

City of West Lake Hills

MINUTES OF A ZONING & PLANNING COMMISSION (ZAPCO)

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 6:30 PM

1. **Call to Order: Chair Robert Meisel**

- a. Meeting begins at 6:32pm
- b. Roll Call
 1. Chair Robert Meisel: Present
 2. Vice-Chair Jim Pledger: Present
 3. Commissioner Karen Bartoletti: Absent
 4. Commissioner Patrick Stewart: Present
 5. Commissioner Laurie Maccini: Present
 6. Commissioner: Vacant Seat

2. **Citizen Communications:**

- a. No comments

3. **Consent Agenda:** The following items are considered to be self-explanatory by the Commission and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these item/s unless a Commission Member or citizen so requests.

- a. Approval of the April 15, 2026 Zoning and Planning Commission Minutes.
- b. Approval of the May 4, 2026 Zoning and Planning Commission Workshop minutes
- c. Report of previous cases ZAPCO acted on by BOA/City Council.

Action: Commissioner Pledger moves for approval of the Consent Agenda

- i. Commissioner Stewart Seconds
- ii. Motion carries unanimously (3-0)

4. **Public Hearing 614 Westbrook Drive.** Discuss and make a recommendation to the Board of Adjustment on proposed variance to allow a four-foot encroachment into the 30-foot rear setback (Section 22.03.276 & Section 22.03.281)

Applicant: Steven Campos, Contemporary Tile Design LLC

- a. **Staff Report:** Director Bills spoke about the previous approved variance at the property. The requested variance would follow the building line of the previously approved encroachment
 - 1. Commissioner Maccini asked about the height of the structure
 - 1. Director Bills explained that the applicant was present and could address design questions.
- b. **Public Comment:**
 - 1. Steven Campos– Applicant
 - 1. Spoke in favor of variance request
- c. **Discussion:**
 - 1. Commissioner Stewart asked the applicant which CRZ the encroachment would avoid.
 - 1. The applicant indicated the proposed design would leave the ¼ critical root zone undisturbed.
 - 2. Commissioner Maccini inquired about if drainage from the accessory structure would impact the tree.
 - 1. The applicant stated that the drainage would not flow toward the tree.
 - 3. Commissioner Pledger asked about the hardship of the variance
 - 1. The applicant stated the desired size of the accessory structure would only be feasible if the encroachment were granted.
 - 4. Chair Meisel asked if there were any further encroachment into the setback further than the pool.
 - 1. The applicant indicated the structure would not encroach further into the setback than the pool.
- d. **Action:** Commissioner Stewart moves to recommend that the variance be forwarded to the Board of Adjustment with a recommendation of **approval**.
 - 1. Commissioner Pledger seconds
 - 2. Motion carries 3-0

The recommendation will be forwarded to the June 10th Board of Adjustment meeting

- 5. **Public Hearing: 406 Redbud Trail.** Discuss and consider a recommendation to Board of Adjustment on proposed variances:
 - a. To reduce the 50-foot front building setback along Skyline Drive to use the previously platted 35-foot building line (Section 22.03.275 and Section 22.03.281)
 - b. To allow grading up to 6 feet on slopes of greater than 35% where no grading is allowed (Drainage and Erosion Control Design Manual Section 7.4.1)

Applicant: Bhavani Singal, Workshop No 5

Notes:

- **Agenda items 5 and 6 are related to the same proposed project but are separate items due to the division of City Council and Board of Adjustment authority over the requested code sections in the variance requests. Since both items require ZAPCO recommendation, the items were discussed concurrently and recorded in the minutes for item 5.**
- **Multiple emailed public comments were provided on these items after the agenda and packet were posted. They were provided to the Commission on the dais and are appended to the end of the minutes.**

a. Staff Report:

1. Director Bills describes the history of the variances at the property and the proposed additional variance requests related to grading, setback encroachment, and tree removal.
2. Commissioner Maccini asks if the previous variance of the tree removal was still active.
 1. Director Bills explains that variance requests expire after 1 year if the applicant does not act on the variances, but that since the applicants applied for a building permit within the expiration window and have been actively in the review process that the 2024 variances have not expired.
3. Commissioner Stewart asks if the building footprint has changed since the last variance request.
 1. Director Bills indicates that the square footage has been decreased slightly.

b. Public Comment:

1. Bhavani Singal: Applicant
 1. Spoke in favor of the variance request
2. Chris Gunter: Neighbor
 1. Spoke in opposition to the variance request
3. Steve Barron: Neighbor
 1. Spoke in opposition to the variance request
4. Gale Brundrett: Neighbor
 1. Spoke in opposition to the variance request
5. Ashwini Raja – Owner
 1. Spoke in favor of the variance request

c. Discussion:

1. Commissioner Stewart asks the applicant if pier and beam has been considered

1. The applicant indicated that they spoke with their structural engineer to find a solution for the home, and pier and beam was not determined to be an ideal solution
 2. Commissioner Pledger shares that the previous plans should work with the previously approved variances and minimize the need for variances
 3. Chair Meisel shares their belief that the structure is oversized for the lot
 4. Commissioner Stewart indicates that there may be a fundamental problem with the design when further deviations is required in addition to the previously-granted variances.
- d. **Action:** Commissioner Pledger moves to recommend the variance request be forwarded to the Board of Adjustment with a recommendation of **denial**.
1. Commissioner Stewart seconds
 2. The motion **carries** (3-0)

The recommendation will be forwarded to the June 10th Board of Adjustment meeting

6. **Public Hearing: 406 Redbud Trail.** Discuss and make a recommendation to City Council on proposed variances:
 - a. To allow for the removal of a 17-inch cedar and 14-inch live oak (Section 22.03.304(a)(4))

Applicant: Bhavani Singal, Workshop No. 5

Notes:

- **Agenda items 5 and 6 are related to the same proposed project but are separate items due to the division of City Council and Board of Adjustment authority over the requested code sections in the variance requests. Since both items require ZAPCO recommendation, the items were discussed concurrently and recorded in the minutes for item 5.**
- **Multiple emailed public comments were provided on these items after the agenda and packet were posted. They were provided to the Commission on the dais and are appended to the end of the minutes.**

- a. **Action:** Commissioner Pledger moves to forward the variance request to City Council with a recommendation of **denial**.
 3. Commissioner Maccini seconds
 4. The motion **carries** unanimously (3-0)

The recommendation will be forwarded to the June 10th City Council meeting

7. **Public Hearing:** Discuss and consider action to make a recommendation to City Council on amendments to the following Code of Ordinances Sections:

- a. General Provisions – Section 1.01.003
- b. Administration and Personnel – Section 2.02.031
- c. Administration – Section 20.02.055
- d. Building Regulations – Article 22.03
- e. Subdivision – Sections 36.01.003-004, 36.01.007, 36.01.009, 36.01.012-013
- f. Zoning – Sections 38.03.032-038, 38.04.031-032, 38.04.034-035, 38.05.032-037, 38.05.098

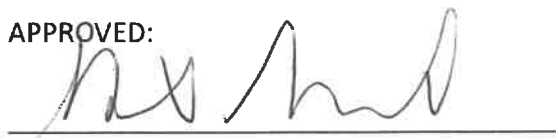
a. **Staff Report:**

- a. Director Bills and Mayor Vaughan briefed ZAPCO on code changes related to building and development and adjustments to the proposed changes made in response to ZAPCO feedback from the April ZAPCO meeting and May ZAPCO workshop.
- b. Commissioner Pledger asks about primary and secondary street setbacks as they apply to buildings and fences
 - 1. A potential issue was identified allowing solid walls to be placed closer than intended due to the transparency requirement of fences being tied to the building setback and not the fence setback. Mayor Vaughan indicated the proposed changes would be revised accordingly.
 - ii. Commissioner Pledger points out grammar mistakes and suggests that it be corrected for clarity on page 9 of the amendments.
 - iii. Commissioner Maccini shares concerns about the front yard fence setbacks and the screening of the front yard fences with bushes as a hazard for parking in the front of houses.
 - iv. Commissioner Pledger urges the Mayor to add clarification directly within the body of the Code of Ordinances regarding which project types are exempt from permitting.
 - 1. Commissioner Stewart suggests it may be better to simply have a page on the City website clarifying which projects require permitting and which do not.

8. **Adjournment**

Chair Meisel adjourns the meeting at 8:10pm

APPROVED:





Robert Meisel, Chair

ATTEST:



Joel Sherrouse, Development Coordinator

These minutes were approved on June 17, 2026.

Appendix - Public Comment Emails

From: [Ivan Brescic](#)
To: [Planner](#)
Cc: [sbarron6](#)
Subject: 406 redbud May 20th ZAPCO Meeting
Date: Sunday, May 17, 2026 7:10:52 PM
Attachments: [f_lo7s6jfv0.png](#)

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

hello there

I am the neighbour the above mentioned property.

I own 411 skyline Drive, West Lake Hills.

unfortunately I wont be able to make the hearing this Wednesday 20th may.

I hereby would like to object completely to the alterations and request for variances for the application.

The request to construct within 50ft - object.

The additional tree removal requests - especially the oak near my property line.

Overall the requests to build a 8500-10k size home on this lot is in my view completely against code.

Any questions please dont hesitate to respond

Many thanks

Ivan brescic

Ivan Brescic
(+1) 310 804 8502



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Appendix - Public Comment Emails

May 12, 2026

Stephen and Michelle Barron
1 Valbella Drive
West Lake Hills, TX 78746

To:

Robert Meisel, ZAPCO Chair
City of West Lake Hills
911 Westlake Drive
West Lake Hills, TX 78746

Subject: Opposition to 406 Redbud Trail Variance Request

Dear Mr. Meisel and Members of the Zoning and Planning Commission,

I have attended or listened to every zoning board meeting regarding this applicant's repeated requests for variances. At each meeting, the Board and neighborhood residents have consistently raised the same specific concerns about the proposed development.

The last meeting was particularly clear: this is a challenging, long-standing parcel that has remained unchanged since the property's original platting. Despite this, we are now reviewing a fourth or fifth resubmission. It appears the applicant views the City of West Lake Hills zoning code not as a binding regulation, but as a starting point for negotiation. The code is their hardship per the comments of the applicant in the variance application.

On multiple occasions, the applicant has requested that the Board pause or defer a ruling. This approach prevents any concrete decision from being placed on the record and simply prolongs the process.

It is time to end this cycle. We should adhere to our adopted code and deliver a clear message: the proposed home will not be approved unless it is substantially reduced in size so that no variances are required. The topography and size of this lot do not support the applicants proposed development plans. Our zoning regulations exist to protect the character of West Lake Hills and the interests of all residents, not to accommodate oversized development on difficult lots.

Continuing to entertain repeated requests wastes valuable Board time and taxpayer resources. I respectfully urge the Board to uphold our code and deny any further variances for this project in its current form.

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Below is a part memorial of my previous letters, and updates relative to the new variance requests.

As residents of West Lake Hills since 2014, we built our home at 1 Valbella Drive in 2017 without requesting any variances, despite making significant sacrifices to our original plans to comply with city codes. We are concerned about the repeated variance requests for the proposed development at 406 Redbud Trail, particularly the current application for four additional variances. We respectfully urge the commission to deny this request and address the following issues.

Concerns Regarding Variances

The proposed development at 406 Redbud Trail appears to require variances due to a home footprint that exceeds the capacity of this one-acre parcel. The property owners were aware of the lot's limitations at the time of purchase, and claims of hardship due to improper planning are unjustified. Specifically:

1. **Tree Removal and Replacement:** Previous variances permitted the removal of over 220-300 replacement inches of trees, yet the updated plans lack provisions for replanting or adequate planting areas given the **extreme slope, shallow soil and rocky conditions**. Without dedicated retaining walls in areas with 35pct slope I do not see how the applicant can replace up to 300 inches of trees on this property. The claim to replace inches is just that, a hypothetical claim. The property in existing condition does not lend to replanting. We request that the commission require a concrete replanting plan inclusive of soil depths study to preserve the neighborhood's aesthetic and environmental integrity, rather than relying solely on the city tree fund, which does not directly benefit our community. Has a soil depth study for each aspect (Septic, Tree Replacement, etc.) of development been completed for this project? The balance of the area outside of the building zone has 35% or greater slopes.

Removal of two new Trees On top of the eight trees already requested for variance, the applicant is now requesting two new large specimen trees to be removed. One is an extremely large oak tree on top of the three specimen oak trees in previous variance requests. This is the type of tree West Lake seeks to preserve. The tree looks to be 70plus years old. Do we just destroy our natural environment for the sake of oversized development. We are against granting any further tree variances to the applicant.

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2. **Septic System and Setback Compliance:** The septic system design appears to encroach on setback areas, raising concerns about future variance requests. If the plan is to locate the septic in the setback along Skyline Drive, then the issue is how to install the drain field work amongst all those trees. We ask the commission to scrutinize this issue to prevent further non-compliance.
3. **Slope Regulations:** The construction on slopes exceeding 35% violates city codes. A smaller home design could eliminate the need for this variance, and we urge strict adherence to these regulations to protect the area's natural landscape. The slope map does not have enough definition of actual slope. 1–2-foot intervals are needed on the map to really assess the slope severity of the property.
4. **Encroaching into the 50ft Skyline Drive setback:** Our home at 1 Valbella Drive has five separate setback requirements due to multiple street frontages, the Skyline Drive right-of-way, and the adjacent greenbelt. When we built our home, we did not request any variances. Instead, we modified our design to fully comply with the City's zoning code.

Setbacks in this area serve a critical purpose: preserving the natural character of the neighborhood and maintaining privacy between properties. I strongly oppose any encroachment into the setback area along the Skyline Drive right-of-way. This is particularly concerning given that the board and citizens suggested the property does not support the scale of proposed home, and to be successful in their application to significantly reduce the home footprint. That was ignored by the applicant.

5. **Driveway:** The proposed driveway looks to be challenging due to the required U-turn in such a short space back to the house. Will this become another modification or variance request? A straight driveway further south down Redbud seems feasible, but due to slopes the applicant may require another variance.
6. **Front of Home Perspective:** Based on the 3D renderings provided it appears the home has a 12-foot wall at the front of the property, which is quite visible from the street. How is this wall to be effectively screened?

Given these concerns, we oppose the approval of additional variances and request a thorough review of previously granted variances to ensure compliance with mitigation measures.

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Construction Parking and Safety Concerns

The proposed development also poses significant parking and safety challenges. The limited space on the property will likely force construction workers and delivery trucks to park on surrounding streets, creating unsafe conditions. During recent city work on Redbud Trail, parking in front of fire hydrants at the Skyline Drive and Redbud Trail intersection created a hazardous situation, particularly given our area's high fire risk. Additionally, construction equipment and debris littered the Skyline Drive right-of-way, and replanted vegetation along Skyline Drive has died due to inadequate irrigation—a situation likely to worsen with two years of construction traffic.

As leader of the Juniper Ridge Subdivision HOA, representing six properties, I have heard majority concerns from homeowners about this variance request and the construction overflow parking on Valbella Drive, Sweet Sky, and Skyline Drive. These narrow streets already face traffic issues, disrupting garbage pickup and delivery services. Mass parking could also impede fire truck access, exacerbating fire safety risks.

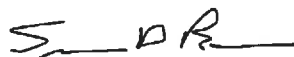
We strongly request that, if the development is approved, the commission mandate within the condition of issuing the construction permit a parking plan prohibiting construction-related parking or equipment storage along Skyline Drive (from the top to Redbud Trail), Valbella Drive, and Sweet Sky. This plan should ensure safe passage for emergency vehicles and maintain neighborhood accessibility.

Conclusion

We respectfully oppose the variance request for 406 Redbud Trail due to its non-compliance with city codes, environmental impact, and potential safety hazards. We urge the commission to enforce existing regulations, require detailed mitigation plans for prior variances, and mandate a comprehensive parking plan to protect our community's safety and character. Should an alternative plan be proposed that addresses these concerns, we would be open to further discussion. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact us at [REDACTED] if you require additional input.

Sincerely,

Stephen and Michelle Barron



Juniper Ridge HOA

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From: [Planner](#)
To: [Jennifer Bills](#); [Elizabeth McNamara](#)
Subject: FW: 406 Redbud Trail - Opposition to Variance Requests.
Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2026 12:16:31 PM

From: Davin Fillpot [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2026 12:13 PM
To: Planner <planner@westlakehills.gov>
Subject: Fwd: 406 Redbud Trail - Opposition to Variance Requests.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Davin Fillpot [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, May 20, 2026 at 12:09 PM
Subject: 406 Redbud Trail - Opposition to Variance Requests.
To: Joel Sherrouse <jsherrouse@westlakehills.gov>, Jennifer Bills <jbills@westlakehills.gov>, Elizabeth McNamara <emcnamara@westlakehills.gov>

RE: 406 Redbud Trail - Variance Requests.

My wife and I are residents of 404 Redbud Trail.
We live on the property directly to the south of the subject property.
We are sending this email as opposition to these variance requests.

We have always known that 406 RedBud Trail would get developed, and a home would be built on this property.
We have absolutely zero problem with anything being built on the 406 RBT property.
However, we have always been curious how the property could get developed due to its' extremely rocky and steeply sloping terrain and difficult access.

We have quietly followed all of the previous zoning and planning presentations by listening to the meetings online, and have reviewed all of the documentation that were presented at the previous meetings.

In preparation for this week's meeting, I went to the CoWHLH Agenda page, and downloaded all documents that were available for download through the city website. They only included a very basic site plan and slope map, and updated variance questionnaire. No Floor Plans, Elevations, or detailed site plan. I had to file an open

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records request to get a copy of the applicant's powerpoint, because it was the only exhibits on file that provided Floor Plans, Elevations and a detailed site plan.

I have had the opportunity to review these documents, not only as an adjacent neighbor, but also as an architect and WLH code consultant.

The exhibit that I thought was extremely eye opening was the slope map that the applicant provided.

It appears that 75% of the property contains slopes greater than 25%, and it appears that approx 30% of the property exists on slopes greater than 35%.

The only thing that is permitted on slopes greater than 35% are pier foundations. That's it. Septic drainfields can not even exist on slopes greater than 30%.

Simply stated. Due to the steep nature of the site's topography, and the significant reduction in the parts of the lot that are developable, This 1 acre parcel is essentially reduced to a lot size equivalent to approx .65 Acre.

I do believe that a house that is 5 or 6,000 SF of conditioned space could work on this property. It would still be tricky. It might even require a variance to remove a cedar tree or two.

Is the topography on this lot a hardship? Clearly.

Does the topography on this lot greatly restrict its ability to be developed? Somewhat. But I do not believe that hardship of the topography warrants the granting of multiple variances so that a 9,000 SF house can be built on a lot that is essentially .65 acres in size.

I believe it is just simply too big of a house for this significantly burdened piece of property to be able to support.

Also, I do not believe that it is the responsibility of ZAPCO or BOA to feel that they have an obligation to contort themselves around the building code to justify granting variances for a house that is simply too big for this severely impacted property.

Thank you all for your service to the city.

Kind Regards,

Davin Fillpot

Resident of 404 Red Bud Trail

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May 12, 2026

Stephen and Michelle Barron
1 Valbella Drive
West Lake Hills, TX 78746

To:

Robert Meisel, ZAPCO Chair
City of West Lake Hills
911 Westlake Drive
West Lake Hills, TX 78746

Subject: Supplemental Opposition to Variance Requests for 406 Redbud Trail – New Site Plans and Slope Data

Dear Chair Meisel and Members of the ZAPCO Commission,

We are writing to supplement our previous letter of opposition regarding the variance requests submitted for the property at 406 Redbud Trail. The recently provided slope maps and revised site design plans supplied by the applicant and the City further demonstrate that the proposed project is incompatible with the City's existing codes and the physical constraints of the site.

Key Concerns:

1. Inappropriate Scale for the Lot

Approximately 33% of this one-acre parcel consists of slopes exceeding 35%. Under current City of West Lake Hills regulations, such steep slopes significantly restrict the allowable size and footprint of any residence. The proposed 9,000 square feet of conditioned space exceeds what the lot can reasonably support while remaining in compliance with code. We respectfully request that the Commission require the applicant to redesign the project to fit within the limitations established by the slope restrictions.

2. Changed Project Scope Requires Restart of Variance Process

The substantial changes to the size, location, and design of the proposed structure render the original variance assumptions obsolete. In fairness to both the Commission and neighboring properties, the applicant should be required to begin the variance process anew with the current plans.

3. Tree Removal and Replacement Variance

The applicant proposes the removal of 12 trees and requests a variance to replant replacement inches elsewhere. Given that one-third of the property has steep slopes

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and shallow soils, successful replanting is highly questionable without a detailed, site-specific replanting plan. We request that the Commission deny any additional tree variance unless the applicant submits — and the City approves — a realistic replanting strategy that identifies protected planting zones capable of sustaining the required 300 replacement inches.

4. **Encroachment into the 50-Foot Skyline Drive Setback**

The request to reduce the required setback from 50 feet to 35 feet along Skyline Drive remains strongly opposed. This setback exists to protect neighboring properties and the character of the neighborhood. Reducing it is unnecessary if the home is appropriately sized to the lot. We fully support maintaining the full 50-foot setback as required by code.

5. **Septic System Location and Compliance**

The proposed septic field location does not comply with City code requirements, particularly the mandatory 7-foot separation from the base of any tree. The current plan places the system in an area densely populated with trees, creating long-term risk to tree health and system functionality. Additionally, a residence of this scale will require approximately 8,000–9,000 square feet of drain field, which appears constrained by both the trees and the steep topography. We object to any variance that would allow the septic system to deviate from established code standards.

Conclusion

We urge the ZAPCO Commission to uphold the City's codes and deny the requested variances. The combination of steep slopes, tree protections, setback requirements, and septic limitations make the current proposal incompatible with the standards that apply to all property owners in West Lake Hills — including ourselves when we built our home.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Stephen and Michelle Barron
1 Valbella Drive
West Lake Hills, TX 78746

Juniper Ridge HOA