



**CITY OF COLUMBUS, INDIANA
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS VARIANCE
FINDINGS OF FACT**

Case Reference Number: BZA-26-38

Applicant: Volunteers of America

Filing Date: April 21, 2026

Hearing Date: May 26, 2026

Location: The southwest corner of the intersection of 14th Street and Hutchins Avenue

Variances Requested:

1. Zoning Ordinance Section 3.14(C) to allow the minimum living area per dwelling for a multi-family dwelling to be 480 square feet, 20 feet less than the required 500 square feet.
2. Zoning Ordinance Section 3.14(C) to allow the maximum gross density to be 17 dwelling units, 1.75 more dwelling units than the maximum 25 dwelling units per acre.
3. Zoning Ordinance Section 7(Table 7.1) to allow multi-family residential to have 9 parking spaces, 22 fewer than the minimum required 31 parking spaces.

The applicant is proposing to construct a 2-story, 17 unit multi-family residential development.

Board Action Taken:

Variance #1: Dwelling Size - Request Approved by a Vote of: 5-0

Variance #2: Increased Density - Request Approved by a Vote of: 5-0

Variance #3: Reduced Parking - Request Approved by a Vote of: 4-1

The Columbus Board of Zoning Appeals acted under the authority of Indiana law as follows: Indiana Code Section 36-7-4-918.5: a board of zoning appeals shall approve or deny variances from the development standards (such as height, bulk, or area) of the zoning ordinance.

In its deliberations, the Columbus Board of Zoning Appeals weighed the evidence associated with the following criteria and made the findings listed below. These written findings shall be considered the official findings of the Board and shall supplement any spoken findings offered at the time the Board's decision was made. Any distinctions between these written findings and those that were spoken serve only to clarify any paraphrasing or commonly understood language used in the spoken findings through the use of technical content of identical meaning.

Variance #1: Dwelling Size

Criteria #1: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(a), the approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.*

Finding: The dwelling units will each have a full kitchen and separate bathroom and be constructed to current building code standards. Neither the Fire Department nor County Code Enforcement reported any concerns with the proposed dwelling unit living area and the approval will not be injurious to the public,

health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #2: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(b), the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.*

Finding: The dwelling units will each have a full kitchen and separate bathroom. The 480 square feet, rather than the minimum 500 square feet, of living area will help expand the housing offerings in the area and not affect the adjacent properties in an adverse manner. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #3: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(c), the strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.*

Finding: The context of the area is urban in nature with smaller lot sizes. The increased density of a multi-family building is not out of context with the area. In these areas there is a need to balance the demands of contextually appropriate construction in an urban neighborhood. This property is close to many services and amenities and can accommodate the density. This criterion has been met.

Variance #2: Increased Density

Criteria #1: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(a), the approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.*

Finding: 14th Street and Hutchins Avenue generally should be able to accommodate any traffic generated from the proposed development. Both readily connect to the larger grid-pattern street system in the area including high-volume streets, such as nearby Central Avenue. The redevelopment of the property will include sidewalks along 14th Street, contributing to needed infrastructure improvements in the area to better accommodate larger numbers of pedestrians. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #2: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(b), the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.*

Finding: The surrounding area contains small industrial uses, single-family dwellings and multi-family uses with Flats on 14th and Central Park Apartments nearby and Ashford, The Lofts at Ashford, and Gateway Apartments a few blocks to the south. Adding 1.75 more dwelling units per acre in this already mixed-use urban area would not create adverse impact on neighboring properties. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #3: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(c), the strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.*

Finding: The context of the area is urban in nature with smaller lot sizes. The increased density of a multi-family building is not out of context with the area. In these areas there is a need to balance the demands of contextually appropriate

construction in an urban neighborhood. This property is close to many services and amenities and can accommodate the density. This criterion has been met.

Variance #3: Reduced Parking

Criteria #1: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(a), the approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.*

Finding: The applicant has demonstrated there is adjacent parking being provided through a lease with the United Way in the adjoining parking lot and on-street parking is also available on Hutchins Avenue. The City Engineering Department and the City Fire Department do not have any concerns with the reduced parking. Further, the site is walkable to nearby goods and services and well-served by ColumBus transit. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #2: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(b), the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.*

Finding: The surrounding area should not be negatively affected by this approval of reduced on-site parking. The applicant has demonstrated there is adjacent parking being provided through a lease with the United Way in the adjoining parking lot and on-street parking is also available. Further, the site is walkable to nearby goods and services and well-served by ColumBus transit. This criterion has been met.

Criteria #3: *Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance, Section 12.3(D)(1)(c), the strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.*

Finding: The applicant has demonstrated there is adjacent parking being provided through a lease with the United Way in the adjoining parking lot and on-street parking is also available. Further, the site is walkable to nearby goods and services and well-served by ColumBus transit. Strict application of the zoning ordinance's parking standards has the potential to overburden this infill site due to its physical constraints. This criterion has been met.

These findings of fact have been adopted by the Columbus Board of Zoning Appeals on the 23rd day of June, 2026.

Chairperson

Secretary