



**CITY OF COLUMBUS  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
(September 27, 2016 Meeting)**

**STAFF REPORT**

**Docket No. / Project Title:** C/CU-16-11 & C/DS-16-44 (Flintwood Wesleyan Church)  
**Staff:** Charles Russell  
**Applicant:** Flintwood Wesleyan Church  
**Property Size:** 2.89 Acres  
**Zoning:** RS4 (Residential: Single-Family 4)  
**Location:** 5300 E 25<sup>th</sup> Street, in the City of Columbus

**Background Summary:**

The proposed conditional use and development standards variance will allow a building expansion of 545.9 square feet, and a building height of 35 feet. The expansion is to add a hallway along the east side of the gym and storage space on the north side. Additionally the applicant will be rebuilding the gym and adding a second floor that is up to 3,000 square feet in area. The applicant was previously approved for an expansion of 1,470 square feet to create a more permanent storage space, and provide bathroom facilities in their gym/fellowship building (C/CU-16-01). This request is in addition to the previous approval. The property is located on the corner of Wedgewood Drive and 25<sup>th</sup> Street, and has a sanctuary, a gym/fellowship building, and a parsonage on-site.

**Key Issue Summary:**

The following key issue(s) should be resolved through the consideration of this application:

1. Is the expansion of a worship facility appropriate in the residential zoning district at this location?
2. Is the proposed 35 foot height appropriate for the area?

**Preliminary Staff Recommendation:**

Conditional Use – Approval – All criteria have been met.

Development Standards Variance – Approval – All criteria have been met.

**Zoning District Intent:**

The intent of the RS4 (Residential: Single-Family 4) zoning district is as follows: To provide for high-density residential in areas with compatible infrastructure and access to Collector or Arterial roads.

<b>Current Property Information:</b>	
<b>Land Use:</b>	Worship Facility (Flintwood Wesleyan Church)

<b>Site Features:</b>	The property is currently served by four drives from Wedgewood Drive. (1 for the parsonage, 2 for the existing parking area, and 1 for the drop-off area)  A sanctuary, a gym/fellowship building, and a parsonage are located on this property.
<b>Flood Hazards:</b>	No FEMA mapped flood hazards. However, the Columbus Flood Risk Management Plan indicated that flooding from the nearby Sloan Branch is possible at this location.
<b>Vehicle Access:</b>	Wedgewood Drive (Local, Suburban, Residential) 25 <sup>th</sup> Street (Minor Arterial, Suburban, Residential)

<b>Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:</b>		
	<b>Zoning:</b>	<b>Land Use:</b>
<b>North:</b>	RS4 (Residential: Single-Family 4)	Single-family residential
<b>South:</b>	RS3 (Residential: Single-Family 3) RM (Residential: Multi-Family)	Single-family residential Lincoln Village Apartments
<b>East:</b>	CC (Commercial: Community Center)	Offices and Self-Storage facility
<b>West:</b>	RS4 (Residential: Single-Family 4)	Single-family residential

<b>Interdepartmental Review:</b>	
<b>Code Enforcement:</b>	No issues with proposal.

**History:**

1. This property was previously approved for a parking lot and building expansion (C/CU-16-01). This allowed the property owner to added needed parking as well as storage and bathroom facilities to the gym/ fellowship hall. The parking lot expansion added 39 parking spaces to the existing 60. The bathroom expansion was approved at 605 square feet, and the storage expansion was approved at 895 square feet.
2. The previous conditional use approval included additional parking lot frontage landscaping to provide screening for the neighboring residential.

**Planning Consideration(s):**

The following general site considerations, planning concepts, and other facts should be considered in the review of this application:

1. The property currently has access off of Wedgewood Drive at 4 different points. Of those access points, 3 are used for the worship facility and the 4th provides access to the parsonage. The prior approval shifted one drive to the north to provide access to the new parking expansion.
2. The applicant is requesting an additional 315 square feet for the bathroom expansion to allow for an interior hallway. They are also requesting an additional 230.4 square feet for storage space. These proposed expansions will meet the required 5 foot side yard setback for the RS4 zoning district.

3. As part of the expansion the applicant is proposing to replace the existing gym, and add a second floor for activity space. Adding this second floor will bring the overall height of the structure to 35 feet. The zoning district permits accessory structures to be 25 feet in height, meaning the proposed height is 10 feet taller than permitted.
4. The surrounding area includes single-family residential neighborhoods to the north, south, and west, and commercial businesses directly east. These businesses include medical offices, a self-storage facility, insurance and law offices, and a pool supply store. The commercial businesses directly adjacent to the gym/fellowship building are 15 to 18 feet in height, but are separated from the subject property by a natural tree line.
5. The houses across Wedgewood Drive are single-story ranch style homes roughly 15 feet in height. They are set back an average of 50 feet from the centerline of the Wedgewood Drive. The gym/fellowship building on the subject property is set back 185 feet from the Wedgewood Drive centerline.
6. On both the subject property and adjacent CC (Commercial: Community Center) properties primary structures are permitted to be 40 feet in height.

### **Comprehensive Plan Consideration(s):**

The Comprehensive Plan designates the future land use of properties in this area as Mixed Use.

The following Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and/or policy(ies) apply to this application:

**POLICY A-2-11:** Encourage all new development to be in scale (height, area, mass, setback, etc.) with its surroundings, determined on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis. *New development should be designed in a manner that is sensitive to the surroundings.*

### **Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria – Conditional Use:**

Section 12.4(D) of the Zoning Ordinance permits the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow conditional uses that meet the criteria listed below. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval.

1. **The proposal will not be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.**

*Provisional Findings:* The gym/fellowship building is setback a significant distance from the neighboring residential, additionally the required parking lot screening from their previous request should provide screening for the building as well. The building additions will not be injurious to the health and safety of the community. *This criterion has been met.*

2. **The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses.**

*Provisional Findings:* It is not uncommon to find worship facilities within residential areas. The setbacks of the building and location at the intersection make the improvements consistent with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance development standards and appropriate for this neighborhood. *This criterion has been met.*

3. **Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity.**

*Provisional Findings:* The proposed expansion is directly adjacent to a commercial zoning district where 40 foot structures are permitted. The building is also setback 235 feet from the nearest residential. Additionally primary structures in the subject property's zoning district are permitted to be 40 feet in height, and it is not unusual for worship facilities to have multiple structures that are used for similar purposes. Granting this approval would not be contrary to the general purposes of the zoning ordinance. *This criterion has been met.*

**4. The proposed use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.**

*Provisional Findings:* Worship facilities may be permitted as a conditional use in residential zoning districts, meaning they may or may not be appropriate depending on the surrounding context of the neighborhood. In this instance the proposed expansions to the worship facility do not infringe upon the use or character of its residential neighbors, and can be considered appropriate for this area and this zoning district. The proposed expansion is also consistent with the comprehensive plan. *This criterion has been met.*

**Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria – Building Height Variance:**

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve or deny variances from the development standards of the City of Columbus Zoning Ordinance. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval. A variance from the development standards may only be approved upon a determination in writing that:

**1. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.**

*Provisional Findings:* The additional height will be built to current building code, so approval of the proposed height would not create a health or safety risk for the general community. *This criterion has been met.*

**2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.**

*Provisional Findings:* Approval of this variance will not substantially hinder or alter the use or value of adjacent properties. The commercial properties to the east are screened by a natural tree line, and structures in the commercial zoning district are permitted to be 40 feet in height. The neighboring residential on Wedgewood Drive are set back a total distance of 235 feet from the gym/fellowship building. Additionally these homes will be screened from the subject property by the require parking lot frontage landscaping. *This criterion has been met.*

**3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.**

*Provisional Findings:* Worship facilities, schools, athletic complexes, and community centers are all conditional uses in the RS4 (Residential: Single-Family 4) zoning district. All of these uses tend to be in larger buildings that could potentially exceed the maximum height requirement. It is not uncommon for worship facilities to have more than one structure that operates in a way that could be considered a primary structure. If the proposed building was the primary structure on site it could be 40 feet in height. Therefore, structures taller than the proposed building are permitted within this zoning district. *This criterion has been met.*

**Board of Zoning Appeals Options:**

In reviewing requests for a for conditional use or a development standards variance the Board may (1) approve the petition as proposed, (2) approve the petition with conditions, (3) continue the petition to a future meeting of the Board, or (4) deny the petition (with or without prejudice). Failure to achieve a quorum or lack of a positive vote on a motion results in an automatic continuance to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**Columbus – Bartholomew County Planning Department**  
**Conditional Use Application**

**Planning Department Use Only:**

Jurisdiction:  Columbus  Bartholomew County

Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_  
Docket No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing Procedure:  Hearing Officer  Board of Zoning Appeals

SEP 01 2016  
BY: AEK

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**Conditional Use Application:**

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**Applicant Information (the person or entity that will own and/or execute what is proposed):**

Name: Flintwood Wesleyan Church

Address: 5300 E 25th Street Columbus, IN 47203  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Phone No.: 812-379-4287 Fax No.: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: flintwoodoffice@gmail.com

**Property Owner Information (the "owner" does not include tenants or contract buyers):**

Name: Same as above

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax No.: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notification Information (list the person to whom all correspondence regarding this application should be directed):**

Name: Wesley A Jones

Address: 2625 Wedgewood Dr Columbus IN 47203  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Phone No.: 812-350-4435 Fax No.: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: flintwoodoffice@gmail.com

How would you prefer to receive information (please check one):  E-mail  Phone  Fax  Mail

**Property Information:**

Address: 5300 E 25th Street Columbus IN 47203  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

or General Location (if no address has been assigned provide a street corner, subdivision lot number, or attach a legal description):

\_\_\_\_\_

**Conditional Use Requested:**

I am requesting a conditional use as listed by Section 3.11B of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the following:

Add restrooms on to east side of gym/fellowship hall building to accomodate our church growth needs.  
Add a shed to the North side of gym to free up other storage space within the church that will be converted  
into meeting spaces. Tear down existing gym and replace with two-story structure with a maximum height  
of 35 feet.

**Conditional Use Criteria:**

The Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance establishes specific criteria that each must be met in order for a conditional use to be approved. Describe how the conditional use requested meets each of the following criteria.

**The approval of the conditional use will not be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.**

Extending the existing lot will keep church attendees from parking on the street which will keep the street from being congested making it safer  
for residents and commuters. Adding restrooms will be on side of property adjoining commercial zoned property and out of view of our residential  
neighbors. Adding the shed to the gym will be done in a way that is consistent with our current building. Siding on other building will continue  
on shed. Increased gym height will not block views neighbors or businesses.

**The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses.**

We wish to maintain and complement the existing standards of the neighborhood. We wish to blend in with  
the neighborhood, so we can continue to be an integral part of our neighborhood and our community.

**Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity.**

We are zoned residential but set on the line of commercial zoning as well. Improving our current church  
property will serve to improve the existing residential neighborhood as well as our commercially zoned  
neighbors next door.

**The conditional use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.**

The church was the first building in the Flintwood Addition in 1966. Homes were built knowing that the church  
was already here. People moved into the community knowing the church was part of the community.  
The church has always had good relations with its neighbors, and we will continue to work hard at  
maintaining those relationships.

**Applicant's Signature:**

The information included in and with this application is completely true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Wesley A. Jones  
(Applicant's Signature)

8-16-16  
(Date)

**Property Owner's Signature (the "owner" does not include tenants or contract buyers):**

I authorize the filing of this application and will allow the Planning Department staff to enter this property for the purpose of analyzing this request. Further, I will allow a public notice sign to be placed and remain on the property until the processing of the request is complete.

Charles D. Fox  
(Owner's Signature)

8-16-16  
(Date)

CHARLES D. FOX  
(Owner's Signature)

8-16-16  
(Date)



**Variance Requested:**

I am requesting a variance from Section 3.11 (c)<sup>CR</sup> of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the following:

We are requesting a heighth variance for a secondary structure of 35' for a multipurpose building that will  
replace the existing gym.

**Variance Request Justification:**

The Indiana Code and the Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance establish specific criteria that each must be met in order for a development standards variance to be approved. Describe how the variance request meets each of the following criteria.

**The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.**

The additional will not harm our neighbors. The proposed building is 170' east of Wedgewood Drive.  
The east side of the building is protected by large trees which separates a parking lot and storage facility.  
The north side of the property is adjacent to the existing church parsonage and is 200' from the closest  
neighbor. The south side of the proposed building is adjoining existing church buildings.

**The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.**

We are tearing down the old existing gym and replacing with a new multipurpose building which will blend in  
with the current buildings on the property.

**The strict application of the terms of the Zoning Ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed; nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.**

The current terms of the zoning ordinance make it impossible for us to add an additional second floor that  
meets our needs.

**Application Fee Refund Information:**

The adopted Planning Department Schedule of Application Fees provides for the refunding of application fees for this request if it is approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals. The refund will be provided by mail in the form of a check. It may take several weeks after the Board of Zoning Appeals approval to process the refund and issue the check. Please indicate to whom the refund should be provided:

Name: Flintwood Wesleyan Church  
Address: 5300 E 25th St. Columbus IN 47203  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

**Applicant's Signature:**

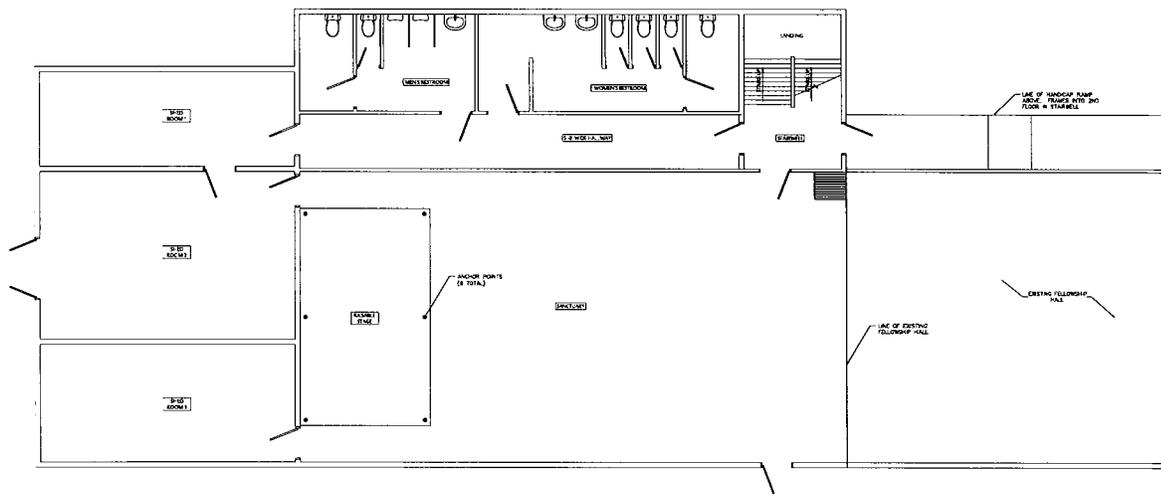
The information included in and with this application is completely true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Wesley C. Jones 9-12-2016  
(Applicant's Signature) (Date)

**Property Owner's Signature (the "owner" does not include tenants or contract buyers):**

I authorize the filing of this application and will allow the Planning Department staff to enter this property for the purpose of analyzing this request. Further, I will allow a public notice sign to be placed and remain on the property until the processing of the request is complete.

Clayton D. Fox 9-12-16  
(Owner's Signature) (Date)  
Kita Carr 9-12-16  
(Owner's Signature) (Date)



CERTIFICATION  
 SCHEMATIC  
 DOCUMENTS

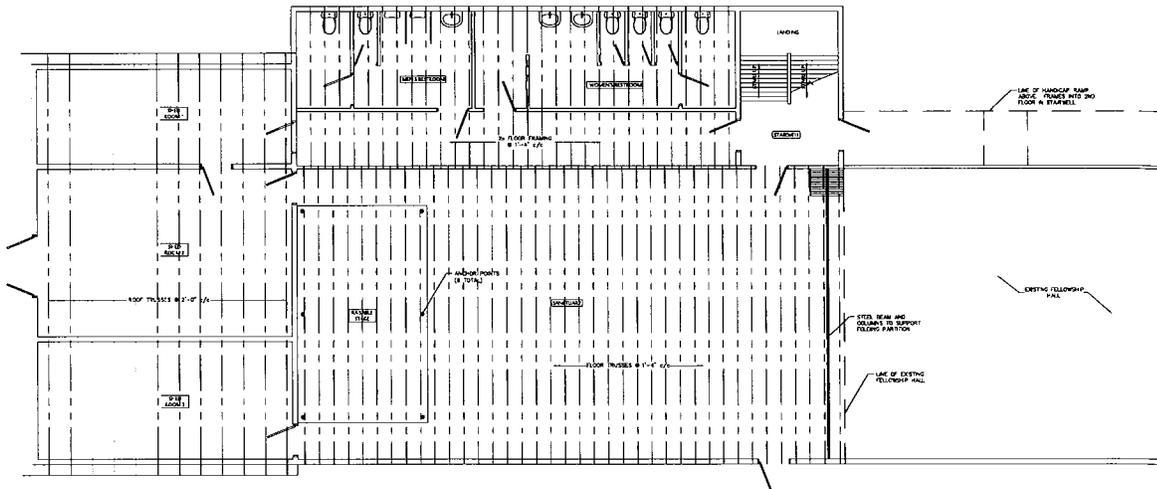
FLINTWOOD WESLEYAN

5300 EAST 25TH STREET  
 COLUMBUS, IN 47203

Project No.  
 Drawn By  
 Checked By  
 Scale  
 Issue Date: 04/2014

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

A1.1




**SECOND FLOOR FRAMING PLAN**  
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

CREDIT: CAI  
 SCHEMATIC  
 DOCUMENTS

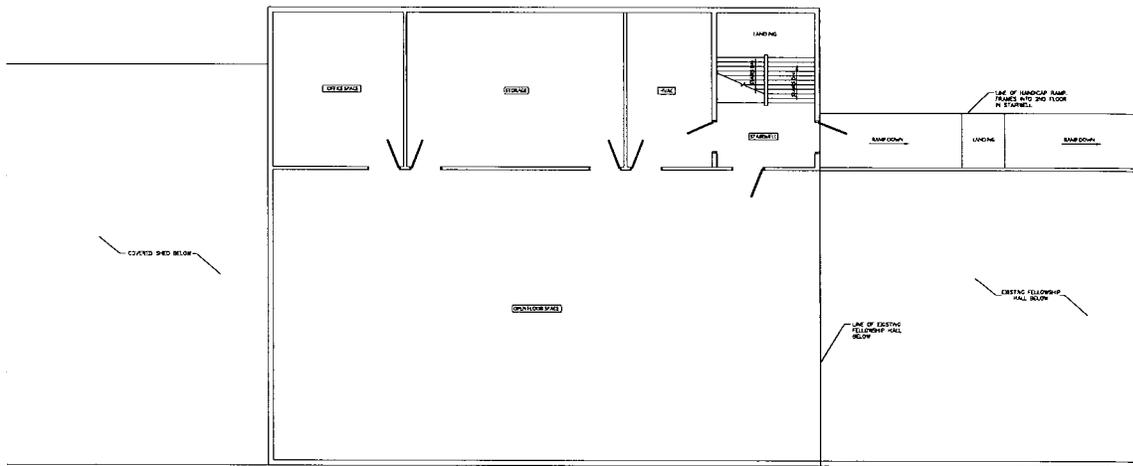
FLINTWOOD WESLEYAN

5300 EAST 25TH STREET  
 COLUMBUS, IN 47203

Project No:  
 Client:  
 Date:  
 Scale:  
 Date Draw: 02/20/11

SECOND FLOOR FRAMING

**S1.1**



CERTIFICATION  
SCHEMATIC  
DOCUMENTS

FLINTWOOD WESLEYAN

5300 EAST 25TH STREET  
COLUMBUS, IN 47203

Project No.  
Created by  
Checked by  
Date  
Scale Date: 04/2011

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

**A1.2**

