

AGENDA

WYOMING ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Monday, December 1, 2025 – 1:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Public Hearings

Application Number: PZV2025-0004
Applicant: Mberabagobo Merci
Location: 1653 Kentfield St SW
Parcel Number: 41-17-15-427-035
Previous Variances: None

Request: The applicant is requesting a use variance for Section 90-406A, which does not allow adult foster care group homes in the R-2 Residential District.

The applicant is proposing an adult foster care group home and is requesting a variance to allow this type of use at this property within the R-2 Residential District.

5. Public Comment
6. Informational Items

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO FORMAL APPROVAL BY THE WYOMING BOARD
OF ZONING APPEALS AT ITS NEXT REGULAR MEETING.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 17, 2025
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY OF WYOMING, MICHIGAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bovard Strong, Burrill, Dishaw, LaPlaca, VanderSluis

MEMBERS ABSENT: Richter, Tobian, Yonkers, VandenBerg

STAFF PRESENT: Smith, Assistant Director, Community & Economic Development
Ortlieb, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chair VanderSluis called the meeting to order at 1:38 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of October 6, 2025 were approved to stand as read.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved to stand as read.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1

Application Number: PZV2025-0004

Applicant: Mberabagobo Merci

Location: 1653 Kentfield St SW

Parcel Number: 41-17-15-427-035

Chair VanderSluis referenced the request. There being only five members present for the meeting, Chair VanderSluis gave the applicant the option to request that the agenda item be tabled until the upcoming meeting on December 1, 2025.

Chair VanderSluis opened the public hearing.

Juvenal Rutaramirwa (448 Van Allen St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49548) spoke on behalf of the applicant. Rutaramirwa stated that the applicant would like to table the request until the December 1, 2025 meeting so that the full seven member board can be present.

Dishaw motioned to table request until the December 1, 2025 meeting. Bovard Strong supported. The motion to table the request passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair VanderSluis opened the public comment.

There being no remarks, Chair VanderSluis closed the public comment.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

There were no informational items.

Smith and VanderSluis thanked the board for their presence and flexibility. LaPlaca, Dishaw, Burrill, and VanderSluis discussed additional forms of communication for board members to improve meeting attendance. Ortlieb and Smith stated Staff could explore alternative methods of communication for future meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:44 PM.

Russel Richter, Secretary
Board of Zoning Appeals

Kathleen Ortlieb, Recording Secretary
Board of Zoning Appeals

WYOMING ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

AGENDA ITEM

NO. 1

BZA MEETING DATE: December 1, 2025

APPLICATION NUMBER: PZV2025-0004

APPLICANT: Mberabagobo Merci

LOCATION: 1653 Kentfield St SW, Parcel Number 41-17-15-427-035

I. Application Materials

- a. Application
- b. Narrative
- c. Site Plan

II. Findings of Fact

III. Public Comments

- a. Public Comment #1
- b. Public Comment #2
- c. Public Comment #3
- d. Public Comment #4
- e. Public Comment #5
- f. Public Comment #6

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS – APPLICATION FOR REVIEW

Please contact the City Planner at 616-530-7285 or email plan_info@wyomingmi.gov if you have any questions. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the proposal with the City Planner prior to submitting to facilitate the review process. Please note that applications will not proceed for review until all required information and fees are provided.

Type of Variance Requested: Use Variance Non-Use Variance

Zoning Ordinance Section(s) Appealed: _____

Brief Description of Appeal: I have added/Attached a brief description of use variance request with this Application.

Address of Variance: 1653 Kentfield St SW Wyoming, MI 49519

Parcel Number: 411 715 427 035

Authorization for City staff and BZA members to enter the property for evaluation: Yes No

Applicant: Mberabagoba Merci Property Owner: Mberabagoba Merci

Address: 1653 Kentfield ST SW Wyoming, MI 49519 Address: 1653 Kentfield ST SW Wyoming, MI 49519.

Phone: 806-335-5260 Phone: 806-335-5260

Email: _____ Email: _____

Date: 10/09/2025 Date: 10/09/2025

Signature: Mberabagoba Merci Signature: Mberabagoba Merci

Filing Fee

<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Use Variance: 1 & 2 Family Uses	\$275.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Use Variance: All Other Uses	\$525.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Use Variance: All Uses	\$525.00

Total 525

USE VARIANCE REQUEST STATEMENT

Requested Variance: Permission to operate an Adult Foster Care home serving up to six residents in an R-2 district

1. Exceptional or Extraordinary Circumstances

The subject property presents unique circumstances that do not generally apply to other properties in the same district. This home is intended to provide essential residential care services for vulnerable adults who require a supportive, home-like setting rather than institutional housing.

Designed as a standard single-family residence, the home is fully consistent in scale, design, and appearance with neighboring properties. The requested variance is not intended to change the character of the neighborhood but to permit a state-licensed, small-capacity AFC home to operate within an existing residential structure. The layout, accessibility, and built-in safety features of the home make it uniquely suited for this type of care and fully compliant with state licensing requirements.

2. Preservation and Enjoyment of Substantial Property Rights

Granting this variance is necessary to preserve the substantial property rights afforded to others in the same zoning district—specifically, the right to use residential property to provide housing and care. Other homes within the district are permitted to operate foster care or daycare services for up to six children, which is comparable in use and intensity to the proposed AFC home.

Denying the variance would unnecessarily limit the ability to offer a lawful and beneficial service aligned with the intent of the residential zone. Approval would allow the applicant to use the property in a way that provides both community benefit and responsible stewardship of the neighborhood's residential character.

3. No Diminishment of Adjacent Property Value or Public Congestion

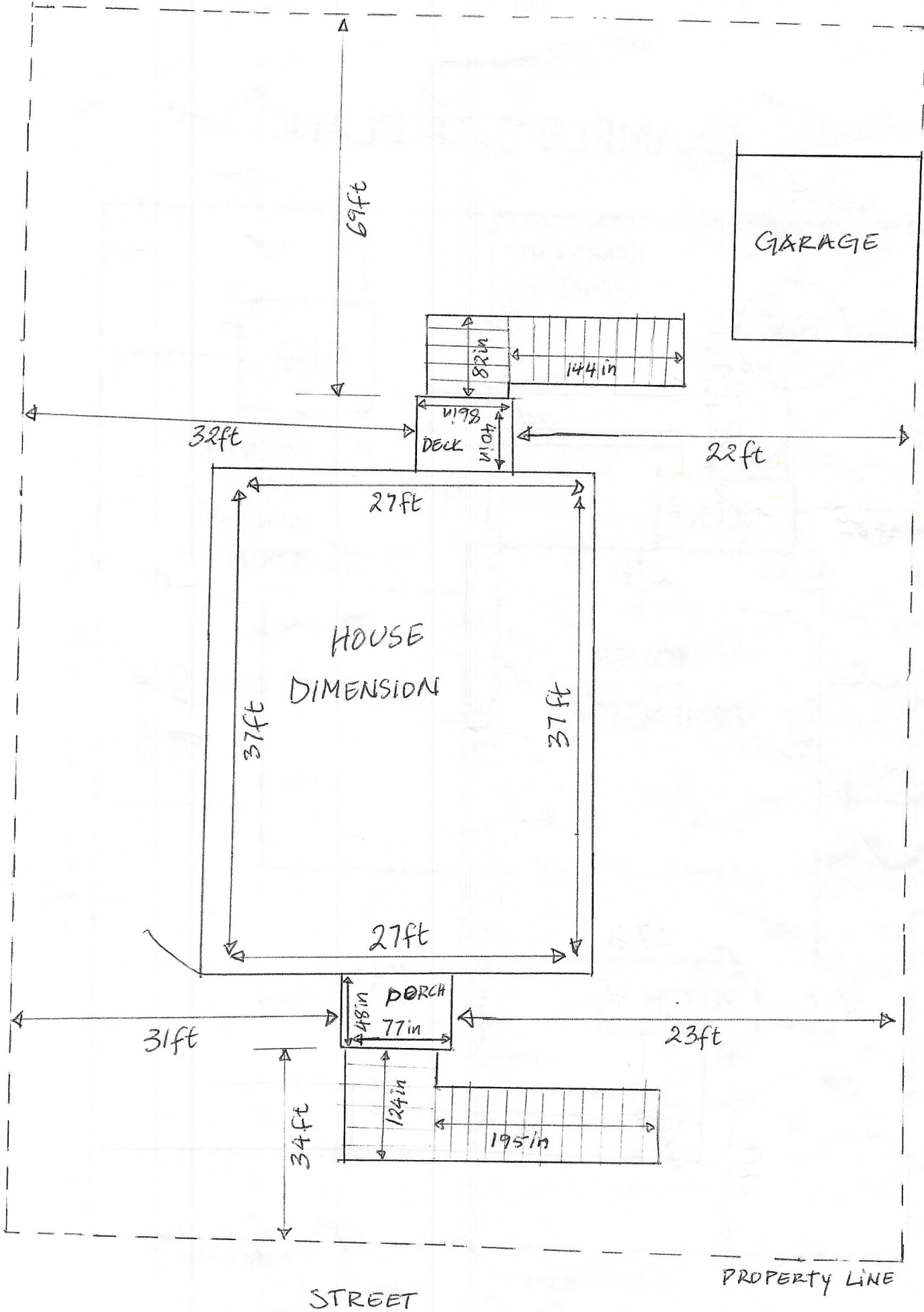
Approval of this variance will not negatively affect the value of surrounding properties. The property is maintained to a high residential standard, with regular maintenance, landscaping, and a clean, well-kept exterior that matches neighborhood expectations.

The AFC home will have a minimal impact on local traffic and parking. Staffing is limited and scheduled in shifts, and visitors arrive at different times, reducing the potential for congestion. All care and activities occur indoors in a quiet, controlled environment, ensuring continued compatibility with the residential setting.

4. Not a General or Recurrent Condition

This request is based on the unique characteristics of this specific property and its suitability for use as an AFC home. The condition prompting this request is not general or recurring in nature and cannot be addressed through broader zoning changes.

Each AFC home operates under specific licensing and operational guidelines established by the State of Michigan. Therefore, general regulations would not sufficiently accommodate the individual requirements and suitability of this property. The requested variance reflects the applicant's intent to provide care in a regulated, family-style setting tailored to this location.



Application No.:	<u>PZV2025-0004</u>	STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Applicant:	<u>Mberabagobo Merci</u>	Approve: _____
Address:	<u>1653 Kentfield Street SW</u>	Deny: <u> X </u>

FINDINGS OF FACT SHEET

1. That the condition, location or situation of the specific piece of property or of the intended use of the property is unique to that property in the zoning district in which it is located because:

The condition, location, and situation of the parcel are not unique. It is a parcel of approximately 8,200 square feet and located in the R-2 zone district. Its present use as a single family home is a principal permitted use in the R-2 zone district and the market for single family homes in Wyoming continues to be competitive.

There are no access issues or other impairments that would impact the ability of the property to be used as a single family home or would be likely to prevent it from being marketed as such.

Adult foster care is not a use that specifically requires single family homes to be successful. There are a number of adult foster care facilities established as multifamily facilities that have proven successful in Wyoming.

2. That the building, structure or land cannot be reasonably used in a manner consistent with the uses allowed in the zoning district in which it is located:

There are no outstanding code violations or known structural issues with the single family home on the site that would prevent its use as such. As mentioned above, there are no known impairments to the land that would prevent its use as a single family home.

The R-2 zoning district is a residential zoning district that focuses primarily on single family homes and other uses that are traditionally included in single family neighborhoods. The R-2 zoning district does permit “Foster care facilities, nursery schools, day nurseries, and child care facilities for the care of not more than six people as defined by the Michigan Family Independence Agency,” but staff has historically read that use as a general permission of childcare uses that fit in the context of a single family home.

The definitions provided in the Wyoming Zoning Code separate “Adult care facilities” and “Child care/residential care facilities.” Section 90-203 defines “Child care/residential care facilities” and includes two definitions of foster care, both of which are specific to children, as well as multiple definitions for child day cares and child day nurseries of various sizes and types. Section 90-201 defines “Adult care facilities” and provides definitions for four types of adult foster care as well as adult day care. Staff have interpreted the “foster care” use in R-2 as child foster care as the remainder of the listed use matches the uses listed under “Child care/residential facilities.” This use is consistent with a single family neighborhood as child foster care facilities typically look and operate like single family homes and do not require additional staff to provide medical or social services.

Adult foster care homes tend to provide permanent supportive services to their residents, which require more staffing and additional resources. In this regard, adult foster care homes tend to operate more like permanent supportive housing or convalescent homes, which are permitted in multifamily zoning districts, commercial districts, and form based code districts.

3. That the use variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, nor the intent of the city master plan, nor be of detriment to adjacent property:

As stated above, adult foster care homes tend to operate more like permanent supportive housing or convalescent homes, which often require additional services and staffing. These staffing needs may create additional parking demands that exceed what can be provided on site.

4. That the requested use is not of so general or recurring a nature as to make reasonably practicable the formulation of a general or adding it to the permitted uses in the zoning district in which it is located or to permitted uses in other more appropriate zoning districts.

The Board of Zoning Appeals could choose to interpret the permitted uses in the R-2 zoning district to include both child foster care and adult foster care. Absent that interpretation, there are no distinguishing conditions or situations for this parcel that set it apart from other parcels in the R-2 zoning district and a variance could create a precedent that would be challenging to administer.

5. The variance will not impair the intent and purpose of this chapter.

The proposed variance will not impair the intent and purpose of this chapter. Adult foster care is a residential use. Permitting it in a single family zoning district would not impair the intent of the code, but could create a precedent that would be challenging to administer.

6. The immediate unnecessary hardship causing the need for the variance request was not created by the applicant.

There more than 2,100 parcels in the City that allow for permanent supportive housing or convalescent homes. That accounts for almost 10% of all parcels in the City of Wyoming. At the time of purchase, the applicant already intended to pursue this use and undertook renovations without seeking zoning approval. The applicant's failure to choose a suitable property does not create a necessity to grant use variance.

PUBLIC COMMENT #1

Charla Williams
1661 Kentfield St SW
Wyoming, MI 49519
November 11, 2025

City of Wyoming Zoning Board of Appeals
1155 28th Street SW
Wyoming, MI 49509

Application number: PZV2025-004

Applicant: Mberabagobo, Merci

Re: Opposition to Use Variance Request – Conversion of Single-Family Residence to Adult Foster Care

Property Location: 1653 Kentfield St SW Wyoming, MI 49519, Parcel Number 41-17-15-427-035

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing as the next-door neighbor to the property at 1653 Kentfield St SW Wyoming, MI 49519 to express my strong opposition to the request for a zoning variance to convert this single-family home into an Adult Foster Care facility. I respectfully ask the Board to deny this request, as it fails to meet the necessary standards for a use variance under the City of Wyoming Zoning Ordinance and would negatively affect the safety, character, and livability of our neighborhood.

Below are my specific reasons for opposition, corresponding to the six required findings for a use variance:

1. The property is not unique within the zoning district.

The condition and location of the property are not unique in any way that would justify a variance. The home and lot are consistent with other single-family residences on our street. There are no special circumstances, lot shapes, or topographical challenges that make this property different from the rest of our neighborhood. It should remain consistent with the same residential standards we all follow.

2. The property can be reasonably used as a single-family home.

This home can be reasonably used within the R-1 zoning district as a standard single-family residence, just as it was intended and has been used historically. There is no hardship preventing the owner from continuing to use it for residential purposes. The

desire to convert it to an Adult Foster Care facility is a personal business decision, not a necessity created by the property's condition.

3. The proposed use will alter the character of the neighborhood and conflict with the City's Master Plan.

Allowing this variance would significantly change the character of our quiet residential street. Increased traffic, parking congestion, and staff or visitor activity would disrupt the peaceful environment that our neighborhood is known for.

I am also very concerned about public safety, as the increased number of vehicles and emergency responses typical to such facilities could create hazards in our small residential area. Additionally, there would likely be noise pollution and environmental impacts from higher daily activity levels.

My property, which directly borders the applicant's, contains a 40,000-gallon in-ground pool. The introduction of a commercial or institutional use next door raises serious privacy and safety concerns for my family and our guests.

The City's Master Plan envisions this area as a low-density residential neighborhood, and this proposal clearly conflicts with that intent.

4. The request is general in nature and not unique to this property.

This type of Adult Foster Care use is not unique to this property and could be proposed anywhere in the city. Because of its general nature, it should be addressed through zoning regulations in the appropriate districts, not through a one-time variance in a residential area. There are other zones in Wyoming already designated for this type of facility.

5. The variance would impair the intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance.

Granting this variance would undermine the intent of the City's zoning regulations, which are designed to preserve the integrity of single-family neighborhoods and maintain separation between residential and institutional uses. Approval would set a precedent that could open the door to additional nonresidential uses in our area, ultimately diminishing property values and neighborhood stability.

6. No hardship has been demonstrated.

The applicant has not shown an unnecessary hardship that was not self-created. The property is fully functional as a residence, and the desire to operate an Adult Foster

Care facility arises from a personal or financial choice, not a limitation of the land or structure itself.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Zoning Board of Appeals to **deny this variance request**. The proposed use does not meet the City's legal standards for a use variance and would negatively impact the safety, environment, and overall quality of life for adjacent homeowners, including myself.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued efforts to preserve the integrity of our residential neighborhoods.

Charla Williams

w.charladee@gmail.com

PUBLIC COMMENT #2

From: [Marcie Tepper](#)
To: [Planning Info](#)
Subject: November 17 Zoning Meeting
Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 2:28:32 PM

You don't often get email from marcieltepper@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email - Think Before You Click

My name is Marcie Tepper and I live directly across the street at 1652 in a home purchased by my family in 1987

Exceptional or Extraordinary Circumstances

The property does not present unique circumstances that would make it a good setting for 6 mentally impaired adults. The basement would not be safe or approved for their use, so they'd be limited to the main floor.

They state it won't change the character of the neighborhood, but they've already installed an improperly finished ramp on the front of the house on September 9. It only goes as high as the cement slab and not the door itself. There are no side rails from the house to the 1st turn, which is 4 feet according to the drawing. I'm concerned that this ramp represents the lack of knowledge on several important issues. Are they totally unaware of the dangers of no side rails or just not care? Do they not realize the whole idea of a ramp for wheelchairs is a waste and dangerous if you have to step down to the ramp from the house? Did they not consult any experts prior to hiring a company? I'm still wondering what company would build a ramp not to code. They did not pull a permit prior to building it, and zoning becoming involved after a complaint about the ramp brought to light the need for a zoning variance and AFC licensing. Were they just going to bypass the whole process? What other guidelines and policies will be ignored concerning patients or maintenance of the home?

They installed a 2nd ramp the same day on the back of which only the end is visible so I've no idea how it's installed

The layout, lack of accessibility and lack of safety features make it unsuited for this type of care and non compliant with state licensing requirements.

Preservation and Enjoyment of Substantial Property Rights

NOT granting this variance is necessary to preserve property rights of others in this neighborhood. Other homes in the district may be permitted to operate foster care or daycare services up to 6 children, and is NOT comparable to use or intensity to this proposed AFC home. I retired after 20 years working directly with mentally impaired adults and I can assure you 6 unrelated mentally impaired adults living in extreme close quarters are NOT comparable to 6 children, and if they truly believe this concept, they have zero understanding of AFC.

No Diminishment of Adjacent Property Value or Public Congestion

Approval of this variance could very well negatively affect the value of surrounding properties.

The AFC will most likely have a substantial impact on traffic and parking. Snow removal was an ongoing issue at this address, they already park at least 1 vehicle in the street, and adding staff vehicles and visitors will create unnecessary problems for residents and city plow drivers.

They claim all care and activities occur indoors, but sadly, that is not healthy for the residents, and were they to choose a location which is truly better suited for their residents, it would include the capability to have outdoor activities.

On September 11 or 12 when I asked if he needed the ramp he said they needed it for a business from the home. He did not state what kind of business. On October 28 he told me he couldn't afford his mortgage and bills because his wife was going to have a baby and wouldn't be working for probably 3-4 months and that he and his wife were moving to an apartment and a company called Better Living would run an AFC at the home for probably 2 years. I suggested he sell and he said they wanted to move back in 2 years. Now I read that his intention was an AFC home in December 2023.

I don't feel the whole neighborhood should be forced to accept a business moving onto our street just because he created his own financial hardship and that he could easily sell the house as a single family home. The house right next door to him placed their home on the market 2 days after receiving this letter and it already sold and had their inspections several days ago, so not being able to sell as single family home is not an issue

PUBLIC COMMENT #3

From: [Kelli](#)
To: [Planning Info](#)
Subject: Zoning variance request 1653 Kentfield SW
Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 2:54:27 PM

[You don't often get email from kellib1965@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

External Email - Think Before You Click

Good afternoon,

My name is Kelli Bandstra, I live at 1646 Kentfield St. SW Wyoming, MI . I'm writing this email regarding the request for a use variance for the property located at 1653 Kentfield St. SW.

I am asking that the request be denied due to the variance affecting and changing the character of the neighborhood.

I also feel that allowing an adult foster care in this neighborhood will cause a devaluation of the properties near it.

The street this house is on is generally a quiet, residential area with different types of families in single family homes and I would like to see it stay that way. There are a lot of kids playing, people walking, riding bikes and skateboards. The additional traffic and congestion created by workers, deliveries may cause safety concerns for pedestrians.

Please vote to deny this request for variance. Thank you.

Kelli Bandstra

Sent from my iPhone

PUBLIC COMMENT #4

From: [stephanie_stafford](#)
To: [Planning_Info](#)
Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 4:07:33 PM

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External Email - Think Before You Click

I live at 1711 kentfield sw, I have lived her for 32 years and have come to enjoy the family neighborly atmosphere we have here. My concern is this business isn't a good fit to this neighborhood. There are many elderly and least 8 single women and many young children that this would affect. Another concern would be the increase in traffic and parking on an already non pass through street and the increase of potential police, ambulance and fire dept. vehicles. I also believe this will decrease the homes values when potential buyers learn of this.

Thank you
Stephanie Stafford

PUBLIC COMMENT #5

From: [Laron Hill](#)
To: [Planning Info](#)
Subject: Adult Group home/ Kentfield St.
Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 4:20:27 PM

[You don't often get email from laron@restoredcounselinggroup.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

External Email - Think Before You Click

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to say that there are plenty of innocent children in This neighborhood and it would be a discomfort and stress to many in the community to have an adult group home. There are a few neighbors that have already reached out to me sharing their fear of the unknown regarding a group home and the type of individuals that may possibly be living there. Therefore, at this time, I along with the neighboring community on Kentfield St. am asking that the group home not be brought into our community at this time.

Sent from my iPhone

PUBLIC COMMENT #6

From: [Samantha Jacob](#)
To: [Planning_Info](#)
Subject: Monday November 17 Zoning Meeting Kentfield St
Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025 4:38:56 PM

You don't often get email from jacob.samantha0302@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email - Think Before You Click

To whomever it may concern,

I own and live at 1704 Kentfield St and have for nearly 10 years. I have raised my young children here since they were babies. As a single parent with young and impressionable children, I want to ensure that our street maintains its quiet, family-oriented environment we currently enjoy. I believe it is important the city declines this business and considers how this would affect the surrounding neighbors and homes on this street. I have special needs family and work with special needs children and understand how complicated and and complex they can be. They tend to have tendencies to elope and wander and although they most of the time good tendencies and are friendly some times they can be the opposite. My children enjoy playing outside and I would like to keep it that way without being worried about who may be walking or wandering up and down the street. I also understand that special needs people also have alot of other medical conditions as well and I do not believe that this type of business is suitable for a family neighborhood. It is a neighborhood and street where people are starting and creating families and it needs to stay this way. It is importantly and necessary to preserve the current character and nature of this street!!

Thank you!
Samantha Jacob