

We understand that permit oversights in Elm Thicket-Northpark have caused confusion and concern among the community. As a resident, we recognize your desire to participate in the Board of Adjustment process. This FAQ provides details on how you can engage and contribute to upcoming Board hearings, particularly for Administrative Official (AO) appeals and variance requests.



**Planning &
Development**

Elm Thicket FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

HOW RESIDENTS CAN ENGAGE WITH THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

1 What is an Administrative Official (AO) Appeal?

An AO Appeal determines if the decision of the official to revoke a permit was made in an error.

The Board of Adjustment reviews if the Administrative Official's decision to revoke a permit was correct. This process does not directly address neighborhood concerns about zoning policies themselves but focuses strictly on the Administrative Official's actions. This appeal is limited to the AO decision and not the merits of the previous Council decision on zoning.

2

How can I participate in an AO Appeal case?

You can submit letters or speak during the Public Testimony portion.

- **Public Testimony:** You may speak during the Public Testimony portion at the beginning of the Board meeting (up to 3 minutes) on any case. Specific speaker time is determined by Board at the time of the hearing.
- **Written Letters:** Submit written letters of support or opposition to Board staff, which will be included in the docket. Letters can be submitted to BDAREPLY@dallas.gov.
- **AO Appeal Hearings:** Only the applicant, their representatives, the City, and called witnesses are allowed to speak during the discussion on the agenda item.

3

What is a variance request?

A variance request asks the Board to allow flexibility in zoning rules. The Board may grant variances when enforcing the zoning laws would cause unnecessary hardship, provided certain criteria are met, that the spirit of the ordinance is observed, and substantial justice is done. This allows property owners to seek relief from specific zoning rules, such as height or lot coverage restrictions.





4 How can I participate in a variance request hearing?

You can speak during the public hearing or submit written letters.

- **Public Hearing:** For a variance, you may speak for up to 5 minutes during the public hearing portion of a specific variance case. Specific speaker time is determined by the Board at the time of the hearing.
 - Public speakers who attend virtually will need to register for the case in which they wish to speak on in advance of the hearing through the [Board website meeting section](#). Speakers attending in person are not required to register, but registration is appreciated.
- **Written Letters:** You can submit letters of support or opposition, which will be included in the docket and reviewed by the Board to BDAREPLY@Dallas.gov.



dal.city/Elmthicket

5 How do AO Appeals and variance requests differ?

AO Appeals consider if the Administrative Official's decision was correct; variances request relief to development regulations.

- **AO Appeal:** The focus is on whether the Administrative Official was right in their decision. Public input is limited to the general public testimony at the start of the meeting.
- **Variance Request:** Public testimony is received during the discussion on the item, and the Board considers how the variance would impact the property owner and neighborhood.

6 Can I attend Board hearings? Yes, you can attend in-person or online.

- **In-person:** Attend at the scheduled location for Board hearings.
- **Online:** You can attend virtually through the [Board website meeting section](#) or the [City Meetings page](#). You will need to complete the speaker registration, if you wish to speak virtually on a specific meeting or case. Your camera must be on and working to provide testimony.

For more information on meeting schedules, visit the [Board of Adjustment webpage](#) and the [Schedule](#). Upcoming cases are posted in the [Pending Case Log](#).

The City of Dallas recognizes the community's interest in engaging in the Board process and has created this guide to ensure your voice is heard during these hearings. Please keep in mind that AO Appeals and variances are distinct processes with different rules and opportunities for public engagement. Should you have any questions, the [Board website](#) provides additional resources.

