

City of Dearborn
Zoning Board of Appeals
Thursday, July 30, 2026
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes

Called to Order: 5:36 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Glen Green (Chair), Hassane Fadlallah (Vice-Chair), Tim Muflihi, Mona Hammoud, Afan Bapacker.

Technical Advisors: David Breneau, Zoning Administrator; Nolan Kukla, Assistant Planning and Zoning Manager; Yassmen Sobh, City Attorney.

Appeal #26-116

Consideration of a request of Daniel Makled for approvals to accommodate construction of a new house, the property size being approx. 28,009 sq ft, irregular, 0.643-acre, in the (RA) One-Family Residential zoning district:

9 Fairmount Court

Breneau summarized the Staff report dated July 30, 2026. Factors to consider on the variance request: Plans were approved in 2025 for the 0.64-acre property for construction of a new house with a two-car attached garage; the house is currently under construction. The City approved it by error with insufficient front yard landscape coverage. During construction an amendment to the approved plan was proposed, adding a 676 sq ft detached cabana and additional changes to the landscaping in the front yard. The cabana is 676 sq ft and includes a covered outdoor living space, a pool storage room, and a bathroom. All accessory structures shall require Zoning Board of Appeals approval, except for those specifically listed per Section 2.03 D2. The cabana structure as a whole is not a specially listed permitted structure. While being similar to a gazebo, it for various reasons does not fit the definition of a gazebo (a permitted structure) and therefore requires Zoning Board of Appeals approval. The proposed front yard landscape coverage does not meet the minimum requirement. However, the wedge-shape of the lot and front yard may be deemed as a practical difficulty in meeting this requirement.

Green said the original square footage of the firepit area, what was it.

Makled said we are no longer doing the firepit.

Green said they were on the original plans.

Makled said he does not know.

Breneau said there were some changes overall between what was approved and what is being present now, with what is being presented tonight the overall landscaping requirement is being met.

Green said it appears the cabana area is similar in size to the firepit area.

Breneau said it is actually larger, but with other changes it reduces impervious coverage.

Makled said he also removed a basketball court.

Bapacker said for the front yard landscaping what changed from the original approved plans.

Breneau said that was part of the error in the original approval, and he is increasing the flatwork some, triggering the front yard requirement.

Bapacker said to meet the requirement we have to move the house.

Breneau said or reduce the amount of pavement.

Bapacker said is the pavement installed?

Makled said no.

Green said what is the percentage of the landscape area.

Breneau said one thing to note is that the applicant has already ordered materials pursuant to the approved plans.

Makled said yes, we relied on the approved plan to order materials, one thing about the lot that is a hardship is the wedge shape in the front, it is tight.

Breneau said quite often we get these wedge-shape properties where it is narrower at the street, it makes it harder to meet the front yard requirement.

Bapacker asked if there are other cabanas in the city similar to this.

Makled said Mike Shehadi built one and there are several in his own neighborhood, and people want to stay here and not go to Northville.

Bapacker said he was wondering if the Board has approved them in the past.

Breneau said a cabana, no; one thing about ordinances is if you are going to list what is and is not allowed it is easier to list what is permitted, to list what is not permitted would be impossible, people come up with new ideas all the time.

Bapacker said so if this were a gazebo.

Breneau said the definition of a gazebo is that it is open on all four sides.

Bapacker said he is trying to figure whether the cabana is an unlisted structure because we do not have all of the definitions or if there is a specific reason it is unlisted.

Breneau keep in mind his request is for an unlisted structure and it is not a variance request, so there is no matter of practical difficulty involved, unlike with the flatwork in the front, we simply cannot list every possible accessory structure.

Hammoud said a lot of people are asking for these, it is difficult to add to avoid a hearing for all of them.

Breneau said a gazebo is a listed structure, but if you add a wall it is no longer a gazebo.

Hammoud said people want these in case they want a TV.

Breneau said if enough people want them then it would be something to consider adding to the list.

Green said if there are a number of them they have not come before the Board.

Muflihi said aside from the cabana will there be as shed in the back.

Makled said he has his attached garage, and hopefully the cabana with storage, he has almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a an acre, hopefully he'll have room for a shed.

Miflihi said he has a large lot, he does not see a shed on the plan and it helps with the cabana.

Breneau said keep in mind you are limited to the number of structures you can have, and you have a shed on the plan.

Hammoud said he has only two structures.

Breneau said there is a pool, an arch, and the cabana.

Makled said we removed the arch.

Breneau said keep in mind part of the cabana is a shed.

Public comment:

Arthur Robosino, lives on Hillcrest, said he is objecting to his variances, he is not a good resident for Dearborn, he has been building for almost two years, he has pictures of the property there is a dump truck sinking into the mud for five months, lumber is laid across the yard, weeds are overgrown, piles of rubble, he's been burning wood, this is not being a good citizen of Dearborn, and he should not be rewarded with benefits. (He handed the photos to the Board.)

Green said it is not the roll of the Board to monitor the condition of a property during construction and monitor how long construction takes, though it can be frustrating having a house in the neighborhood under construction.

Breneau said if the project is taking too long the Building Department deals with that.

Green said what is before the Board is the approval of a detached accessory structure, it

is a cabana, which is not in the ordinance, so it has to be approved through the Zoning Board, it is kind of a formality, the plans show it is comparable in size to what was originally approved as a firepit; the front yard landscape coverage, it is attributable to the shape of the lot, that is what is before the Board, what is required for front yard landscape is 70%, we are less than this, this plan is an improvement to what was originally approved.

Outside correspondences: None

RESOLUTION. Motion by Commissioner Hammoud, supported by Bapacker, for the reasons and subject to the facts, representations and stipulations stated on the record during the public hearing, to APPROVE the request detailed below:

Sec. 2.03 D2. Approval of a detached accessory structure (cabana). Zoning requirement: ZBA approval required for unlisted accessory structures. Proposed: The cabana structure as proposed is an unlisted structure is APPROVED (DZO 32.05, F.1. A, E, F, I, M).

Sec. 29.02. Waive the minimum required front yard landscape coverage. Zoning requirement: 70%, 3,240 sq ft t. Proposed: Waive the requirement is APPROVED (DZO 32.05, F.1. A, E, F, I, M).

This motion is conditioned on the petitioner's continuous compliance with all applicable ordinances, codes, laws and statutes; and, the petitioner must perform all work under plans, permits and final inspections approved by the City of Dearborn.

Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Fadelallah, supported by Commissioner Hammoud, to adjourn the hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:00 p.m.