



Village of South Russell

5205 Chillicothe Road
South Russell, Ohio 44022
440-338-6700

Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting
Minutes
April 15, 2026 – 7:00 pm

Members Present:

Andy Hitchcock, Chairman, John Buda, Martin O'Toole, Mike Mulloy, Cindy Matejcik

Other Officials:

Mayor Bill Koons, Dave Hocesvar, Building Official, Todd Hicks, Solicitor,
Ruth Griswold, Board Secretary

Visitors:

Linda Mandau, 5101 Chillicothe Rd.; Bill and Joanie Werman, 5081 Chillicothe Rd.;
Carmen Insana, 5084 Chillicothe Rd.; Robert J. Vitt, 47 West Cottage Street; Ginny and
Don Shirk, 5079 Chillicothe Rd.; Bryan Fetzner, 46 Daisy Lane, Jillian Fetzner, 46 Daisy
Lane; Lisa Grimm, 327 Whitetail Dr.; Rick Grimm, 327 Whitetail Dr.; Mitch Jacobson, 323
Whitetail Dr.

Call to Order

Mr. Hitchcock called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Griswold conducted roll call. All members were present and a quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Hitchcock asked whether the Board had reviewed the minutes of the January 21, 2026 meeting. Hearing no comments or requested changes, Mr. Hitchcock made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Matejcik seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Swearing In

The Solicitor administered the oath to all individuals who intended to provide testimony.

Agenda Item 1: BZA Case #26-02: Bryan and Jillian Fetzner, owners and applicants for the property located at **46 Daisy Lane**, are seeking the following 1) A side yard area variance of 9'4" for a new front addition to the home. The site plan shows the front north corner of the addition to be 15'8" from the side lot line and 2) A side yard area variance of 2' 2" for an addition to the rear of the garage. The site plan shows the rear south corner of the garage addition to be 22'10" from the side lot line. Per Section 4.02 of the South Russell Zoning Code, additions must be a minimum of 25' from all side lot lines.

Applicant Testimony

- Proposed addition to front of home to create a bedroom
- Proposed addition to rear to construct a single-car garage
- Existing home lacks basement and attic storage
- Front addition results in further encroachment into existing nonconforming setback
- Neighbors were consulted and expressed no objections
- Alternative designs considered, including larger rear addition, but rejected due to greater encroachment

Board Questions and Discussion

- Board questioned whether smaller additions could reduce variance
- Applicant stated bedroom count and functionality required proposed size
- Board noted alignment with neighboring homes and minimal visual impact
- Clarification that garage space would primarily be used for storage
- Discussion of possible design modifications such as stepping back portions of structure

Board Deliberation

- Existing structure already nonconforming
- Proposal represents reasonable improvement to property
- Minimal impact on surrounding neighborhood character

Motions

- **Mr. Hitchcock said for BZA Case #26-02, for the property located at 46 Daisy Lane, he makes a motion to approve 9'4" side yard variance to permit a permanent addition to the home, located no closer than 15'8" to the north lot line. Mr. Buda seconded. On roll call vote, all members voted in favor. The motion passed.**
- **Mr. Hitchcock said for BZA Case #26-02, for the property located at 46 Daisy Lane, he makes a motion to approve a side yard variance of 2'2" to permit a garage addition no closer than 22'10" from the south lot line. Mr. O'Toole seconded. On roll call vote, all members voted in favor. The motion passed.**

Agenda Item 2: BZA Case #26-03: Carmen Insana, owner and applicant for the property located at **5084 Chillicothe Road**, is seeking the following: 1) An area variance to allow this 1.58-acre property that is zoned R-1A to be known as Agricultural. Per Section 4.02 of the South Russell Zoning Code, agricultural properties must be a minimum of 5 acres, requiring an area variance of 3.42 acres. 2) A use variance that would allow wine making and tasting, and retail sales of wine and produce from this property. Section 4.02 of the South Russell Zoning Code prohibits retail sales from an agricultural property.

Applicant Testimony

- Operates existing winery business with prior locations in Little Italy and Old Brooklyn
- Recently acquired subject property and intends to utilize existing barn
- Proposes wine production, limited tastings, and retail sales
- Plans to maintain and expand agricultural activities (produce, flowers, grapevines)
- Estimated wine production of approximately 6,000–10,000 gallons annually
- Majority of grapes to be sourced off-site; limited on-site production
- On-site cultivation expected to yield approximately 30 cases annually in future years

- Minimal structural changes proposed; conversion of wellhouse to restroom facilities
- Installation of limited outdoor seating areas; no large-scale events intended
- Intends to employ individuals with developmental disabilities as part of operations

Public Comment

- Neighbor at 5081 Chillicothe Road expressed concerns regarding traffic congestion
- Concerns regarding increased noise, lighting, and evening activity
- Concern about expansion of commercial activity in residential area
- Reference to prior traffic issues associated with produce sales at property

Board Questions and Discussion

- Solicitor confirmed agricultural use requires minimum five-acre parcel
- Subject property (approx. 1.58 acres) does not qualify without variance
- Discussion of distinction between agricultural and commercial use
- Board noted wine production largely dependent on imported grapes
- Questions regarding scale of production and distribution methods
- Discussion of zoning implications of manufacturing, storage, and retail components
- Clarification that winery licensing differs from zoning classification
- Board expressed difficulty categorizing mixed-use nature of proposal
- Discussion of potential infrastructure needs, including restrooms and traffic flow

Board Deliberation

- Concerns regarding intensity of use within residential zoning district
- Consideration of precedent for similar applications
- Discussion of whether requests constitute practical difficulty or use change
- Recognition of complexity in blending agricultural, commercial, and retail uses

Mr. Hicks explained to the applicant that even if the board approves his application, it does not give him the ability to do what he has described, since it is not a commercial property. Mr. Insana said he would like to ask for commercial status. Mr. Hicks said that is not what he applied for and went on to further explain the situation for Mr. Insana.

Mr. Hitchcock asked if board members had any further questions. There were none. Mr. Hitchcock said, given what he has heard this evening, he is struggling to see this as something that he can vote for, but he wants to give the applicant, and the board an opportunity to have this pass. He said, in the case of BZA #26-03, he makes a motion to approve an area variance of 3.42 acres to allow the property to be known as agricultural. Ms. Matejck seconded. Mr. Hitchcock asked for any questions on the motion. Mr. Mulloy said he wants to confirm if a vote is taken and it is denied, Mr. Insana would not be able to resubmit. Mr. Hicks said that is correct.

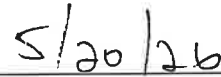
Mr. Mulloy told the applicant he may want to rethink his plan before the vote. Mr. Hicks said if the agricultural variance gets voted down tonight, that will close down his ability to grow grapes on the property and make wine out of those grapes. Mr. Hicks said he must decide if he wants to go home and study the zoning code to really understand what's in play here, , maybe talk to a lawyer, or proceed with the vote. He said he just really wants him to understand the situation.

Mr. Insana said he would like to withdraw his requests for the variances.

Mr. Hitchcock asked if there was any Old Business or New Business. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 8:32 pm.



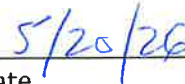
Marty O'Toole, Acting Chairman



Date



Board Secretary



Date