

STAFF REPORT WEST ALLIS BOARD OF APPEALS Wednesday, July 9th 2025, 5:30 PM Room 128 – City Hall – 7525 W. Greenfield Ave.

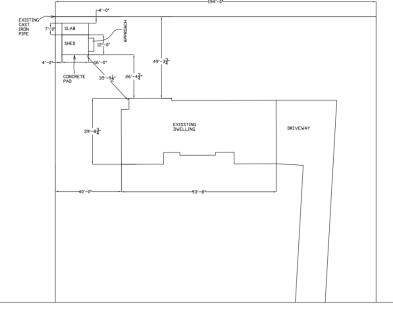
3. Appeal by Keith Robers for an Area Variance to Sec. 19.42 to construct a 192 sq. ft. shed at 2558 S. 118 St. (Tax Key No. 483-0018-000)

Request for area variance:



Keith Robers, owner of 2558 S. 118th St., is proposing an accessory building in the rear yard of the existing lot. The applicant is requesting a variance to Sec. 19.42 of the zoning code to construct the proposed shed The proposed building is 12' x 16', covering an area of 192 square feet. Sec. 19.42 limits building coverage maximums to 150 sq. ft.

The rear and side setbacks on the proposal show setbacks of 4 ft. All setback requirements within the zoning code are met. Additionally, all height requirements are met. The applicant has indicated that the project will cost \$15,000 and will take 4 months to complete. Building permits have been



applied for and have been approved by the Code Enforcement department pending the outcome of this variance request.

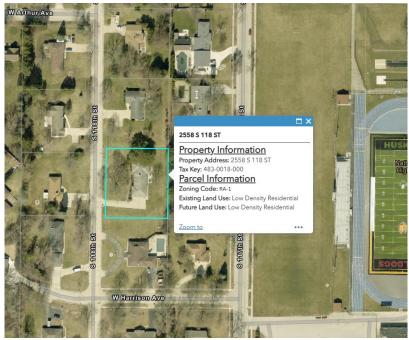
Staff Comments: Building Coverage

With the submittal of this variance request, staff has also conducted research on other nearby zoning code regulations on accessory buildings in nearby municipalities. Staff has found that other municipalities allow sizes of accessory buildings that vary from West Allis' regulation. Some municipalities permit accessory buildings up to 400 square feet by right, or apply a sliding scale based on lot size.

The size and configuration of lots in West Allis varies significantly across the city. Smaller lots are more prevalent in the eastern portions of the city, while larger lots—like the subject property—are more commonly found in the western areas. In this case, the proposed accessory structure (192 sq. ft.)

exceeds the current 150 sq. ft. coverage limit but still fits comfortably within the rear yard without violating any setback or height restrictions.

Given this context, and considering other requests for slightly larger accessory buildings, staff recommends the City of West Allis re-evaluate accessory building size limits. To this end, as part of the Board of Appeals decision, to also advise Common Council to consider changing the ordinance similar to other surrounding cities. Specifically, staff recommends consideration of an ordinance amendment that would increase



the allowable accessory building size above 150 sq. ft., with an upper cap, potentially based on lot size or zoning district. Further exploration can be conducted by staff to ensure any ordinance amendments that affect the max coverage of accessory buildings will reflect best practices and maintain neighborhood compatibility.

Municipality	Regulation	Maximum Size Allowed
Greenfield	Area of Accessory Building (except garages). That this shall not prohibit the erection of two (2) accessory building (except garage) not exceeding two hundred fifty (250) square feet in area each to be no closer than two (2) feet to the side and rear lot lines and 10 feet to any principal structure	250 ft
Wauwatosa	Generally, total square footage of lot coverage for all buildings cannot exceed 37% and of that total percentage, detached garages, storage sheds, and outbuildings cannot exceed 12% of the lot area.	Varies
New Berlin	Square footage. Square footage shall be based on the first-floor footprint. Eaves up to 24" are excluded from this measurement. Overhangs and other attached accessory structures, as defined in \$275-42D, exceeding 24" shall be counted towards the square footage.	Varies
Oak Creek	Two Accessory structures shall be permitted per lot, and shall only be permitted after a principal structure has been constructed on the same lot. An accessory structure shall not exceed 400 cumulative square feet.	400 ft

Recommendation: Board of Appeals has the discretion to approve or deny the requested Area Variance to Sec. 19.42 to construct a 192 sq. ft. shed at 2558 S. 118 St. (Tax Key No. 483-0018-000) based on the criteria of the of the individual case and the standards outlined in the zoning code. However, there is also an opportunity to consider a broader policy change that permits larger accessory buildings structures by right—up to a reasonable cap—potentially based on lot size or zoning district.