

Board of Adjustment Agenda Memo

From: Ryan Miller, City Planner
Meeting: February 3, 2026
Subject: Variances – 629 9th Avenue
Presenter: Ryan Miller, City Planner

Summary and Recommended Action:

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church has made a request for variances on Lots 8, 9, 10 and 11 in Block 2 of the Morehouse Addition, also known as 621 and 629 9th Avenue. The first request is for an expansion greater than 25 percent of gross floor area for a nonconforming use. The second request is for a reduced front yard setback. The minimum required front yard setback in the Residence R-2 District is 25-feet. The third request is for reduced off-street parking. The fourth request is for reduced landscape requirements including the placement of parking and garbage receptacles within the required landscape area. The fifth variance is to exceed the maximum allowable building height of 35-feet.

Staff recommends approval of all requested variances.

Item Details:

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church is proposing an expansion of their church located at 629 9th Avenue. The expansion will include the demolition of a parsonage home located at 621 9th Avenue, to the south of the current church. The church, which is located within the nationally listed University Residential Historic District, has presented their plans to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Brookings Historic Preservation Commission (BHP). The BHP accepted the plans as presented noting the difficulty of applying historic design standards for a residential district to a church structure. The SHPO determined that the expansion would encroach upon the historic district, however, SHPO noted that no feasible and prudent alternatives exist and that all possible planning to minimize harm to the historic district has been considered.

The first variance is to exceed an expansion of 25 percent of gross floor area. The use is nonconforming in the Residence R-2 Two-family district which allows churches as a permitted special use if such use is located upon an arterial or collector street.

According to Sec. 94-41(c)(1), a building containing a nonconforming use shall be allowed a 25 percent maximum expansion based on its gross floor area, excluding any basement. Such enlargement shall be permitted provided the yard, height, landscaping, parking and loading requirements of the zoning district in which it is located are complied with. The church is located at the corner of 9th Avenue and 7th Street, both local streets. The current structure occupies 7,828 square feet. The proposed

expansion will add 6,986 square feet to the church, an 89% expansion. The proposed expansion will also require variances for yard, height, landscaping and parking.

The second request is for a reduced front yard setback. The minimum front yard setback in the R-2 district is 25-feet. The church has an existing minimum front yard setback of 12-feet along 7th Street. Additionally, the expansion proposes a minimum front yard setback of 3' 8-1/4" along 9th Avenue for a proposed covered drive-thru car port at the future primary entrance.

The third request is for reduced minimum off-street parking for the use. The expansion will result in a reduction of four off-street parking spaces for a garbage enclosure. With the expansion, a total of 58 off-street parking spaces will be required. The proposed site plan includes 32 off-street parking spaces and 17 boulevard parking spaces. Boulevard parking spaces are reviewed separately from the variance request for off-street parking. The total variance for off-street parking is 26 spaces.

The fourth request is for reduced landscape requirements. According to Sec. 94-399(e)(1), an addition of greater than 25 percent must provide a landscape plan in full compliance of the minimum landscape requirements. In this case, landscape areas, kept free of parking, storage, merchandise, or accessory structures, shall include a minimum ten-foot-wide landscape area along any right-of-way and five feet along a side lot line. The church is surrounded by right-of-way with 7th Street and 9th Avenue to the north and east and alleyways to the south and west. The side yard, to the west, is located along an alleyway with parking and a garbage enclosure. A drive-thru drop-off/pick-up area is proposed within 10-feet of 9th Avenue.

The fifth request is to exceed the maximum allowable height of 35-feet in the R-2 zoning district. The existing church has a maximum height of 34' 5-5/8". The peak of the proposed addition will have a maximum height of 35' 0-7/16".

Supporting Documentation:

Hearing Notice

Location Map

Application

Site Plan

Landscape Plan

Elevations

Renderings