



Town of Highland Park, Texas
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
AGENDA

8:00 AM
November 13, 2025

4700 Drexel Drive Highland Park, TX 75205
Town Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. MINUTES

- A. Take action on Board of Adjustment Minutes held on September 10, 2025.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Conduct a public hearing and consider a variance from Section 8-706 of the Zoning Ordinance to exceed the allowable 30% lot coverage by an additional 6%, on property located at 4824 Abbott Avenue.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

A member of the public may address the governing body regarding an item on the agenda either before or during the body's consideration of the item, upon being recognized by the presiding officer or the consent of the body.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS: Let us know if you need special assistance of any kind.

Please contact the Town of Highland Park Administrative staff at (214) 521-4161 from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

NOTE: The Board of Adjustment reserves the right to meet in Executive Session closed to the public at anytime in the course of this meeting to discuss matters listed on the agenda, as authorized by the Texas OpenMeetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, including any one of the permitted exceptions to open meetings provided for in § 551.071 through § 551.076 and § 551.087. Any action taken on such matters will be conducted in Open Session following the conclusion of the Executive Session.



**Town of Highland Park
Board of Adjustment
Thursday, November 13, 2025**

Item Coversheet

**Take action on Board of Adjustment Minutes held on September 10,
2025.**

PRESENTED BY:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

2025-09-10 - Board of Adjustment Meeting Minutes - Final

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS, HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, 4700 DREXEL DRIVE, HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS, 75205, AT 8:30 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025.

Present at the meeting were Acting Chair Robert McCulloch, Board Members, Joan Clark, Allison Hunsicker, Jim Yoder, as well as Alternate Nancy Rogers. Absent from the meeting was Chair Stacey Furst and Alternate Louis Morrison.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Member McCulloch was appointed as Acting Chair in absence of Chair Furst. Acting Chair McCulloch called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

II. MINUTES

Board Member Yoder, seconded by Board Member Hunsicker, created a motion to approve the May 14, 2025 and August 21, 2025 Minutes. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Conduct a public hearing and consider a variance from Section 10-101(3)A of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a house with a flat roof to extend one and one-half feet (1.5') above the maximum allowed height of 26 feet, and variances from Section 8601(1) to allow a house to extend two and one-half (2.5') feet above the maximum height of 25 feet allowed in the rear 40 feet of a lot and to allow a top plate to extend two and one-half (2.5') feet above the maximum top plate height of 12.5 feet allowed in the rear 40 feet of a lot, on property located at 4712 St. Johns Avenue.

Jeff Armstrong, Director of Community Development, provided an overview of the case, displaying the 200' notification buffer, site plan, elevation plan, floor plan, and photos. The subject property is Zoned C; Town's Zoning Ordinance limits flat/mansard roofs to 26-feet. The Town's Zoning Ordinance also specifies a maximum 25-foot height and 12.5-foot top plate height in the rear 40-feet of the property. Datum (height measurement reference) is average ground elevation at the front building line (515.59-feet above mean sea level). The lot has a substantial increase in elevation from front to back (approximately 3.5ft from building line to rear). Staff supports this request.

There were no letters in support of this request received by the Town.

There was one letter in opposition of this request received by the Town.

Acting Chair McCulloch requested that the applicant present their case.

David Eitches, 4712 St. Johns, stated they have met with the neighbor to inform them of their request. The applicant emphasized the importance of ceiling heights for the home's marketability and family needs.

Acting Chair McCulloch thanked the applicant and opened the public hearing for those who wish to speak in favor of this request at 8:45 A.M.

Jordan Wallace, 3214 Dartmouth Avenue, expressed his appreciation for the consideration of the large oak trees with this design. Mr. Wallace does not believe this request is a disadvantage.

With no one else to speak in favor, Acting Chair McCulloch opened the public hearing for those who wish to speak in opposition of this request.

With no one to speak in opposition, Acting Chair McCulloch closed the public hearing at 9:02 A.M.

MOTION

Board Member Hunsicker created a motion, seconded by Alternate Board Member Rogers, to deny all three (3) requests. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

B. Conduct a public hearing and consider a variance from Section 8-601(1) of the Zoning Ordinance to construct a garage 3 feet above the required plate height, on property located at 4918 Abbott Avenue.

Jeff Armstrong, Director of Community Development, provided an overview of the case, displaying the 200' notification buffer, site plan, elevation plan, floor plan, and photos. The property is Zoned D, which requires a minimum of 60-foot lot width, but the lot is currently 50-foot wide. The property borders the Dallas city limit line and the Katy Trail. The area across Katy Trail in Dallas is undergoing significant construction with taller buildings. The subject property is restricted to horizontal expansion due to setback and lot coverage requirements. At least five other lots on the block exceed the top plate height of 12.5-foot. Staff supports the request.

There were no letters in support of this request received by the Town.

There were no letters in opposition of this request received by the Town.

Acting Chair McCulloch requested that the applicant present their case.

Kaitlin & Zachary James, 4918 Abbott Avenue, displayed photos of the existing interior conditions as well as the proposed exterior height request. The applicant desires to add a guest suite/bedroom above the garage to mitigate privacy concern.

Acting Chair McCulloch thanked the applicant and opened the public hearing for those who wish to speak in favor of this request at 9:20 A.M.

With no one to speak in favor, Acting Chair McCulloch opened the public hearing for those who wish to speak in opposition of this request.

With no one to speak in opposition, Acting Chair McCulloch closed the public hearing at 9:20 A.M.

MOTION

Board Member Hunsicker created a motion, seconded by Board Member Clark, to approve this request. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair McCulloch adjourned the meeting at 9:23 A.M.

Approved on this _____ day of _____ 2025.

APPROVED:

Stacey Furst
Chair

ATTEST:

Serena Palomino
Permit Technician



**Town of Highland Park
Board of Adjustment
Thursday, November 13, 2025**

Item Coversheet

Conduct a public hearing and consider a variance from Section 8-706 of the Zoning Ordinance to exceed the allowable 30% lot coverage by an additional 6%, on property located at 4824 Abbott Avenue.

PRESENTED BY: Jeff Armstrong, Director of Community Development

BACKGROUND:

Background and analysis of the request can be found in the attached staff report.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends denial.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff Report 4824 Abbott



Town of Highland Park Board of Adjustment

Staff Report

MEETING DATE: November 13, 2025

REQUEST: A variance from Section 8-706 of the Zoning Ordinance to construct an addition to a home that will exceed the maximum lot coverage of 30% allowed for a combined lot by 6% on property located at 4824 Abbott Avenue.

LOCATION: 4824 Abbott Ave.

SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to construct a 3,845 square foot addition to the south side of the existing home, which is 4,012 square feet in area.

- Two lots were replatted in 2017 to create the existing combined lot which is 24,700 square feet in area.
- The maximum lot coverage for a combined lot is 30%; in this case 7,410 square feet)
- Proposed lot coverage is 35.94% (8,876.5 square feet)
- Requested variance is 5.94% (1,466.5 square feet). Staff rounded the request to 6%.
- The proposed addition would be single-story and include a 2 ½ car garage, a fitness room, laundry room, study, and a primary bedroom suite.

ORDINANCE

8-706 “The maximum building coverage permitted for a combined building site within a B, C, D, E, or F district shall be 30%.”

The property is zoned “D”.



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ANALYSIS

The Board of Adjustment is required to find all the following criteria are met to approve a variance:

- **Special Conditions.** Is the request for variance owing to a special condition(s) inherent to the property itself?

Analysis: The property backs up to the Dallas city limit and Katy Trail. The other side of the trail includes multi-story apartment buildings. The subject property consists of lots that were combined in 2017, making the lot approximately 24,700 square feet in area. The existing house was constructed in 2014, prior to combining the two lots and sits entirely on the northernmost of the two original lots. The property includes an existing garage/pool house, located at the rear of the property behind the house. The southern half of the combined lot is vacant and is the portion of the property where the addition would be located.

The property is located at the corner of Abbott Ave. and 4th St. and is one of two properties between Fourth St. and Abbott Park.

- **Unique to Property.** Is the condition unique to the property subject to the variance request?

Analysis: The lots on the east side of Abbott Ave., south of Dartmouth Ave., back up to the Katy Trail and dense development in the City of Dallas. Lot coverage six percent above the minimum at this location would likely have little noticeable impact in the area.

There are two other combined lots on Abbott Ave. in the 5000 block that are developed with single-family homes. Both properties meet the 30% lot coverage required for combined lots. Both of those homes were built after the lots were combined. Other combined lots located a block south along Abbott Ave. are developed with multifamily structures that have greater lot coverage and larger buildings than what is proposed.

- **Unnecessary Hardship.** Will literal enforcement of this chapter result in an unnecessary hardship?

Analysis: The applicant would like to protect their neighbors from the several extra months of construction that would be required if the garage were placed underground. In addition, the applicants do not wish to construct a second story due to the increased visibility into their home that a second floor would have from the multi-story apartments



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located behind their property. The applicants believe that a single-story addition would have the least impact on the neighborhood, provide the most privacy, and would be the most compatible with their existing house.

- **Contrary to Public Interest.** Would approval of the variance be contrary to the public interest?

Analysis: No negative effects on the public are expected if the variance is approved as requested.

- **Spirit of the Ordinance.** Is the request within the spirit of the ordinance and does it further substantial justice?

Analysis: Prior to the lots being combined, each lot could have had coverage of up to 40%. This could have resulted in up to 9,880 square feet of lot coverage on the two lots. However, once combined the Zoning Ordinance limits lot coverage to 30%. In this case a maximum of 7,380 square feet. As proposed, the addition would cover 35.9% (8,876.5 square feet) of the combined lot.

The intent of the ordinance is to reduce the possibility of homes and accessory structures being built on combined lots that are significantly larger than the properties around the combined lot, causing the home to not fit in well with the surrounding area. The proposed addition would make the house 7,857 square feet which would be larger than most other homes in the vicinity, in most cases by 1000 to 3000 square feet. However, one block to the south on the east side of Abbott Ave. are multifamily structures that are significantly larger than 7,857 square feet. In addition, the buildings behind the property in Dallas are much larger than the proposed structure.

RECOMMENDATION

There are reasonable alternatives for the construction that would reduce the lot coverage, such as a second story or a basement that could include underground parking. Although there are many compelling circumstances in this case, staff does not believe the criteria have been met to approve a variance.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Aerial Map
2. Written Notification Area Map
3. Applicant Letter
4. Construction Plan
5. Site Photo



*Town of Highland Park
Board of Adjustment*

Staff Report

ATTACHMENT 1 – AERIAL PHOTO

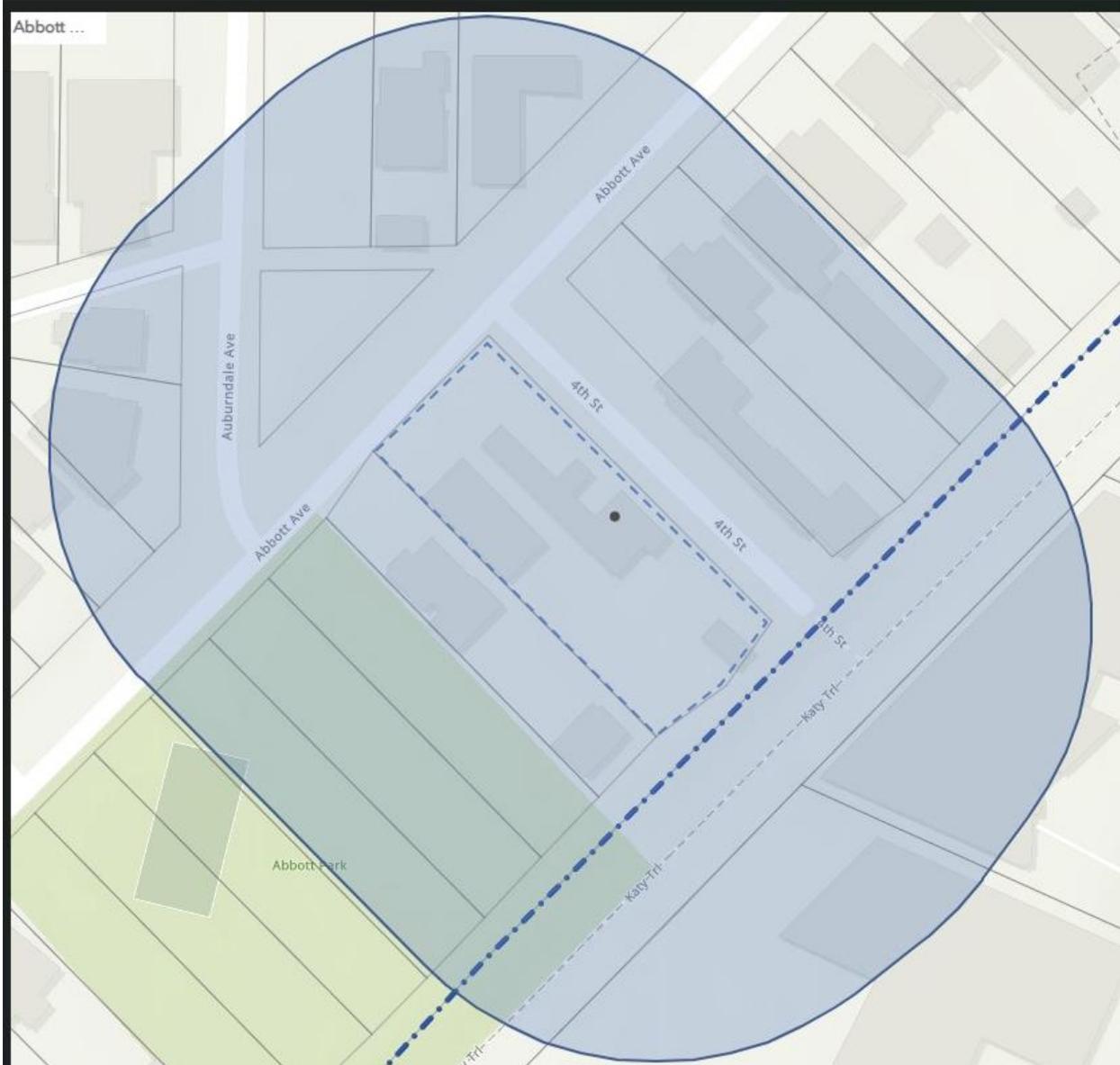




***Town of Highland Park
Board of Adjustment***

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ATTACHMENT 2 – WRITTEN NOTIFICATION AREA MAP





Town of Highland Park Board of Adjustment

Staff Report

ATTACHMENT 3 – APPLICANT LETTER

Board of Adjustments
Town of Highland Park
4700 Drexel Dr.
Highland Park, Texas 75205

October 4, 2025

Dear Board,

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request for a zoning variance as we begin the process of remodeling our home at 4824 Abbott Avenue. Before outlining the conditions which impose a hardship on our construction plans, I would like to first provide some brief background information.

When we purchased 4824 Abbott Avenue in July of 2016, we also acquired the lot next door at 4822 Abbott Avenue. At that time, we had to decide between two options: combining both lots and remodeling the existing home OR build a spec home on 4822 Abbott Avenue for resale. After considering both options, we decided to submit our plans for the remodel and request a re-platting of the lots into one combined lot which was approved around September of 2017.

During this process, the company I owned in Dallas decided to expand its operation in Japan. My wife and I put our residential construction plans on hold and moved to Osaka for two years. When we returned in September of 2019, the Covid Pandemic further delayed our construction. When we finally decided to move forward again in 2024 our architect discovered that the construction plans that had been submitted for the re-platt did not conform to a zoning ordinance that capped lot coverage on our combined lot at 30%.

Since this discovery we have worked diligently to create a plan that complies with this restriction, and we have one. Unfortunately, the coverage restrictions in combination with the existing structure and unusual shape of the lots, in our view, creates several significant hardships.

I would like to outline some key data points for the board and then provide a description of the hardships:

1. Foremost, our combined lot is unique in its attributes and is not typical of the type of situation contemplated by the current zoning restriction on surface area coverage. Our lot is on the corner of Abbott Avenue and Fourth Street. We only have one adjacent neighbor—Walter and Laura Elcock—on our south perimeter. The Katy Trail and, more recently, a growing number of multi-family high rise buildings in the City of Dallas flank our east side, Fourth Street flanks our north side and the lots face west to Abbott.



Town of Highland Park Board of Adjustment

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2. If we had chosen to build a spec home on 8422 Abbott, zoning ordinances would have allowed us to cover 40% of the lot including building a two-story structure with an underground garage.
3. Due to the existing coverage area restriction for combined lots of our type, and because the existing structure on 8424 Abbott was built at the maximum of 40% coverage, we are limited to only 19.25% of the surface area of 4822 Abbott Avenue.
4. The limit of 19.25% creates a difficult challenge when considered in combination with the extreme narrowness of the lot (only 50 feet wide) and the uniqueness of the existing home.

Here are the reasons we believe the current restriction creates several important and significant hardships:

1. We believe the existing home at 4824 Abbott, built by Betty Gertz in 2014, is a potentially historically significant home. It is one of only two homes built in the state of Texas by architect and designer, Axel Vervoordt. As such, we cannot in good conscience tear it down or significantly remodel it.
2. One of the home's key features, is a beautiful and completely impractical 1,200 square foot Great Room or Library built in the style of historically significant grand European homes. This room takes up almost 24% of the existing structure. It cannot and should not be repurposed for other uses.
3. The 19.25% surface area limit equates to approximately 2,377 square feet. We have designed a new master suite within these limits but cannot also accommodate a surface area garage. To move forward with construction, we will need to engineer an underground garage. Doing so, will be time-consuming, expensive and very disruptive to the Elcocks and our other neighbors.
4. Alternative options to move some of the master suite to a second floor are challenged by the long narrow lot, aesthetic incongruence with the existing structure and safety concerns about visibility into our home from Katy Trail and the neighboring high-rise apartments.
5. Because of the narrowness of the lot, building an underground garage will require our contractor to drill and pour reinforced concrete retaining walls against Laura and Walter's home to prevent any movement of their foundation during our dig.
6. Construction of an underground garage will create an estimated 8 to 10 additional months of neighborhood construction congestion, noise and disruption.



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7. The environmental impact of digging out an underground garage will cause material noise pollution and dust in the air that will negatively affect the experience of those who enjoy Abbott Park located immediately south of our construction site.

We are respectfully requesting a variance of approximately 1,599.25 square feet (see submitted plan for details) to avoid unnecessary significant disruption to our south side neighbors and to the broader community, to maintain the existing, unassuming, low-profile façade and historical significance of the current home, and to create the safest possible environment for ourselves.

This variance would allow us to cover 31% of the vacant lot and 35.9% of the combined lot, still a much smaller coverage area than that of a separate single-family home.

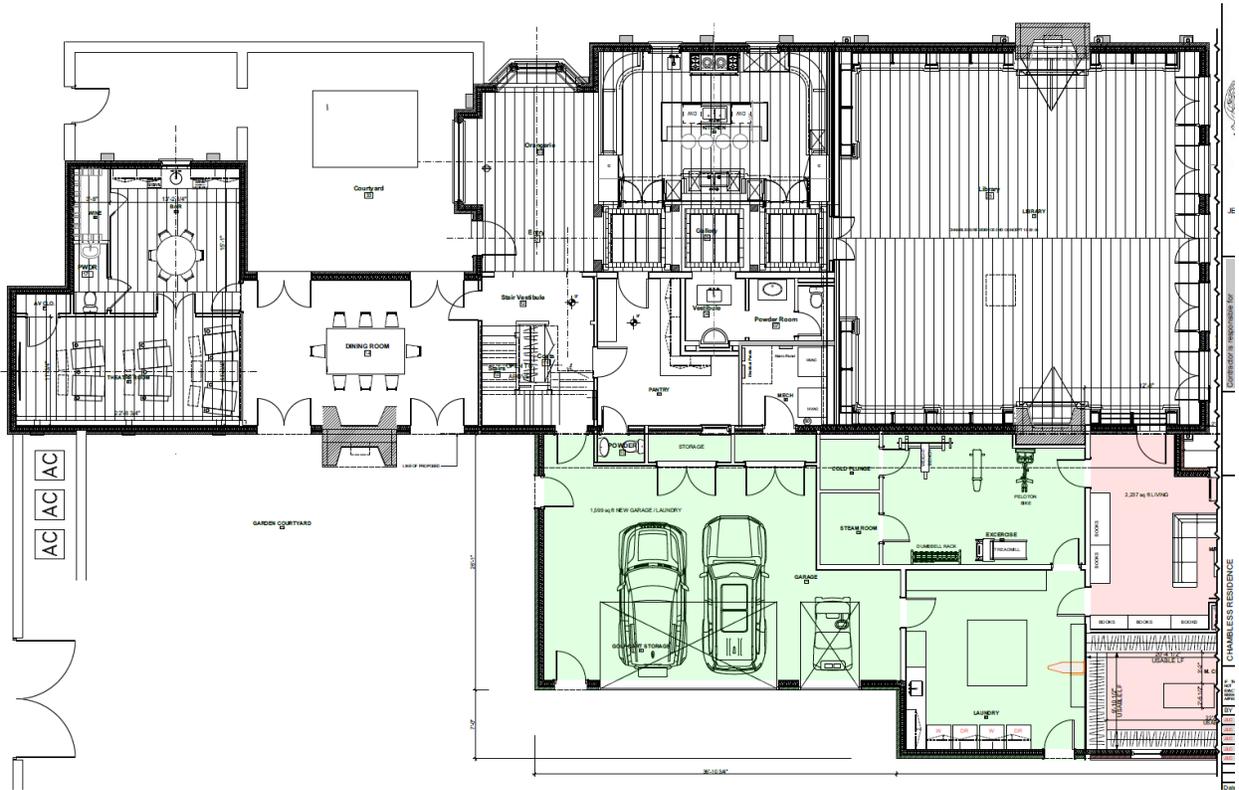
Thank you all in advance for your consideration of our request.

Chris Chambless



Town of Highland Park Board of Adjustment

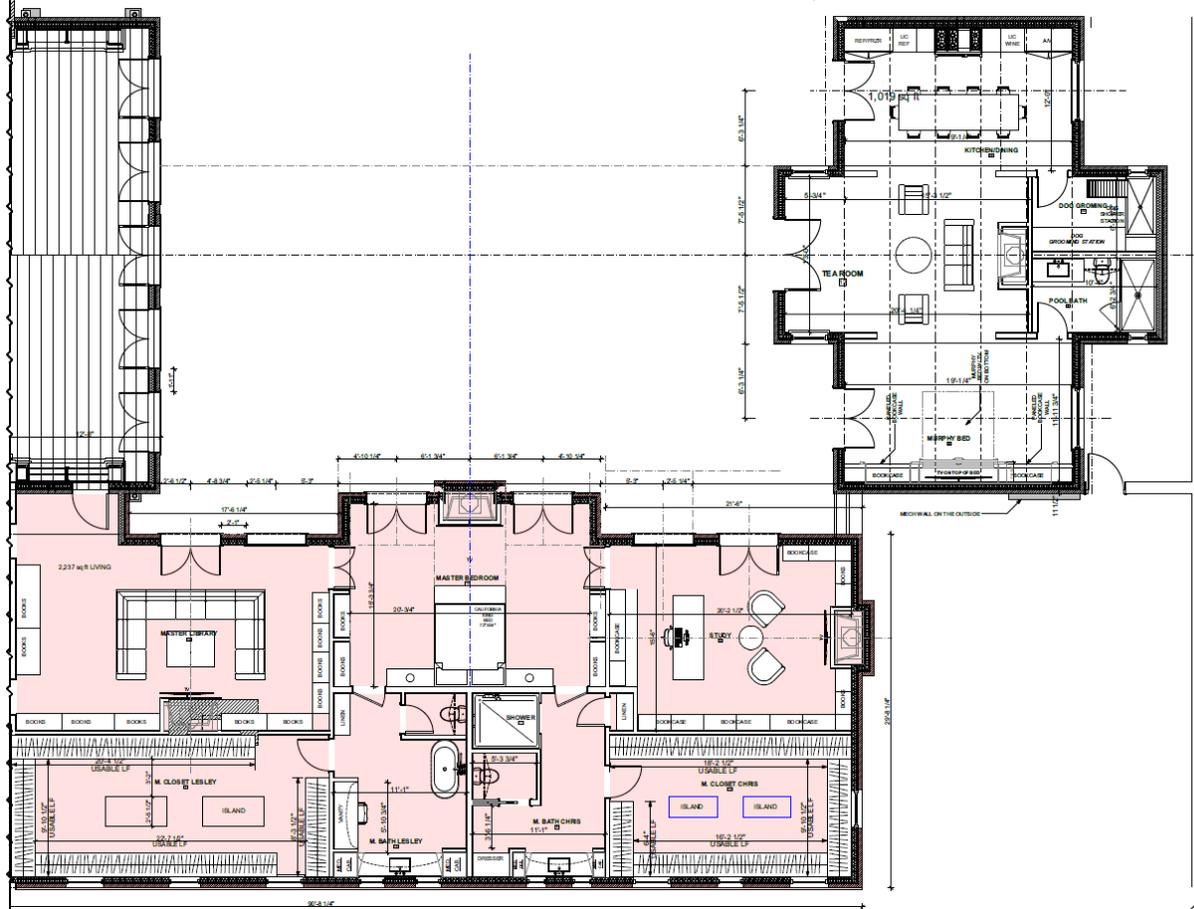
Staff Report





Town of Highland Park Board of Adjustment

Staff Report





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Board of Adjustment*

Staff Report

ATTACHMENT 5 – SITE PHOTO

