

**ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
JULY 1, 2025  
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Members present

Donald Acker, Chair  
Jorge Cisneros, Place 1  
Edward Lopez, Place 2  
Doug Knowlton, Place 5  
Melissa Scheuttig, Alternate 2  
Rachel Konopka, Alternate 4

Members absent

Ashly Schilling, Place 3  
Joyce Fiaccone, Alternate 1

Staff present

JP Ducay, Director of Planning and Development Services  
Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary  
Annabelle Ackling, City Attorney

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Acker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. OATH OF OFFICE**

City Secretary Lindsay Rawlinson administered the Oath of Office to Doug Knowlton, Place 5.

**3. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**A. Executive Session:** Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Section 551.071. Executive Session may be held, under these exceptions, at any time during the meeting that a need arises for the Zoning Board of Adjustment to seek advice from the City Attorney as to the posted subject matter of this Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

**Motion:** Motion was made by Member Knowlton and seconded by Member Cisneros to convene into Executive Session. Time: 6:02 p.m.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

**B. Reconvene:** Action necessary on items discussed in Executive Session

Chair Acker reconvened into open session. Time 6:40 p.m.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

#### REGULAR AGENDA

##### 5. Approved minutes from the May 6, 2025 Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

**Motion:** Motion was made by Member Lopez and seconded by Member Cisneros to approve the May 6, 2025 Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting minutes.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

##### 6. Denied ZBA 2025-0611, a request for a variance to increase the height requirements of a proposed accessory structure on the property described as Lot 7, Block 10, Richland Hills Addition, City of Richland Hills, Tarrant County, Texas otherwise known as 7148 Dover Lane, Richland Hills, Texas 76118. PUBLIC HEARING

Director of Planning and Development Services JP Ducay presented ZBA 2025-0611, a request for a variance to increase the height requirements of a proposed accessory structure on the property described as Lot 7, Block 10, Richland Hills Addition, City of Richland Hills, Tarrant County, Texas otherwise known as 7148 Dover Lane, Richland Hills, Texas 76118. The property is a 2.6-acre lot with a 3,888 square-foot single-family residence located in the SF-E zoning district. Permits were recently submitted proposing a 2,100 square foot addition to the primary structure as well as a 2,700 square foot detached accessory building (garage). The applicant for this property is Jonathan Mercer.

In May 2025, the applicant submitted building permits proposing to construct a 2,100 square foot addition to the primary structure and a 2,700 square foot accessory garage. With the proposed addition, the primary structure would be roughly 5,988 square feet. The proposed accessory garage would not exceed 50 percent of the floor area of the principal building. However, during the review, it was noticed that the proposed accessory garage was 29.1 feet tall. According to the Accessory Structure Standards, an accessory structure shall not exceed a height of 15 feet. Accessory structure height regulations are typically established to ensure structural integrity, neighborhood character, and limited visual impact. The applicant was informed that a variance would need to be granted to allow for the structure to exceed 15 feet in height.

The following variance is being requested:

1. Increase the accessory structure height limit of 15 feet to 29 feet 1 inch.

Chair Acker opened the Public Hearing at 6:49 p.m. and asked to hear from any proponents followed by opponents of the case.

Jonathan Mercer, 7148 Dover Lane, Richland Hills, expressed his appreciation to the Board for their consideration on the item and explained that he is seeking to build a space for his aging parents to allow them to be cared for by family. Additionally, he is seeking to build a space for vehicles and an RV.

The Board asked about the amount of proposed space above the height of the RV.

Mr. Mercer advised that he is trying to match the pitch and style of the current home and is wanting to make it aesthetically pleasing.

Additional discussion ensued regarding a potential lower roof height, the overall height allowed in the SF-E zoning district, and the neighbors who submitted their signatures in support of Mr. Mercer's application for a variance.

Mr. Mercer confirmed that he would be willing to lower the height of the roof if his engineer agreed that it would be possible.

Mr. Ducay advised that the overall height of buildings in the SF-E zoning district is 35 feet.

Cecil Lanter, 7133 Hovenkamp, Richland Hills, expressed his support for Mr. Mercer and his application for a variance. He advised that Mr. Mercer has a very large lot and the proposed addition would be 875 feet from his back door.

Chair Acker closed the Public Hearing at 6:59 p.m.

Further discussion ensued regarding the maximum height allowed in the zoning district and different options available.

Mr. Mercer advised that he had previously been approved for a Specific Use Permit for a guesthouse and has chosen not to forward with that option as he is concerned about future issues with two houses on the same property. Additionally, his dream is to build a barndomineum and would prefer to do it correctly.

City Attorney Annabelle Ackling explained the purpose of the city's ordinances and state law in relation to this case.

**Motion:** Motion was made by Member Scheuttig and seconded by Member Lopez to approve ZBA 2025-0611, a request for a variance to increase the height requirements of a proposed accessory structure on the property described as Lot 7, Block 10, Richland Hills Addition, City of Richland Hills, Tarrant County, Texas otherwise known as 7148 Dover Lane, Richland Hills, Texas 76118.

The vote was as follows:

For: Chair Acker, Members Cisneros and Scheuttig

Against: Members Knowlton and Lopez

Motion failed by a vote of 3-2.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** Motion was made by Member Knowlton and seconded by Member Lopez to adjourn.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

There being no further business to come before the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Chair Acker declared the meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

**APPROVED:**

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Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

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Donald Acker, Chair