

ROME CITY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Regular Meeting

March 19, 2026

The Rome City Board of Zoning Appeals held their regular meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Rome City Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by President Kelly Morris.

Members Present:

Barb Tatman

Kelly Morris

Leigh A. Pranger-Secretary

Tom Clifton

Members Absent:

Christine Coe

Gerrit Geurs

Rollcall determined a quorum was present.

Member Tatman made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes and approve them as presented. Second by Member Clifton. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried. The minutes were posted on the bulletin board for everyone to read.

Interested Parties in attendance: Town Attorney Dustin Glick, Brian and Tiffany Berkey, Ruth and Rob Wilson, Attorney Robert Eherenman, Kevin and Leesa Sturgis, Tom Chronister, John and Anita VanMeeter.

NEW BUSINESS

Use Variance #2026-08

BDB Properties, LLC, 740 Lakeside Drive, Rome City, IN 46784 are requesting relief from the Rome City Unified Development Code, 2.12 Lake Residential District 10 feet minimum side yard down to an existing 3.4 feet on the east side. The use variance will allow for the existing side yard setback, the addition of a second story to extend over the existing deck (which will be screened) and for new footers to be poured for support of the second story and porch. This will be an expansion of the nonconforming structure.

President Morris called for BDB Properties to present their petition. Attorney Robert Eherenman, representing Brian and Tiffany Berkey, addressed the board, the Berkey's would like to remodel and add a second story onto the existing house. The house does not meet the side yard setback for the current UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) nor does the lot. They will not be expanding the house on the side yards outside of the current foundation. The proposed remodel and addition will be approximately \$400,000 investment while bringing the house into compliance with the current building codes and the structure with the minimum square footage requirement of 980 sq. ft. The addition will be no closer then the existing house and deck to the lakeside or side yards. The deck will be covered with the second story addition. This project promotes and protects property values and is consistent with the land use ordinance. It will not interfere with the environment and the maximum story height allowed is 2 ½ stories and the addition will be a two story. There will be no adverse impacts on the adjoining landowners. The hardship was created by lot size which was platted in the early 1900's before the new UDO existed. The contractor for the project will be Sauder Built who has built many beautiful homes on Sylvan Lake. Member Tatman asked about the existing deck, will it stay the same or be improved. Attorney Eherenman stated the deck will be converted to a screened porch. President Morris asked about the entrance on the roadside. Due to the elevation change how will you enter the house? Mr. Sauder stated the entrance will be on the second story directly from the parking

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Rome City, IN 46784

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lot. Member Clifton asked about the deck and the posts being used for a screened porch. Attorney Eherenman stated they will be adding a foundation under the deck, the deck does meet the setback from the lake and will stay within the side yards of the house. There being no further questions President Morris called for interested parties on Use Variance #2026-08. Secretary Pranger informed the board all adjoining owners were notified by certified mail. Mr. Tom Chronister stated he is in favor of the project as the Berkey's have already built a very nice home on Sylvan Lake, and they will be using the same builder to do this house. Mr. Kevin Sturgis stated he is excited to see the development on the lake. There being no further questions or comments President Morris called for a motion on Use Variance #2026-08. Member Clifton made a motion to approve Use Variance #2026-08 as presented per the findings of fact. Second by Member Tatman. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried. Use Variance #2026-08 Approved.

Variance #2026-09

Dorothy Mary Vorndran Irrevocable Trust, Macharri Renee Vorndran Trustee, 9575 Bass Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46818 are requesting variances on 603 Lions Drive, Rome City, IN 46784 for relief from the Rome City Unified Development Code, 2.12 Lake Residential District 10 feet minimum side yard down to 5 feet and Maximum Structure Coverage of 35% up to 40%. To allow for the construction of new two-story stick-built home of approximately 1893 sq. ft. The new home will have side yard setback of 5 feet on both the north and south sides. President Morris called for the Vorndran's to present their petition to the board. Attorney Eherenman informed the board he is also representing the Vorndran's for their petition. They would like to demolish the current house and rebuild it. The new house will have five feet setbacks on both sides due to the width of the non-conforming lot. The new house will improve the side yard setback on the south side of the lot by two and half feet from where it currently sits. The existing house does not meet the lake yard nor side yard setbacks. They are requesting to cover 45% of the lot due to expansion of the house. Attorney Eherenman stated the new home will be a sizable investment and the house will meet all building codes. This project will improve the side yard setback to the southern neighbor. The practical difficulty is the size of the lot which was platted in the early 1900s prior to the requirements of the UDO. The narrowness of the lot being approximately 30' wide restricts what can be built if the code is strictly adhered to and would not allow for a structure to be built that will meet the state building code. Mr. Mark Sauder, contractor Sauder Built informed the board they will remove the old house and foundation and build all new construction on the lot. President Morris asked what the age of the current house is? Mr. Wilson (Vorndran trust) stated early 1900's. Their house is close to lake level and with the fluctuation in the level needs to be elevated. There being no further questions, President Morris called for interested parties on Variance #2026-09. Attorney Eherenman stated all the adjoining owners were notified by certified mail. No interested parties were present. President Morris called for a motion. Member Clifton made a motion to approve Variance #2026-09 as presented per the findings of fact. Second by Member Tatman.. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried. Variance #2026-09 Approved

Variance #2026-10

John P. and Anita K. VanMeeter, 1375 Hilltop Drive, Rome City, IN 46784 are requesting variances on 603 Lions Drive, Rome City, IN 46784 for relief from the Rome City Unified P.O. Box 338

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Development Code, 2.12 Lake Residential District Maximum Accessory Height of 16 feet up to 22 feet and 5.07 Accessory Structure Standards C. Quantity and Size 2. Maximum size of 1200 sq. ft. up to 1583 sq. ft. To allow for the construction of a 44'x36'x22' pole building with covered porch for storage purposes.

President Morris called for the VanMeeter's to present their petition to the board. Mr. John VanMeeter addressed the board stating they would like to build a pole barn for storage of lake items and various other vehicles. He showed pictures to the board depicting the outside storage of jet skis and trailers and stated they would like to get them inside. The pole barn will be in the same style as the house and the exterior will match the house. The pole barn size will be 36'x44', he noted the roof pitch will be similar to the house. The building will be built on the backside of the lot not on the lakeside. He stated the building will not block anyone's view as the land adjacent is owned by the State of Indiana. He noted he owns 2.278 acres which is wooded to the south and east. He stated he has spoken to his neighbor John Dobis, and he is happy with the plans for the pole barn. Member Clifton asked if he will need water or sewer for living quarters in the barn. He stated no, the barn will be for storage the only utility will be electric. There being no further questions President Morris called for interested parties on Variance #2026-10.

Secretary Pranger stated all adjoining owners were notified with no one returning the notice. No interested parties were in attendance. President Morris called for a motion. Member Clifton made a motion to approved Variance #2026-10 with the restrictions no business, bathroom, living quarters, rental or exterior stairs, all per the findings of fact. Second by Member Tatman. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried. Variance #2026-10 APPROVED with standard restrictions.

OLD BUSINESS-

Appeal by Larry Weisenberger-Update by Attorney Glick

ON HOLD Tabled-they are now asking for my items to be added to the packet from the court. Pranger stated she is working on this as she has time in her schedule.

Requested Continuance by Weisenberger's attorney-no decision yet. Appeal #2025-12-Court date-April 6, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. Judge Clouse

1115 Pleasant Point, Rome City from Zoning Administrator's decision to enforce the Fence standards, 5.23 FW-04 Residential Fence Standards B. Location 2. Side Yard or rear yard in the Rome City Unified Development Ordinance.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Nothing for the agenda.

Next Meeting: April 16, 2026

There being no further business, Member Tatman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. Second by Member Clifton. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried.



Kelly Morris, Chair BZA
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Attest:



Leigh A. Pranger, Secretary
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