

**CAUCUS PRIOR TO STRONGSVILLE BOARD OF ZONING &
BUILDING CODE APPEALS
Meeting of
March 26, 2025**

Board of Appeals Members Present: Dustin Hayden, Ken Evans, John Rusnov, Richard Baldin

Administration: Assistant Law Director Daniel Kolick

Assistant Building Commissioner: Steve Molnar

Recording Secretary: Mitzi Anderson

The Board members discussed the following:

1) AQUA-TOTS SWIM SCHOOL, Mike Kallmeyer, Agent

Requesting a 1,931 SF Floor Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1258.03(a)(3)(E), which permits a 5,000 SF Floor Area and where a 6,931 SF Floor Area is proposed, in order to operate a Swim School Facility, property located at 17792 Pearl Road, PPN 394-25-001 zoned GB – General Business

Mr. Hayden – Item number one on the agenda is for Aqua-Tots Swim School. They are requesting a floor area variance for the property located at 17792 Pearl Road for the installation of a swim school facility.

Mr. Rusnov – It will probably end up as a rehab center for the hospital across the street.

Mr. Kolick – It would be appropriate to get the ages of the children and make sure everything is done on the inside. You should also find out the maximum number of employees and customers that are there at one time. That is one of the reasons they have the limitation on the square footage, so that they do not use up all of the parking and I think that they are taking up only half of the building.

Mr. Rusnov – The parking lot in the rear is huge.

Mr. Kolick – I understand that but the Planning Commission will want to know because they require a Conditional Use Permit. We will need to find out if there are any changes to the exterior of the property.

Mr. Evans – I think it will be good to find out whether the applicant has other facilities and whether or not they are the same size or structure.

Mr. Hayden – We will ask those questions on the floor.

The Board members approved the minutes for March 12, 2025.

STRONGSVILLE BOARD OF ZONING & BUILDING CODE APPEALS
MINUTES OF MEETING
March 26, 2025
7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mr. Hayden.

Present:

Mr. Baldin
Mr. Rusnov
Mr. Evans
Mr. Hayden

Also Present:

Mr. Kolick, Assistant Law Director
Mr. Steve Molnar, Assistant Building Commissioner
Mrs. Anderson, Recording Secretary

Mr. Hayden – I would like to call this March 26, 2025 meeting of the Strongsville Board of Zoning and Building Code Appeals to order. May we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL:

MR. HAYDEN	PRESENT
MR. EVANS	PRESENT
MR. HOULÉ	ABSENT
MR. RUSNOV	PRESENT
MR. BALDIN	PRESENT

MOTION TO EXCUSE:

Mr. Baldin – I move to excuse Mr. Houlé for just cause.

Mr. Evans – Second.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you Mr. Baldin for the motion and Mr. Evans for the second. May we have a roll call please?

MR. RUSNOV	PRESENT
MR. EVANS	PRESENT
MR. HAYDEN	PRESENT
MR. BALDIN	PRESENT

Mr. Hayden – I hereby certify that this meeting has been posted in accordance with Chapter 208 of the Strongsville Codified Ordinances.

Mr. Hayden - Before us we also have minutes to approve from our meeting on March 12, 2025. We discussed this in caucus and there were no corrections or changes and we will file those accordingly.

Mr. Hayden - If you are here this evening and you plan on addressing the Board, I would ask that you stand and be sworn in by our Assistant Law Director, as well as our Building Department representative and Secretary.

Mr. Kolick administered the oath to those standing.

1) AQUA-TOTS SWIM SCHOOL, Mike Kallmeyer, Agent

Requesting a 1,931 SF Floor Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1258.03(a)(3)(E), which permits a 5,000 SF Floor Area and where a 6,931 SF Floor Area is proposed, in order to operate a Swim School Facility, property located at 17792 Pearl Road, PPN 394-25-001 zoned GB – General Business

Mr. Hayden – Item number one on the agenda is for Aqua-Tots Swim School. Please state your name and address for the record.

Mike Kallmeyer, 7560 Kerfield Drive, Galena, Ohio 43021

Mr. Hayden – You were here for the duration of Caucus and heard some of our comments regarding your project, please give us a description of your project. Also, is the Westlake location your only facility or do you own others?

Mr. Kallmeyer – My wife and I have four other locations, which include (3) in the Columbus area and hopefully a second in the Cleveland area. Our locations are in Westerville, near Polaris; Powell, which is near the Columbus zoo; New Albany and those are the three in the Columbus area and we are hoping to have three locations in the Cleveland area. I will read through the bullet points for the record.

Aqua-Tots Swim Schools will serve the families of Strongsville and the surrounding communities, teaching what we call "Lessons for Life". We highly emphasize water safety and drowning prevention. Aqua-Tots Strongsville will offer year-round swim lessons for all ages: infants, toddlers, and children. Accommodating busy schedules is important to us, so we offer flexible class days and times every day of the week, our state-of-the-art facility will feature a UV/Ozone filtration system for our beautiful pool, a lobby with free coffee bar and comfortable seating, along with private changing rooms and restrooms. We are excited to contribute to the Strongsville economy creating new business for our neighbors, as well as employ dozens of local young people. Aqua-Tots is also proud to offer free water safety talks to all local schools, pre-schools, and daycares. Our targeted opening date will be in the Fall of 2025.

Mr. Hayden – In your brochure you mentioned your staff. How many do you typically employ at each location?

Mr. Kallmeyer – We typically employ three full time managers, if the enrollment is large enough. For the coaches and front desk, depending on the time of the year there will be between 20 to 30 employees and in busier times we may add a few more. Our least busy time is in the fall and December.

Mr. Hayden – You will average around 25 employees?

Mr. Kallmeyer – Our employees are 16 years old and up, because we go until 8:00 at night. They may change the law in Ohio allowing a 15 year old to work until 9:00 pm and then we will go 15 years old and up.

Mr. Hayden – What are your hours of operation?

Mr. Kallmeyer - Hours of operations will be Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 8:00 pm, and lessons start at 9:00 am and end at 8:00 pm. Weekends are big for us and on Saturday through Sunday we go from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Mr. Hayden – So that we can understand the parking aspect, on a typical shift how many employees will be working at one time?

Mr. Kallmeyer – There will be 12 – 15 employees. The parking for the employees will be located in the back.

Mr. Kolick – How many cars from customers would be there during your busiest time period?

Mr. Kallmeyer – We have determined over the years that there will be 35 cars, during the busiest times and they are also revolving. I counted the spots in the front of the site and there are 60 spots out front, some of those would go to the Dollar General. We are across the drive from a bank that has a drive-thru and there are more spots located over there. Our customers would be encouraged to use the back spots as well, there is a nice covered sidewalk that comes up to the entrance.

Mr. Kolick - There will be 35 cars parked there; however, when the next session comes in will there be 70 cars, how does that work?

Mr. Kallmeyer - Our lessons are every 10 minutes and it is much more of a traffic circle than a traffic stop sign or light. It is a constant circulation of the vehicles because your lesson would start with increments for example from 6:00 pm and then 6:10 pm, we came up with this and it works awesome. The parking lot is the same as the lobby, where there are 3,4, and 5 cars and people leaving all at once and ten minutes later there are cars and people coming and leaving.

Mr. Baldin – Are these ½ hour sessions?

Mr. Kallmeyer – Yes. We came up with the 35 number because there maybe families that have 2 to 3 kids and there would actually be less cars then customers, between the 60-70 percent ratio.

Mr. Kolick – Is everything inside?

Mr. Kallmeyer – Yes, everything is inside including our pump room.

Mr. Kolick – Are there any changes to the exterior of the building?

Mr. Kallmeyer – No additional changes, other than signage.

Mr. Baldin - How large is the pool?

Mr. Kallmeyer – The pool will be 60' x 26' and 3 ½' deep. It is not exactly a swimming pool for recreation but designed for instruction.

Mr. Baldin – Is the pool 3 ½ ' deep all the way across?

Mr. Kallmeyer – Yes and the water is kept at 90 degrees.

Mr. Kolick – Is there any type of water therapy available?

Mr. Kallmeyer – It is available and it has been done before, I know that there is a hospital across the street, University Hospitals. It could be available when the kids are not there and I would have to look into it.

Mr. Baldin – How long have you been doing this?

Mr. Kallmeyer – Aqua-Tots is based in Arizona with good friends of mine. My wife and I brought it to Ohio and friends of our started it in Springboro, which is in the Centerville area in 2012. Our first location was in Westerville in 2016 and then Powell, Crocker Park, New Albany and due to COVID we stopped opening them for a few years.

Mr. Baldin – This will be a great addition to the City and it will take up a vacant spot.

Mr. Evans – We want all businesses to be successful in the City. We already have Goldfish Swim School in the City, what differentiates Aqua-Tots from Goldfish?

Mr. Kallmeyer – We like to say that they do a great job. I love our curriculum and it is very detailed particularly for babies and toddlers. I would say that they are a little more focused on the older kids and we are a little more focused on the younger kids. We have eight levels and half of the first four levels are for water safety. Learning how to save yourself, how to find the edge of the pool, climb out of a pool, how to float on your back, how to hold your breath the proper way and what happens when you fall into a pool. We do a drill where you keep your clothes on because accidents usually don't happen with your swimsuit on. We do that every year during May, which is water safety month. I am not saying that they don't focus on those things as well, but we are laser focused on those things. The curriculum is very detailed and it is beyond a Red Cross curriculum, where every step leads to the next one. There is nothing at all wrong with the Red Cross curriculum and we highly encourage anyone to take swim lessons anywhere.

Mr. Evans – What is the cost difference between your facility and Goldfish?

Mr. Kallmeyer – It is usually about the same in Fairview Park, they charge \$125.00, which is a monthly tuition. There is a similarity with each model of Aqua-Tots and Goldfish. I believe their charge may be even \$130.00 now, which is about \$5.00 more than we charge at Crocker Park.

Mr. Evans – I was just curious and looking at success ratios we would want your business to be successful.

Mr. Kallmeyer – I think Strongsville is a great location for swim schools, particularly on Pearl Road and they will both be located on Pearl Road. We are looking forward to serving Brunswick and Medina families as well. When the families are coming to Strongsville they are spending their money here too.

Mr. Hayden – Do they have swim schools similar to this in Medina or Brunswick?

Mr. Kallmeyer - They probably have recreation centers.

Mr. Baldin – What is the monthly tuition?

Mr. Kallmeyer - The monthly tuition would be \$120.00 for one lesson per week, broken down it is approximately \$30.00 per lesson. Our top selling points are the small classroom sizes with a four to one ratio, the facility, with the warmth of the water and if there are five Mondays in a month you get the extra one for free. If you glance at the pictures the Aqua-Tots Strongsville is a little bigger than the Crocker Park location. The Crocker Park location is 6,000 SF and this one would be approximately 7,000 SF. I also understand that there are more preschools and daycares being added in the area.

Mr. Evans – The Homeowners Associations prior to COVID used to do swim lessons and none of them do anymore.

Mr. Kallmeyer – You would need good weather for that because they are typically outdoors and with this facility that is another thing you would not have to worry about.

Mr. Hayden – This is a public hearing, is there anyone in the audience that wishes to speak for the granting of the variance. Is there anyone in the audience that wishes to speak against the granting of the variance. Hearing none and seeing none I will declare the public hearing closed and entertain a motion.

Mr. Rusnov - Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion for requesting 1,931 SF Floor Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1258.03(a)(3)(E), which permits a 5,000 SF Floor Area and where a 6,931 SF Floor Area is proposed, in order to operate a Swim School Facility, property located at 17792 Pearl Road, PPN 394-25-001 zoned GB – General Business

Mr. Evans – Second.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you Mr. Rusnov, for the motion and Mr. Evans for the second. May we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL:

MR. EVANS	YES
MR. HAYDEN	YES
MR. BALDIN	YES
MR. RUSNOV	YES

MOTION APPROVED

Mr. Hayden – Mr. Kallmeyer your variance has been approved by this Board and City Council has an opportunity to review this decision at their next meeting, which is on April 7, 2025.

Mr. Kolick – He would need to make application to the Planning Commission for a Conditional Use Permit. He would also need to make application to the Architectural Review Board for the signage.

Mr. Hayden – If there is no further business to come before this Board, this meeting is adjourned.

Dustin Hayden/s/

Mitzi Anderson/s/

4-9-25

Mr. Hayden, Chairman

Mrs. Anderson, Secretary

Approval Date