



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 * 6:30 PM
MINUTES

The Belle Isle Planning & Zoning Board met on October 28, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the City Hall Chambers at 1600 Nela Avenue, Belle Isle, FL 32809.

Present was:

Board member Agrusa
Board member Zimmerman
Board member Squires
Board member Hobbs

Absent was:

Chairman Holihan
Board member Conduff
Board member Thompson

Chief Grimm, Attorney Benjamin Schafer, City Planner April Fisher, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Vice Chairman Squires opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m., and the Clerk confirmed the quorum.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag – Board Member Hobbs

Board member Hobbs gave the invocation and led the pledge to the flag.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of P&Z Board Meeting Minutes - September 23, 2025

Board member Zimmerman moved to approve the minutes with the following changes,

Page 4, 3rd Paragraph reads, “...Board member Zimmerman asked if a motion could be made on the condition that the other permits are properly closed. City Manager Rudometkin said he does not see a lot of that; however, the Board can motion with conditions.

Should read, “...Board member Zimmerman asked if a motion could be made on the condition that the other permits are properly closed. City Manager Rudometkin said he does not see a lot of that; however, the Board can motion with conditions. Board member Zimmerman stated that there is an after-the-fact permit process within F.S.”

Page 4, 7th Paragraph reads, “...ALSO KNOWN AS PARCEL ID # 20-23-30-1222-00-020 with the condition that the fence is inside the applicant's property line, does not remove the back neighbor's fence, and the applicant would submit for a permit for those projects already completed and in compliance.

Should read, “...ALSO KNOWN AS PARCEL ID # 20-23-30-1222-00-020 with the condition that the fence is inside the applicant's property line, does not remove the back neighbors' fence, and the applicant would coordinate with staff and submit for a permit for those projects already completed that were performed without permits and in compliance.”

Board member Agrusa seconded the motion, which passed 4:0.

4. Public Hearings

- a. **Planning and Zoning Case Number 2025-10-002: PURSUANT TO SECTION 42-64, AND SECTION 50-102 (A)(8) OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD SHALL REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON A REQUESTED VARIANCE FROM SECTION 50-102 (A)(4)(D) AND (G) TO ALLOW AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE (A PAVILLION) TO BE BUILT THAT EXCEEDS THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT AND SQUARE- FOOTAGE ALLOWED, SUBMITTED BY APPLICANT TRAVIS BARR, TD BARR CONSTRUCTION, ON BEHALF OF THE PROPERTY OWNER, GREGORY MEERBAUM FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1910 HOFFNER AVENUE, BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA 32812, ALSO KNOWN AS PARCEL ID # 18-23-30-5120-00-510.**

Vice Chairman Squires opened the public hearing and read Public Hearing 2025-10-002 by title.

April Fisher, City Planner, presented the variance and said the applicant seeks a variance to build an oversized accessory structure—a 3,496 sq. ft., 20'1"-tall pavilion with a 2' chimney extension. After reviewing the variance criteria, staff found the request does not meet several requirements: the structure is not the minimum size necessary; no unique property conditions justify the variance; and the need is considered self-imposed. She noted, however, that the pavilion appears architecturally compatible with the primary residence and may be considered in harmony with the intent of the Land Development Code, despite its size. Staff recommends denial based on failure to meet variance criteria, but advised that if the board approves the request, two conditions should be required: (1) Submit a Unity of Title between 1916 Hoffner (primary residence) and 1910 Hoffner (subject property), since accessory structures cannot exist without a primary residence, and (2) the pavilion must be used solely as accessory recreational space for the residents—no commercial or non-single-family uses.

Greg Meerbaum, property owner of 1916 and 1910 Hoffner Avenue, explained that he unexpectedly acquired the adjacent parcel from a longtime Belle Isle resident who needed to sell quickly, and that he purchased it to help him. With more property than planned, he sought to repurpose the additional parcel by creating a family pavilion instead of additional housing. He stated the proposed size reflects the scale of the combined three-acre property and better suits its intended family use than a smaller 400 sq. ft. structure. He emphasized that the pavilion is designed to match the existing home, involves no tree removal, and has been carefully planned and walked through multiple times. He stated that the project fits the site and would positively contribute to the neighborhood and property values. Materials and design work have already been ordered or completed. Mr. Meerbaum said that the project is intended to enhance the property and community, not harm the lake. He requested the board's approval and offered to answer questions, with his technical representative available for detailed inquiries.

Ed Fore, Attorney for the applicant, explained that the owner had already begun construction on his primary residence when he acquired the adjacent parcel containing a 1960s single-family home on an unusually shaped, historically platted lot. Redeveloping that lot independently would present significant challenges due to outdated setbacks, existing encroachments, and the narrow driveway configuration. Combining the parcels and replacing the old home with an accessory pavilion avoids these issues. He reviewed the alternatives required for variance consideration which were (1) connecting the structures with a breezeway would eliminate the need for a variance but would be aesthetically incompatible, add roof runoff toward the lake, increase costs, and obstruct a neighbor's view, and (2) renovating the existing 1960s house into a pavilion would be technically challenging and visually inconsistent due to the flat roof and outdated design. He stated the proposed pavilion generally follows the scale of the former home, is open-air rather than enclosed, and is intended to complement the main residence. The structure will include plumbing and electrical service, tying into the existing septic system on the property. The pavilion is situated between the pool and an existing dock, serving as an amenity space. The total square footage is approximately 3,496 sq. ft., including a chimney allowance permitted by code. Attorney Fore noted that an earlier plan showed space for a tennis court if the existing driveway were removed, illustrating the area's size. Although a tennis court is not part of the current plans, the idea had been previously suggested by a former board member who lives nearby.

Board member Zimmerman asked for clarification on the unity of title, noting confusion about how the two parcels (1916 and 1910) would function. He asked whether combining them under a unity of title would convert the request from a variance involving two separate lots into a variance applying to a single unified lot. He asked the applicant if they were willing to submit the Unity of Title as recommended. The applicant said yes.

April Fisher, City Planner, explained that while the variance applies to the accessory structure, the code does not allow an accessory structure to exist as the primary use on a separate lot. Therefore, the applicant must record a unity of title, combining 1916 and 1910 into a single property. This allows the house to remain on 1916 and the pavilion on 1910, while both are legally treated as a single-family lot.

There being no further public comment, Vice Chairman Squires closed the public comment period.

Board member Agrusa confirmed that this property is to be used for family, not for commercial purposes, such as a wedding pavilion or event space. The applicant said no, strictly for family use. Board member Agrusa also noted that he did not see any letters from the neighbors' perspective, either in support or in opposition. The applicant stated that

they did not receive any. Board member Argus noted that, for this application and future ones, the applicant should receive written community support to strengthen the application.

After the discussion, Vice Chairman Squires moved, pursuant to Belle Isle code 42—64 and, SECTION 50-102 (A)(8) to approve from Section 50-102 (A)(4)(D) AND (G) to allow an accessory structure (a pavilion) to be built that exceeds the maximum height and square footage allowed, submitted by applicant Travi Barr, TD BARR Construction, on behalf of the property owner, Gregory Meerbaum for the property located at 1910 Hoffner Avenue, Belle Isle, Florida 32812, also known as Parcel ID # 18-23-30-5120-00-510 with the following conditions: (1) Unity of title joining 1910 and 1916 Hoffner be recorded, (1) the pavilion must be used only as accessory recreational space for homeowner, with no commercial or non-single-family use permitted. Board member Agrusa seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4:0.

April Fisher, City Planner, stated that there is a 15-day appeal period, and the application cannot proceed to permitting until that period has passed.

- b. Planning and Zoning Case Number 2025-10-009: PURSUANT TO SECTION 42-64, THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD SHALL REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION ON A REQUESTED VARIANCE FROM SECTION 50-73 AND SECTION 50-102 (A) TO ALLOW AN INSULATED ROOF (NON MESH) OVER A SCREEN STRUCTURE TO ENCROACH INTO THE REAR BUILDING SETBACK, SUBMITTED BY APPLICANT DOMINIC FIOCCO, ON BEHALF OF THE PROPERTY OWNER, KENNETH COUSINS FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1658 PAM CIRCLE, BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA 32809, ALSO KNOWN AS PARCEL ID # 30-23-30-0610-01-190.

Vice Chairman Squires opened the public hearing and read Public Hearing 2025-10-009 by title.

April Fisher, City Planner, explained that the variance is needed because the applicant wants to expand their screen enclosure and add an insulated roof, which no longer qualifies as a traditional “screen enclosure” under code and therefore must meet primary structure setbacks. Due to the irregular, angled lot shape and cul-de-sac location, the house cannot meet the rear setback on one side. The hardship is not self-created, and the enclosure would not impact residential neighbors, as the rear abuts a commercial hotel and side setbacks are met. Based on the variance criteria, the staff recommends approval.

Chief Grimm noted that homes bordering commercial properties often experience light and noise intrusion, and the proposed enclosure could help block those impacts for current and future residents.

The homeowner, Ken Cousins, stated that the expansion and insulated roof are intended to block increased light from recently upgraded hotel lighting and enhance privacy from exterior walkways. Additional landscaping is also planned to improve screening.

There being no further public comment, Vice Chairman Squires closed the public comment period.

There being no further discussion, Board member Agrusa moved, pursuant to Belle Isle code 42—64, 50-73 and 50-102(A) to approve an insulated roof (non-mesh) over a screen structure to encroach into the rear building setback, submitted by applicant Dominic Fiocco, on behalf of the property owner, Kenneth Cousins for the property located at 1658 Pam Circle, Belle Isle, Florida 32809, also known as Parcel ID # 30-23-30-0610-01-190. Vice Chairman Squires seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4:0.

April Fisher, City Planner, stated that there is a 15-day appeal period, and the application cannot proceed to permitting until that period has passed.

5. Other Business

a. Combine the November 25 and December 23 meetings

The Board discussed scheduling challenges for the November and December meetings due to holidays, vacations, and quorum concerns. After considering multiple dates, including November 18, 20, 21, 25, and various December alternatives, the consensus was to hold the November 25th meeting as the final meeting of the year and cancel the December meeting. This approach avoids quorum issues, minimizes advertising costs, and provides clear notice to

applicants and the public. **Board member Zimmerman moved to cancel the December meeting. Board member Agrusa seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4:0.**

Board member Agrusa inquired whether meetings typically include more than one or two agenda items, noting recent low attendance and minimal quorum. He suggested that a more robust agenda might encourage greater participation. It was noted that attendance challenges are common due to members' professional obligations, and low turnout is not necessarily linked to the number of agenda items. The meeting schedule is primarily driven by applicant submissions, which must be handled promptly to meet due process requirements. The Board's attendance policy was reviewed: members may be removed by the council after repeated absences, and the board can recommend removal if a member consistently misses meetings. Sensitivity to health or personal issues affecting attendance was advised. The Board agreed to monitor attendance, follow procedures for repeated absences, and, where possible, consider consolidating agenda items to maximize efficiency.

6. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Vice Chairman Squirees moved to adjourn, which was unanimously approved at 7:20 pm.