

Board of Adjustment and Appeals
Pinellas County
January 7, 2026 Meeting Minutes

The Board of Adjustment and Appeals (BAA) met in regular session at 9:04 AM on this date in the County Commission Assembly Room at the Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Alan C. Bomstein, Chair
Jason Holloway, Vice-Chair
Jose Bello
Andrew Hunsicker
Robert Warner
Deborah J. White

Not Present

Alonda Vaughan

Others Present

Michael Schoderbock, Division Manager, Zoning and Project Management
Derrill McAteer, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Jessica Oakes, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
Other interested individuals

All documents received by the Clerk have been filed and made a part of the record.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bomstein called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM and provided an overview of the hearing process; whereupon, he requested that the members disclose if they have visited the subject property as each public hearing begins.

QUASI-JUDICIAL STATEMENT

Attorney McAteer noted that the following hearings are quasi-judicial; and that only competent, substantial, fact-based testimony or evidence may be considered in the decisions by the Board; whereupon, he provided information regarding the types of evidence that are considered as such.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Due notice having been given to interested persons pursuant to Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance No. 90-1, a public hearing was held for the following application. All persons planning to give testimony were duly sworn by a Deputy Clerk.

Case No. VAR-25-17

APPLICATION OF ANGELO ALVES THROUGH JENNIFER RONNEBURGER, REPRESENTATIVE, FOR A VARIANCE

A public hearing was held on the above application for a variance to allow for the replacement of an existing legally nonconforming freestanding sign (81 square feet) with a new 128-square-foot freestanding sign, where the maximum allowable sign area in a General Office (GO) zone is 50 square feet, for the property located at 5800 49th Street in Lealman.

Mr. Schoderbock introduced the case and presented the following staff recommendation:

Recommend Conditional Approval. Staff has no objection to the conditional approval of this request as it appears to meet the Criteria for Granting Variances found in Section 138-231 of the Pinellas County Land Development Code.

The subject property contains a medical office campus, built in 1977, located at the intersection of 49th Street North and 58th Avenue North in Lealman. The HCA Florida Northside Hospital, built in 1976, is located directly to the west and north of the subject property. The HCA Florida Northside hospital is a large hospital campus with an expansive layout with multiple different medical buildings and offices. There is currently an 81-square-foot freestanding sign located at the northwest corner of the intersection of 49th Street North and 58th Avenue North, identifying the HCA Florida Northside Hospital. Importantly, this existing sign is situated on property that the hospital itself does not occupy. HCA Florida Northside Hospital intends to replace this sign with a larger one to improve wayfinding for patients and the community. The hospital's existing freestanding sign is classified as legal nonconforming, as its size exceeds the sign area limits established by the current Land Development Code. However, the sign was lawfully permitted and installed in accordance with the regulations in effect at that time. The proposed replacement sign will be illuminated, double-sided, stand 16 feet tall, and have an area of approximately 128 square feet. Electronic messaging is not included in this proposal. Per the Land

Development Code, the GO zoning district allows a maximum freestanding sign area of 50 square feet. While all other code requirements such as height and setbacks are satisfied in this proposal, the increased sign area requires a variance from the Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

Staff finds the requested increase to a 128-square-foot sign to be warranted, as it would further improve identification, access, and overall efficiency for visitors navigating this large hospital campus. Additionally, the applicant has secured and recorded a formal sign easement, allowing the HCA Florida Northside Hospital's freestanding sign to remain within the designated easement area on the subject property. The applicant has also obtained a no-objection letter from Duke Energy, satisfying the code requirement for signs taller than six feet and placed within ten feet of a right-of-way. This ensures safety and compliance with all other relevant codes. Approval should be subject to the following condition:

1. Applicant must obtain all required permits and pay all applicable fees.

Chair Bomstein indicated that he would like to disclose that he currently serves on the board of a different hospital system; and that while he is not recusing himself from this case, since there is no conflict under State law, he still believes it is appropriate for him to disclose this information to the Board. Responding to comments by Attorney McAteer, Chair Bomstein confirmed that there is no relationship between the entity associated with the hospital system board on which he serves and the applying entity for this case.

Upon the Chair's call for the applicant, Jennifer Ronneburger, Boynton Beach, appeared, provided background information regarding the request, and indicated that it would allow for easier wayfinding and consistency with another sign on the subject property.

In response to comments and queries by Chair Bomstein and Mr. Hunsicker, Ms. Ronneburger provided brief comments regarding the size and placement of signs on the subject property; whereupon, responding to additional queries by Chair Bomstein, Ms. Ronneburger and Mr. Schoderbock discussed allowable signage in different zoning districts and the need for a variance in this case.

Following brief discussion, no one appeared upon the Chair's call for opponents or other public comment. Upon the Chair's call for a motion, Mr. Hunsicker made a motion to approve, based on the facts and findings of the staff recommendation to grant conditional approval of the signage. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bello and carried by a vote of 5 to 1, with Chair Bomstein dissenting.

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 3, 2025 MEETING

Upon the Chair's call for a motion regarding the December meeting minutes, Mr. Holloway made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Ms. White and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 AM.