

**Rock Island Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes**

Council Chambers, City Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

1528 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

December 1, 2025

5:30 PM



<b>Voting Members Present</b>	Mike Creger Sarah Wright Tanja Whitten Maureen Riggs Samuel Odeyemi Bill Sowards Norm Moline Don Mewes
<b>Voting Members Absent</b>	Reshanda Johnson
<b>Staff Present</b>	Eunice Amissah-Mensah, Urban Planner Tanner Osing, Planning & Zoning Manager

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Riggs called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and read the roll call.

**Public Comment**

No members of the public wished to comment so the meeting continued.

**Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes**

Mewes moved to approve the minutes for November 3, 2025. Sowards seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 8 to 0.

**Old Business**

None

**Public Hearings**

2025-26 Public hearing: Request from John Henschen to consider a variance from the Rock Island Zoning Ordinance for property at 1720 Big Island Parkway in an R-1 (one-unit residential) district.

Amissah-Mensah read the staff report with the recommendation for approval of the request.

Cory Hale, contractor and John Henschen, property owner spoke on the request.

Cory Hale stated that the garage build supports storage needs and allows John, who has a physical impairment, to continue parking in the attached garage. The proposed garage connects directly to the existing driveway and avoids significant tree removal with only two trees and a small crab tree compared to 7–10 trees if built in the rear. He stated the structure will match the home's materials and design, and with a 114-foot setback, it will be minimally visible from Big Island Road.

As there were no other questions or members of the public wishing to speak, Chair Riggs called for a motion.

#### Decision for Case 2025-26

Whitten made a motion to approve the variance request for the garage in the front yard. Mewes seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 8 to 0 (Riggs, Creger, Whitten, Wright, Odeyemi, Moline, and Sowards)

2025-27 Public hearing: Request from Tom Lawrence to consider a variance from the Rock Island Zoning Ordinance for an unrelated group use for property at 3312 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue in an R-2 (one-and-two unit residential) district.

Amisah-Mensah read the staff report with the recommendation for approval of the request.

The applicant or representative was not present. The meeting carried on.

Commissioners expressed concern about the neighborhood becoming saturated with Augustana student rentals, noting that most nearby properties are owned by LLCs. Staff confirmed the owner could rent to three individuals without a variance. The idea of postponing the vote to consult the college was discussed but not pursued.

As there were no other questions or members of the public wishing to speak, Chair Riggs called for a motion.

#### Decision for Case 2025-27

Mewes made a motion to authorize the unrelated group use request. Odeyemi seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 8 to 0 (Riggs, Creger, Whitten, Wright, Odeyemi, Moline, and Sowards)

### **Other Business**

#### Approval of the 2026 Public Meeting Schedule

Creger made a motion to approve the 2026 Public Meeting Schedule with an amendment. Whitten seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 8 to 0 (Riggs, Creger, Whitten, Wright, Odeyemi, Moline, and Sowards)

#### Community Listening Session for the Urban Agriculture Ordinance

Osing provided an ordinance overview, purpose of the ordinance and key provisions of the updated ordinance.

Members of the public spoke on the updated ordinance.

Kathleen North and Nina Struss expressed support for gardening and healthy food cultivation but raised concerns about a communication gap as well as limits on seasonal structures would hinder productive gardening.

Aldersperson Evans noted that the conversation was necessary, emphasizing the need to raise awareness and foster neighborliness.

Andy Parer reiterated his view that the proposed ordinance does not comply with the State's Right to Garden Act.

Staff clarified that residents may request a variance for nearly any aspect of the ordinance, including size limits and permitted timeframes for structures.

Osing concluded the listening session by outlining the next steps in the process.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Riggs adjourned the meeting at 7:20PM.

Minutes submitted by Eunice Amisah-Mensah.