



Post Office Box 299
Peru, Illinois 61354

April 16, 2026

Mayor Ken Kolowski,
Peru City Clerk, and
Aldermen of the City of Peru

RE: Petition of William and Lore Jones
118 Cross Street, Peru, IL (PINs: 17-20-113-005, 17-20-113-004 & 17-20-113-010)

Gentlemen:

Pursuant to legal notice published in the News Tribune in the manner provided by law, the Planning/Zoning Commission of the City of Peru convened for a public hearing on Wednesday, April 15, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the City Municipal Building, 1901 Fourth Street, Peru, IL, to consider the Petition of William and Lore Jones (“Petitioner”) concerning property commonly known as 118 Cross Street in the City of Peru, Illinois, legally described as follows:

Lots One (1) and Ten (10), and also the East One-Half (E. ½) of Lots Two (2) and Nine (9), all in Block Eight (8) in C.C. Merrick’s Subdivision of the East fractional one-half (E. fr. ½) of the Northwest fractional one-quarter (NW fr. ¼) of Section Twenty (20) in Township Thirty-three (33) North Range One (1) East of the Third Principal Meridian, situated in the City of Peru, County of LaSalle and State of Illinois.

PINs: 17-20-113-005, 17-20-113-004 & 17-20-113-010 (collectively, the “Property”)

Petitioner desires to construct a 40’ x 48’ detached garage on the Property and seeks the following relief under the City’s Zoning Ordinance, to wit:

- (a) A variance to increase the maximum floor area of all garages and all accessory structures from not more than 1,200 square feet as provided in Section 6.01.1(e), to not more than 2,496 square feet;
- (b) A variance to increase the maximum height for a detached private garage from not more than 18’, as provided in Section 6.01.3(b), to not more than 20’;
- (c) A variance to increase the maximum floor area for all detached private garage from not more than 714 sq. ft., as provided in Section 6.01.3(c), to not more than 2,496 sq. ft.;
- (d) A waiver from Section 6.01.1(d) to allow for garage doors which are commercial in appearance;

- (e) A variance to increase the allowable height for garage doors from not more than 8', as provided in Section 6.01.1(f), to not more than 12';
- (f) A variance pursuant to Section 6.01.3(f) to allow for metal exterior finish materials used on a detached garage;
- (g) A variance to increase the allowable width of a driveway from not more than 35', as provided in Section 7.02.(d)(3)a., to not more than 40'; and
- (h) For such other and further relief deemed necessary or appropriate.

The Property is zoned R-3 Single and Two-Family Residence District.

Planning/Zoning Commission Members Miller, Lucas, Kalsto, Jones, Grabowski, Brady, and Becker were all present at the hearing. No Members were absent.

Petitioner William Jones appeared and was duly sworn. Mr. Jones testified that he desires to construct a new garage for storage. He has two garages now, one at 118 Cross Street and one off Schuyler Street.

In response to questioning from Chairman Miller, Mr. Jones said the existing garage on the Property will remain. Mr. Jones said he was finally able to purchase additional property from Mertel Gravel (PINs 17-20-113-004 & 17-20-113-010) after 15 years of trying to do so where he plans to construct the garage.

Member Lucas noted that the Property is way down south by the river. In response to questioning from Member Lucas, Mr. Jones stated that his neighbor to the west had no objection. His neighbor to the east did not express any objection to him either. He said he has had flags in the yard and the zoning hearing notice sign posted for weeks. Mr. Jones added that he just saw the neighbor to the east the night prior due to a gas leak on her property, and she didn't voice any disagreement with his plan. Mr. Jones added that the garage is sitting back far enough along the hillside and off the property lines that it really doesn't affect any residential houses.

Member Brady commented that a large metal garage is not ideal but agreed that it is on a dead end pushed up against the back of the property against the railroad. In response to questioning from Member Brady, Mr. Jones confirmed that the garage door would be facing east towards Cross Street. Member Brady said that he would like to see a couple windows on the north side to make it appear more residential. Mr. Jones responded that the only problem with that is they provide an entry point for people to break in. However, he has thought about putting them in anyways just for lighting. Member Lucas noted that if they are installed high enough, it won't be a problem.

In response to questioning from Chairman Miller, Mr. Jones confirmed that access to the garage would be provided by a concrete drive, not gravel.

In response to questioning from Corporation Counsel, Scott Schweickert, Mr. Jones said the garage would be used for storage. Mr. Jones has an RV, a drag boat, multiple motorcycles and vehicles. Those things are currently being parked in his existing garages. One garage is 22' x 28' and the other is 24' x 24' and they are pretty full.

Member Kalsto noted that 40' x 48' is 1,920 sq. ft. but the Petition asks for 2496 sq. ft. Attorney Schweickert responded that all three parcels were being considered as one for zoning purposes, and that the existing 24' x 24' garage situated on the Property was included in the square footage calculation for all garages. Member Kalsto noted that the proposed garage would be constructed upon two of the three parcels and stated one issue she has is that the Zoning Ordinance does have a provision to not allow accessory structures to be built upon a lot without a principal structure. Mr. Jones said his wife owns the house, but he would be willing to talk with her about combining the parcels.

Member Kalsto said her other issue is that the proposed garage is a massive shed, and she is opposed to sheds in town no matter where they are located. She added she would not want this on her block or for her neighbors, present or future, to have to look at it. Mr. Jones responded that there is a similar building that is 40' x 60' two blocks north of the Property. Kalsto replied that she wasn't on the Planning/Zoning Commission when that garage went through. She is anti-morton building in the City of Peru and knows there are several that have been built and where they are located but will continue to vote against them.

Chairman Miller noted they just denied a metal garage earlier that night and each one is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Chairman Miller agrees with Member Kalsto that this garage is huge, but it is also largely out of sight.

Mr. Jones stated it is his intent to make an improvement, not a distraction. In response to questioning from Member Brady, Mr. Jones said he would be landscaping around the garage after it is complete. Member Brady stated it is his opinion that it would look better with windows. Member Lucas stated he doesn't have a problem with it only because of where it is located.

There were no public comments or objections.

The Planning/Zoning Commission found the requested relief will not alter the essential character of the locality; will not be detrimental or injurious to other properties in the area; will not impair an adequate supply of light or air to adjacent properties, or increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety, or diminish or impair property values and will not increase street congestion and, therefore, favorably recommends that the City Council grant the relief as prayed for in the Petition.

Member Lucas moved, and Member Brady seconded, to favorably recommend that the City Council approve the Petition as prayed for. The motion passed 4-3 with Chairman Miller and Members Lucas, Grabowski and Brady voting aye; Members Kalsto, Jones and Becker voting nay; and 0 Members absent.

Respectfully submitted,

CARY MILLER, Chairman
Planning/Zoning Commission