



York City Planning Commission Minutes
Monday, September 14, 2026, | 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall | 101 S George St, York, PA 17401

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call (Johnson, Velez-excused, Burgos-excused, Davis, Wolfe, Gaines, Moore)
3. Minutes of the previous meeting

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

4. Committee reports
 - 1.1. Zoning Hearing Board-emailed
 - 1.2. Planning Resolutions from 8-10-26 – emailed

Staff introduced the practice of providing City Council planning resolutions to the Planning Commission so members can see the final decisions made by City Council on matters previously reviewed and recommended by the Commission, including land development, subdivision, and stormwater-related matters.

Unfinished business

New

Staff introduced Ehsan Ershad Sarabi as the Planning Commission's new board member and welcomed him to his first meeting.

8.1.1

35-2026-Z-SE-V | 721 Jessop Pl. – TABLED FROM AUGUST

Mr. Wolfe made a motion, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous to bring back from be tabled.

Applicant: Dan Burke/representative Steve Donald
Owner: Therapy Investments, LLC
Property: 721 Jessup Place, York, PA 17401
Zoning District: MUI-2, Mixed-Use/Residential District

The Commission considered an application involving the proposed conversion of an existing single-family dwelling into a **two-unit multifamily dwelling**.

The applicant's representative, **Steve Donald**, appeared on behalf of the applicant and explained that the building is a three-story structure. The proposal would create one dwelling unit on the first floor and a second dwelling unit occupying the second and third floors. Each unit would contain its own kitchen, bathroom, bedrooms, and other living facilities.

The applicant explained that the property had previously contained multiple makeshift bedrooms and had been in poor condition. Those spaces were removed and various deficiencies were corrected so that the property could be safely occupied and registered as a rental.

The applicant stated that the upper portion of the property has been occupied since 2025, while the first-floor area had remained vacant for several years. The applicant indicated that separate utilities would be established as required for the two-unit configuration and that construction work had not been undertaken to create the second unit before obtaining the necessary approvals.

Parking

The applicant stated that the property currently provides **two on-site parking spaces**, while the applicable requirement would be three spaces. A variance was therefore requested.

The applicant noted that the neighboring property has a similar configuration and also provides two parking spaces. The applicant also stated that there is substantial street parking in the surrounding area.

Commission Discussion

Commission members asked questions concerning:

- The property's vacancy history;
- The previous use and condition of the building;
- The removal of makeshift bedrooms;
- Utility arrangements for the proposed two units;
- Existing and required parking; and
- The condition and history of the garage shown on older plans.

The applicant indicated that the garage shown on some plans has not existed for many years, possibly since the 1990s.

Staff referenced an inspection report identified as **Exhibit D**.

Public Comment

The Commission opened the matter for public comment. No substantive public comments were recorded in the portion of the transcript provided.

- Recommend to [approve/deny] a variance to the definition of multi-family conversion from a different use, as defined in section 1304.01-1.02.002a, for the property at 721 Jessop Pl. in the MUI2 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

- Recommend to [approve/deny] of a dimensional variance for 2 units as defined in §1304.01.1.02.002(b)(4), for the property at 721 Jessop Pl. in the MUI2 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

- Recommend to [approve/deny] of a variance to the required off-street parking spaces found in section 1304.01-1.02.002, for the property at for the property at 721 Jessop Pl. in the MUI2 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

- Recommend to [approve/deny] a variance to waive the special exception provision that the property must have been vacant for two years found in section 1311.11(c)(1) for the property at 721 Jessop Pl. in the MUI2 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

- Recommend to [approve/deny] of a special exception to allow multi-family use, as defined in section 1304.01-1.02.002, for the property at 721 Jessop Pl. in the MUI2 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

36-2026-Z-V | 31 Carlise Ave.

Applicant: Julio Zapata

Applicant Address: 2716 Eastwood Drive, York, PA 17403

Owner: Budget Rentals, LLC

Owner Address: 475 Madison Avenue, York, PA 17404

Zoning District: UN-1, Urban Mixed Residential/Commercial District

Property: 31 Carlisle Avenue

The Commission began consideration of an application requesting a variance related to a proposed **neighborhood grocery store**.

The requested variance concerns the zoning provision limiting the retail area, or area designated for public shopping use, to **1,000 square feet** in the UN-1 zoning district. The applicant is seeking relief to allow a retail/public shopping area of approximately **2,000 square feet**.

The staff's recommendation was to **deny the requested variance** from the 1,000-square-foot limitation under the applicable zoning ordinance provision.

The applicant appeared before the Commission. **Carrie Mercedes** was also identified during the discussion. The applicant stated that he was proposing to develop a grocery store and referenced his prior business experience.

The Commission requested additional information concerning the proposed grocery store.

- Recommend to [approve/deny] a variance to the neighborhood grocery store that the Retail area or area designated for public use shall be limited to 1,000 square feet, as defined in section 1304.01-4.09 (5), at 31 Carlisle Ave. in the UN1 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

37-2026-Z-SE-V | 401 Roosevelt Ave.

Request: Variance to permit up to 15 occupants in a group home.

The Commission reviewed an application for a group home at **401 Roosevelt Avenue**. The applicant explained that the property has operated as a recovery/sober-living residence for approximately seven years. The applicant stated that the program provides a supportive living environment and does not provide on-site treatment. Residents generally participate in outside treatment, counseling, employment, and recovery programs.

Staff explained that the City's ordinance does not specifically identify "recovery homes" or "sober living" as a separate use. The applicant is therefore proceeding under the City's **group home** provisions.

The ordinance permits a group home with up to five individuals by right. The applicant is requesting a variance to allow **up to 15 occupants**. Staff noted that the number of occupants is also subject to applicable state/DDAP licensing and inspection requirements.

On-Site Staffing

The Commission discussed the ordinance requirement that a group home have an **on-site residential staff person present at all times**, identified as a paid professional with an appropriate license or certification. A resident receiving treatment for the disability for which the home was established may not serve in that capacity.

The applicant initially indicated that personnel are associated with the residence and that the organization maintains an office and provides oversight. However, questions arose as to whether the person who would be on site meets the ordinance's specific licensing/certification requirement.

Staff explained that the application did not request a variance from the on-site staffing requirement because staff understood that the applicant would provide a qualified person. The Commission discussed making compliance with this requirement a condition of approval or requiring the applicant to obtain an additional variance if necessary.

The applicant stated that the residence does not provide direct treatment but serves as a supportive environment for individuals participating in outside treatment programs.

Occupancy and Parking

The applicant stated that the property contains nine bedrooms, two-and-a-half bathrooms, a large kitchen and substantial common areas. The applicant indicated that the residence has historically housed approximately 10–14 residents and currently has capacity for 15.

Staff reviewed the parking requirements. For the requested occupancy of 15 residents, the ordinance would require additional off-street parking beyond the initial spaces, resulting in a total requirement of approximately **six off-street parking spaces**, subject to the applicable provisions and any waiver.

The applicant indicated that residents generally do not have significant numbers of vehicles and that parking is available on the property.

Staff further explained that the property's DDAP license establishes the maximum number of residents permitted based on the size and characteristics of the residence. The property is subject to periodic inspection, and the City maintains records of the licensed occupancy.

Public Comment

A nearby resident expressed concern regarding the proposed occupancy and stated that she was unfamiliar with the operation of the recovery home. She emphasized that she supports giving people opportunities but was concerned about having a group home with many residents near her neighborhood and a nearby school.

Another nearby resident, **Chris Microsado**, stated that he and his wife support group homes and supportive services. He expressed concern, however, that nearby residents had received little or no advance information regarding the operation and proposed expansion. He stated that the public notice received was the first time he became aware of the organization and its proposed occupancy.

Mr. Microsado also raised concerns regarding property maintenance and requested greater communication between the operator and surrounding residents.

Dylan Bower addressed the Commission and stated that he supports recovery programs but encouraged the Commission to consider the cumulative effect of approving numerous high-occupancy group homes throughout the City. He questioned how the City monitors compliance with conditions, particularly the requirement for an on-site qualified staff person. He stated that, as a developer and resident, he understands the business model but believes the Commission should consider long-term neighborhood impacts and enforcement.

The applicant responded that the organization has operated at the location for approximately seven years and that no significant neighborhood problems have been reported. The applicant stated that residents are subject to random drug testing, employment expectations, counseling, and participation in treatment programs. Residents may eventually transition into apartments, homes, or other independent living arrangements.

The applicant explained that confidentiality and federal/state requirements concerning individuals in recovery limit the organization's ability to proactively identify residents or publicize the nature of the operation.

Staff clarified that the City's public-notice requirements are satisfied through the City's notification process, newspaper advertisements, and posted notice. Staff stated that notices were sent to surrounding property owners.

The Commission also discussed how changes in occupancy are monitored. Staff explained that the City's property maintenance inspection process and DDAP licensing records are used to verify the permitted occupancy.

Ownership and Future Use

The applicant clarified that the organization **leases rather than owns the property** and has operated there since approximately 2019. The Commission discussed whether a condition could be imposed requiring the property to revert to its prior single-family use if the property is sold or the approved group-home operation ceases.

Staff and the Commission concluded that such a condition could be placed on the property rather than solely on the applicant.

- Recommend to [approve/deny] a variance for Group Home 6-8 occupants to allow up to 15 as defined in section 1304.01, 1.04.001(b) at 401 Roosevelt Ave. in the UN2 zoning.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval conditioned on all further required provisions being met, motion died for lack of a 2nd.

Ms. Gaines made a motion to deny Mr. Moore 2nd. Mr. Wolfe nay.

- Recommend to [approve/deny] of a Special Exception for Group Home as defined in section 1304.01, 1.04.001(b) at 401 Roosevelt Ave. in the UN2 zoning.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval conditioned upon sale converted back to single family, Ms. Gaines. 2nd. Mr. Johnson nay.

38-2026-Z-V | 437 W. Market St. – EMERGENCY CAN NOT ATTEND

- Recommend to [approve/deny] a variance to add 2 additional units to a current 2 unit approved multi-family conversion from a different use, as defined in section 1304.01-1.02.002 for a total of 4 units, for the property at 437 W. Market St. in the UN2 zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion for no recommendation Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

39-2026-Z-V | 14-16 W. Market St.

Request: Dimensional variance to permit 50 residential units in the Central Business District (CBD).

The Commission reviewed a request for a dimensional variance to permit **50 residential units** at 14–16 West Market Street, commonly known as the **Wolf Building**.

The applicant, represented by Dylan Bower of WellSpan/Well Square, explained that the building historically housed the Wolf Company and was formerly associated with the Weiss/Wolf department store. The upper floors are currently vacant, and the applicant proposes converting those floors to approximately 50 apartments.

The first floor contains existing office space, including the York County Community Foundation. The applicant stated that the existing first-floor occupants would remain.

The applicant noted that the property is located near a municipal parking garage containing more than 400 parking spaces. The applicant stated that the proposed residential use would bring additional residents downtown and support existing restaurants and businesses.

The rear portion of the building has been largely vacant since the 1990s and could be used for common residential amenities such as fitness, storage, and other resident services.

The applicant discussed building-code and structural challenges associated with the property's zero-lot-line condition. Because of the adjoining properties, conventional windows cannot readily be installed on portions of the east side. The applicant is considering light wells and vertical openings from the roof to provide natural light to interior areas, subject to structural review and applicable approvals.

The applicant also discussed the existing aluminum façade and expressed an interest in rehabilitating and reusing the building rather than leaving the upper floors vacant.

Commission members expressed support for converting vacant downtown office space to residential use and increasing the number of people living downtown.

- Recommend to [approve/deny] a dimensional Variance for the proposed 50 units as defined in §1304.01.1.02.002(b)(4) at the property at 14-16 W. Market St. in the CBD zoning district.

Mr. Wolfe made a motion to recommend approval, Ms. Gaines 2nd. Unanimous

Other Business/Public Comment

Adjournment