY VOICE</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Schubert
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Cavanaugh
<b>AYES:</b>	None
<b>NAYES:</b>	None

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15PM

SUBMITTED BY:

Annette Schwab  
Customer Service