

STAFF REPORT

DATE: October 7, 2025
TO: Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Helen Miller, Planner
RE: Petition Number: 2025-41
Applicant: Joliet Township High School District 204
Status of Applicant: Property owner
Location: West of N. Eastern Avenue at Van Buren Street
(Council District #4)
Request: Series of Variations on landscape requirements
and parking lot design standards to allow the
reconstruction of existing parking lots

Purpose

The applicant is requesting the following Variations to allow the reconstruction of three existing parking lots for Joliet Central High School:

- Variation to reduce perimeter landscaping from 10 feet and 5 feet to 0 feet
- Variation to omit curbed landscape islands at the end of each parking row
- Variation to reduce required parking stall area from 180 square feet to 162 square feet

The Zoning Board of Appeals makes the final decision on these Variation requests.

Site Specific Information

The subject site comprises six parcels that are approximately 1 acre total and contain existing parking lots for faculty and staff of Joliet Central High School. The south and middle lots are located west of Eastern Avenue between Jefferson Street and Van Buren Street, and the north lot is located at the northwest corner of Eastern Avenue and Van Buren Street. The south and middle lots are separated by an east-west public alley that will remain. The properties are zoned B-3 (general business).

Based on aerial imagery, most of the parcels have been used as parking lots for at least 30 years. The asphalt lots are currently in disrepair and need to be reconstructed. The existing parking stalls are around 9 feet wide with varying depths. The lots do not have any existing perimeter landscaping except a strip of grass along the west side of the north lot and a small landscaped area at its southwest corner.

Surrounding Zoning, Land Use and Character

The property is part of the Joliet Central High School campus located east of downtown Joliet. The zoning and land use for the adjacent properties are as follows:

- North: B-3 (general business), Boys and Girls Club of Joliet
- South: B-3 (general business), Joliet Central High School parking lot
- East: R-4 (multi-family residential), Joliet Central High School
- West: B-3 (general business), Joliet Central High School athletic fields; Cornerstone Services (staff training center); and City-owned parking lot

Applicable Regulations

- Section 47-15E.5(A) Perimeter Landscaping – Non-Residential Uses
- Section 47-15E.6(A) Interior Landscaping of Off-Street Parking Areas
- Section 47-15H.11 Minimum Recommended Parking Lot Requirements – Non-Residential Design Standards
- Section 47-19.8 Findings of Facts Supporting a Variation (refer to attachment)

Discussion

The approval of the requested variations would allow existing parking lots for Joliet Central High School to be reconstructed similar to their existing conditions. The proposed redevelopment of the lots would require them to comply with the current landscaping and parking lot standards, which include: a 10-foot-wide landscaped area along the perimeter adjacent to public right-of-way; a 5-foot-wide landscaped area along the perimeter adjacent to non-residential uses; landscape islands, with barrier curb, at the end of each parking row; and a minimum parking stall area of 180 square feet. The existing lots do not currently meet these requirements. If the reconstructed lots were to comply with the regulations, the school district would lose a significant number of parking spaces for this campus.

The proposed layout will improve safety and circulation within the lots while maintaining the current number of parking spaces (see attached Concept Plan). All proposed stalls will be 9 feet by 18 feet, which meets the parking stall width requirement but requires a variation to reduce the stall area from 180 to 162 square feet. The stalls would need to be increased to 10 feet wide or 20 feet deep to meet the minimum area requirement, which would result in a reduction of the total number of parking spaces. These lots are mainly used for staff parking and will not have frequent vehicle turnover like a typical commercial parking lot, so the reduced depth will not greatly impact the flow of traffic within the lot.

The reconstructed lots will meet the requirement for perimeter curb and gutter. Stormwater will be managed within the existing storm sewer system. The existing landscaping at the site corners adjacent to Eastern Avenue will remain, and any additional land outside of the parking lot borders will be returned to grass.

Staff finds that the request meets the variation criteria for physical hardship because adherence to the current parking lot and landscaping standards would cause a significant reduction in available parking spaces. The south parcels are irregularly shaped due to the angle of Eastern Avenue and are separated by a public alley, which limits the possible arrangement of the stalls. Staff also finds that approval of the requested variations will not alter the essential character of the area. The lots are part of a larger urban school campus and have existed as parking lots for decades.

Conditions

None

Figure 1: North parking lot (2025)



Figure 2: Middle and south parking lots (2025)



Figure 3: South lot, view north from Jefferson Street (October 2025)



Figure 4: South lot, view west from Eastern Avenue (April 2025)

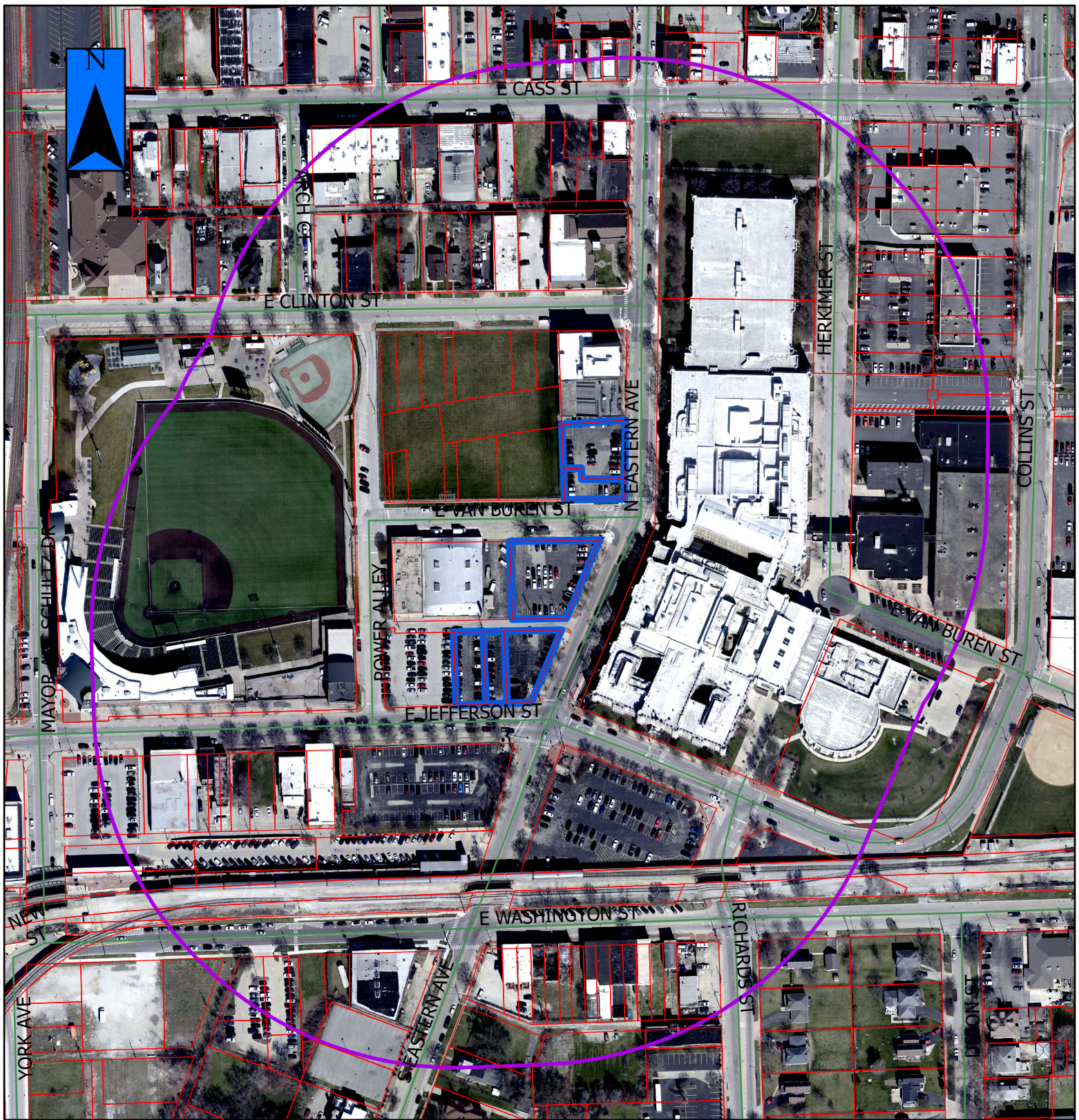


Figure 5: Middle lot, view southeast from Van Buren Street (April 2025)



Figure 6: North lot, view north from Van Buren Street (April 2025)

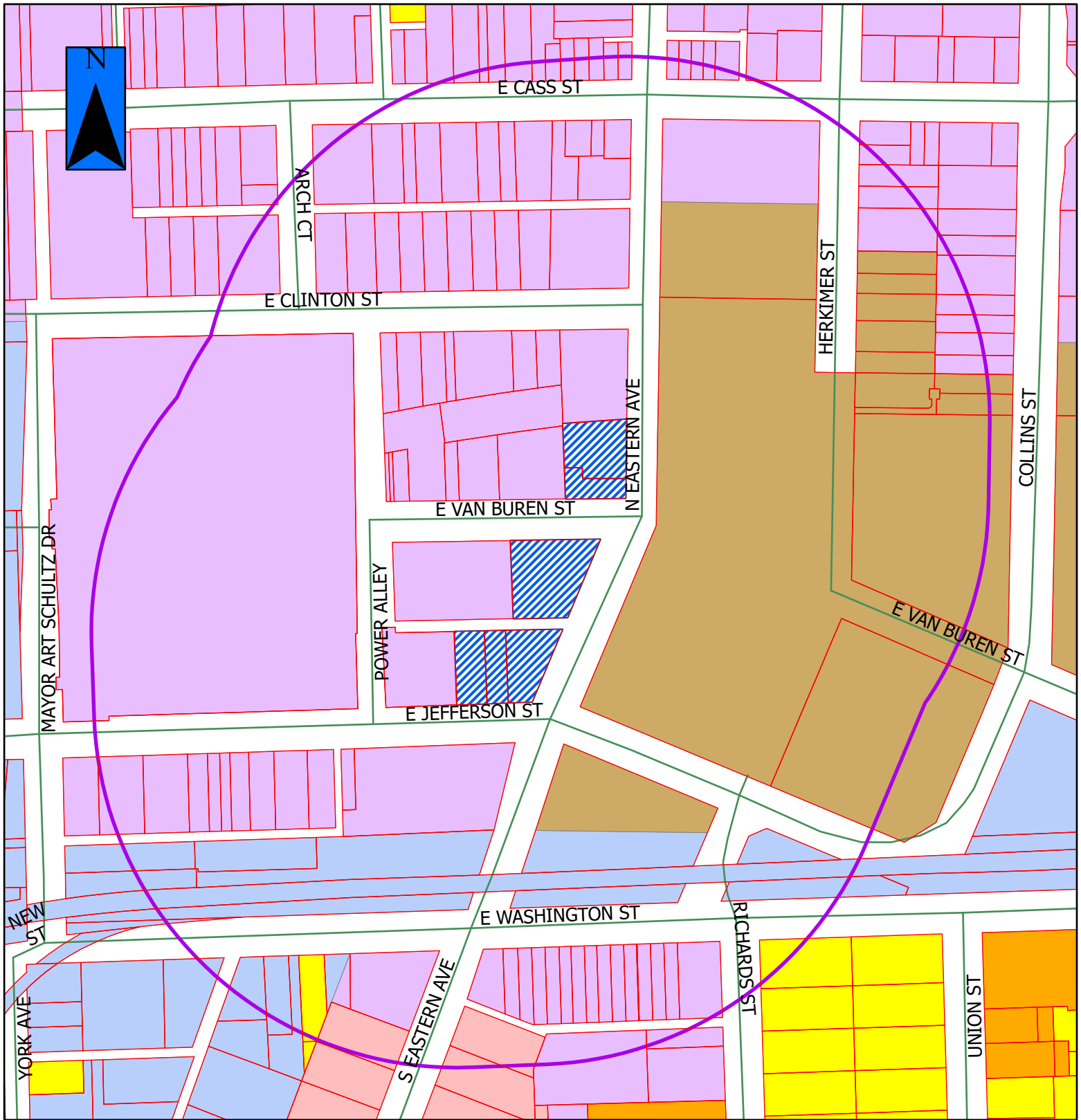




2025-41a



- = Property in Question / Propiedad en cuestión
- = 600' Public Notification Boundary /
Límite de notificación pública de 600 ft (180 m)



2025-41



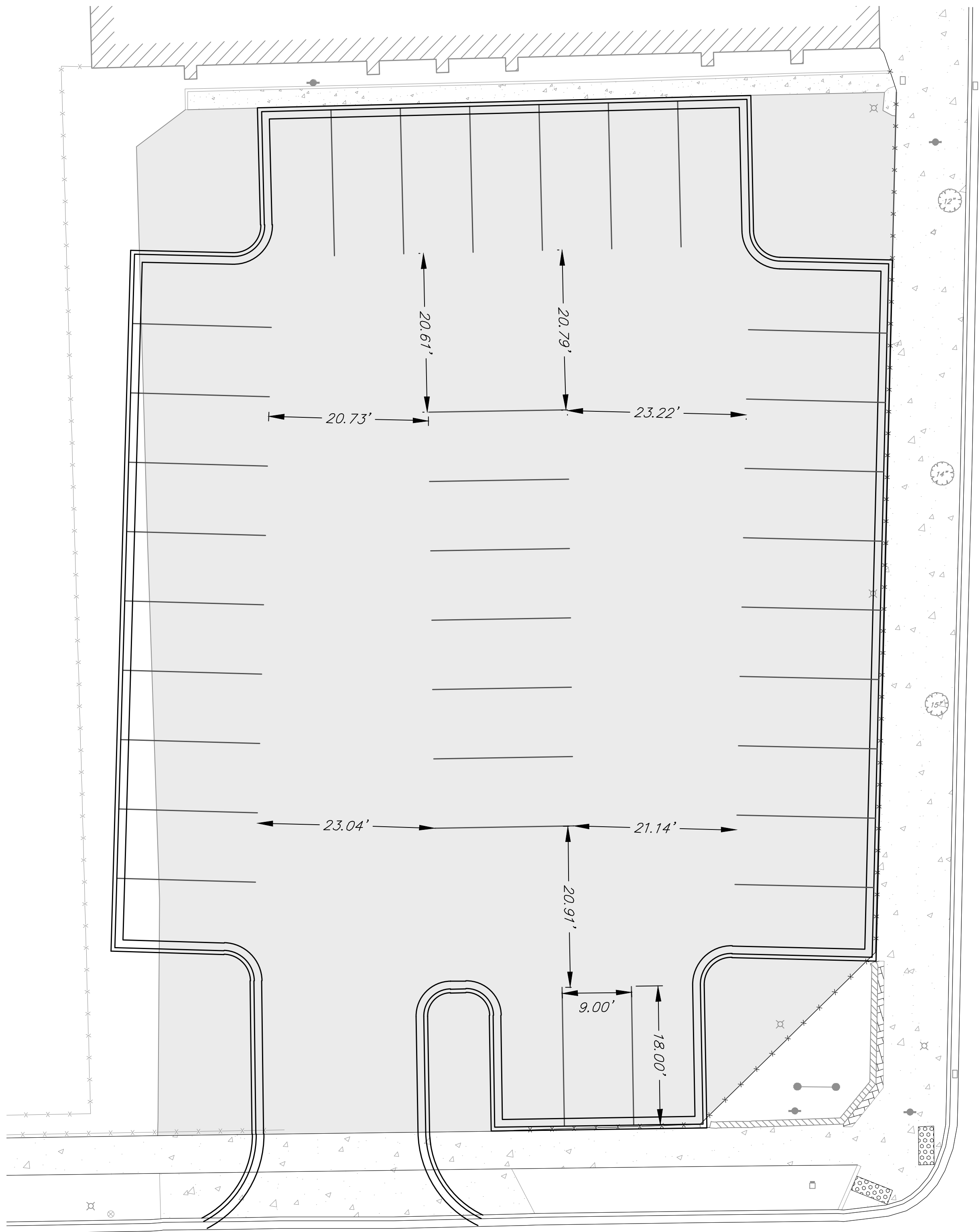
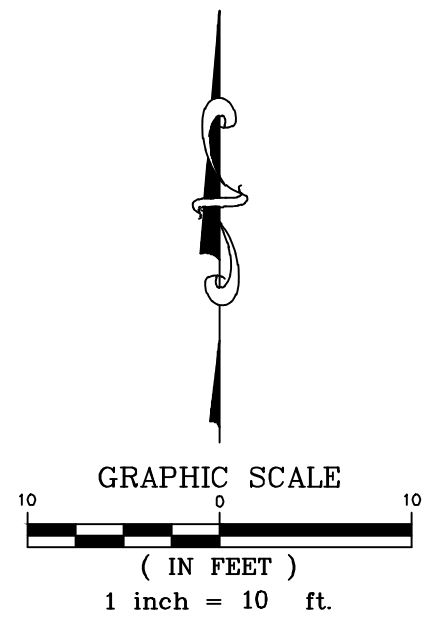
= Property in Question



= 600' Public Notification Boundary

Legend

B-1	I-TA	R-2
B-2	I-TB	R-2A
B-3	I-TC	R-3
I-1	R-1	R-4
I-2	R-1A	R-5
I-T	R-1B	R-B



EXISTING PARKING STALLS
36 STANDARD
PROPOSED PARKING STALLS
36 STANDARD (9'X18')

BENCHMARKS:
SITE BENCHMARK #1:
NORTHEAST BOLT ON FIRE HYDRANT LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF
HERPOMER STREET APPROXIMATELY 445' SOUTH OF CASS STREET.
ELEVATION = 543.58
SITE BENCHMARK #2:
NORTHEAST BOLT ON FIRE HYDRANT LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF
CASSEDAY AVENUE APPROXIMATELY 40' NORTH OF KNOWLTON AVENUE.
ELEVATION = 543.30
SITE BENCHMARK #3:
BOLT THAT ARROW POINTS TO ON FIRE HYDRANT LOCATED AT THE
NORTHEAST CORNER OF EXISTING SHEET METAL BUILDING AND
APPROXIMATELY 125' NORTH OF THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF JOLIET
CENTRAL BASEBALL FIELD.
ELEVATION = 545.18

Call Before You Dig
JULIE
ILLINOIS
ONE-CALL SYSTEM
CONTACT JULIE at 811 or 800-892-0123
48 Hours (2 Working Days) BEFORE YOU DIG.
Include the following:
County, City/Township, Section &/or Section No.

REVISIONS				DOCUMENTATION:			
No.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	No.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY
0	2-28-2025	PRELIMINARY PROGRESS SET	R.P.				

RT

&

TA

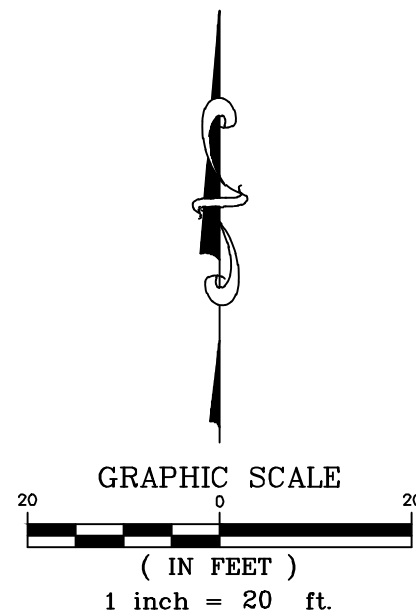
TWIG

Technologies

Ruettiger, Tonelli & Associates, Inc.
& TWiG Technologies
Surveyors - Engineers - Planners - G.I.S. Consultants
129 Capista Drive - Shorewood, Illinois 60404
Ph: (815) 744-6600 Website: www.ruettigertonnelli.com

PROJECT TITLE:
PARKING LOT REHABILITATION
JOLIET TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL
CENTRAL CAMPUS
201 E. JEFFERSON STREET
JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60432

DRAWING TITLE: PO1 PARKING LOT STRIPING	DRAWING No. 324-1429-C1
	SCALE: AS NOTED
	SHEET E04



EXISTING PARKING STALLS
89 STANDARD
PROPOSED PARKING STALLS
101 STANDARD (9'X18')

BENCHMARKS:
SITE BENCHMARK #1:
NORTHEAST BOLT ON FIRE HYDRANT LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF
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RT & TWiG
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JOLIET TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL
CENTRAL CAMPUS
201 E. JEFFERSON STREET
JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60432

DRAWING TITLE:
PO2 & PO3 PARKING LOT
STRIPING

DRAWING No.	324-1429-C1
SCALE:	AS NOTED
SHEET	E03

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Verified by Planner (please initial): _____

Payment received from: _____

Petition #: _____

Common Address: _____

Date filed: _____

Meeting date assigned: _____

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

JOLIET, ILLINOIS

PETITION FOR VARIATION/APPEAL

City of Joliet Planning Division, 150 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432
Ph (815)724-4050 Fax (815)724-4056

ADDRESS FOR WHICH VARIATION IS REQUESTED: Parking Lot E (Jefferson St & Van Buren St)

PETITIONER'S NAME: Joliet Twp. High School District 204

HOME ADDRESS: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS: 300 Caterpillar Drive Joliet, IL ZIP CODE: 60436

PHONE: (Primary) 815 727-6970 (Secondary) _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: [REDACTED] FAX: _____

PROPERTY INTEREST OF PETITIONER: Owner

OWNER OF PROPERTY: Joliet Twp. High School District 204

HOME ADDRESS: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS: 300 Caterpillar Drive Joliet, IL ZIP CODE: 60436

EMAIL ADDRESS: [REDACTED] FAX: _____

Any use requiring a business license shall concurrently apply for a business license and submit a copy with this petition. Additionally, if this request is for operation of a business, please provide the following information:

BUSINESS REFERENCES (*name, address, phone or email*):

N/A

OTHER PROJECTS AND/OR DEVELOPMENTS:

N/A

PERMANENT INDEX NUMBER (TAX NO. OR P. I. N.): Please find attached _____;
_____; _____; _____.

Property Index Number/P.I.N. can be found on tax bill or Will County Supervisor of Assessments website

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (an attached copy preferred):

Please find attached.

LOT SIZE: WIDTH: Varies DEPTH: Varies AREA: _____

PRESENT USE(S) OF PROPERTY: Parking Lots

PRESENT ZONING OF PROPERTY: B-3 General Business

VARIATION/APPEAL REQUESTED: _____

RESPONSE TO VARIATION CRITERIA

The Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to grant or recommend relief only when it has received adequate evidence to establish a practical difficulty or hardship. The evidence must support each of the following three conditions:

- (a) The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return by use permitted and subject to the conditions allowed by the regulations in the particular district or zone.
- (b) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances.
- (c) The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Please describe how this request meets the criteria by responding to the following questions in your own words.

1. How do the applicable zoning regulations prevent the property in question from yielding a reasonable return?

We are requesting the parking lot layouts to remain similar to the currently layouts to maintain parking lot counts rather than reduce capacity to meet landscape / design codes.

2. *What unique circumstances exist which mandate a variance?*

The Joliet School District has limited space for parking on the west side of the school to accommodate school staff at the Central Campus. The current parking lots need to be reconstructed as the conditions have deteriorated and with new regulations many stalls would be lost.

3. *What impact would the granting of this variance have upon the essential character of the general area? Please include both positive and negative impacts.*

It would have no impact on the area as we are requesting to maintain the current conditions that are in use today.

REQUIRED SUPPORTING ATTACHMENTS

- ☒ Site plan / concept plan / floor plan / building elevation plan
- ☒ Joliet Ownership Disclosure form
- ☐ Business license application (if applicable)

NOTARIZATION OF PETITION

STATE OF ILLINOIS) ss
COUNTY OF WILL)

I, Ilandus Hampton, depose and say that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to be present in person or by representation when this petition is heard before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Petitioner's Signature

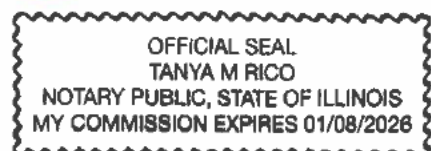
Owner's Signature

(If other than petitioner)

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 8 day of Sept, 20 25

[Signature]



CITY OF JOLIET OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE FORM

The City of Joliet requires that applicants for zoning relief, subdivision approval, building permits and business licenses disclose the identity of all persons having an ownership interest in the business and the real property associated with the application. A copy of this form must be completed and submitted with other application materials. Failure to properly complete and submit this form may result in the denial of the application.

I. INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICATION

This form is submitted as part of an application for the following (check all that apply):

- ☒ Rezoning, Special Use Permit, Variation, or Other Zoning Relief (Complete Sections II and III)
- ☐ Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, or Record Plat of Subdivision (Complete Sections II and III)
- ☐ Building Permit (Complete Sections II and III)
- ☐ Business License (Complete All Sections)

II. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPERTY

The address and PIN(s) of the real property associated with this application are:

See attached

PIN(s): See attached

III. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Select the type of owner of the real property associated with this application and fill in the appropriate contact information below:

- ☐ **Individual:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the individual owner(s)
- ☐ **Corporation:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons holding 3% or more of the stock of the corporation and the percentage of shares held by such stockholders
- ☐ **Limited Liability Company:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all members of the company along with the percentage of ownership held by each member
- ☐ **Land Trust:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the trustee(s) and all beneficiaries
- ☐ **Partnership:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all partners
- ☒ **Other type of organization:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons having a legal or equitable ownership interest in the organization or the right to direct the affairs of the organization

Joliet Township High School District 204

Ilandus Hampton - Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

E-MAIL: [REDACTED] FAX: _____

IV. BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

If the owner of the business is different than the owner of the real property associated with the application, then the following information must be provided:

Select the type of business owner associated with this application and fill in the contact information below:

- ☐ **Individual:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the individual owner(s)
- ☐ **Corporation:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons holding 3% or more of the stock of the corporation and the percentage of shares held by such stockholders
- ☐ **Limited Liability Company:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all members of the company along with the percentage of ownership held by each member
- ☐ **Partnership:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all partners
- ☒ **Other type of organization:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons having a legal or equitable ownership interest in the organization

Joliet Township High School District 204

Ilandus Hampton - Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

E-MAIL: [REDACTED] FAX: _____

NOTE:

If a stockholder, member, beneficiary or partner disclosed in Section III or Section IV is not an individual, then the individuals holding the legal or equitable title to the real property or business associated with the application must also be disclosed. For example, if the real property associated with an application is owned by a land trust, and the beneficiary of the land trust is a limited liability company, then the members of the limited liability company must be disclosed. If one of the members of the limited liability company is a partnership, then the identity of the partners must be disclosed. If one of the partners is a corporation, then all persons owning 3% or more of the issued stock must be disclosed.

SIGNED: [Signature]

DATE: 09/08/2025

Name, Title, and Telephone Numbers of Person Completing and Submitting This Form:

Ilandus Hampton - Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

PRINT

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
CRITERIA FOR VARIATIONS

Section 47-19.8 of the Zoning Ordinance states:

A variation shall not be granted in any case unless the Board shall find and clearly state in its record of the case that:

	Does the evidence presented sustain this criteria?	Comments
(1) Reasons sustaining the contention that strict enforcement of the Ordinance would involve practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardship were found as follows: (a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (list of reasons)		
(2) Adequate evidence was submitted to establish practical difficulties or particular hardship so that, in the judgment of the Board, a variation is permitted because the evidence sustained the existence of each of the three following conditions: (a) The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in the particular district or zone. (b) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances. (c) The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.		
(3) A public hearing was held on such variation of which at least 15 days and not more than 30 days notice was published in the _____ (name of newspaper) on _____ (date).		