

**VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD  
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
Meeting Minutes  
JANUARY 14, 2025**

Opening:

The public meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Village of Ridgewood was called to order at 7:37 p.m.

**REORGANIZATION:**

Diana Ruhl and Yelena Raytser took the Oath of Office.

**Present:** Greg Brown, Diana Ruhl, Jonathan Papietro, Jason Curreri, Jamie Fox and Yelena Raytser were present.

The following people were elected to the following offices:

Chairman:	Greg Brown
Vice Chairman:	Matthew Bandelt
Chairman Pro Tem:	Jonathan Papietro
Board Secretary:	Jane Wondergem

The following persons were appointed:

Board Attorney:	Bruce Whitaker/McDonnell & Whitaker LLC
Board Professionals:	Chris Rutishauser, Village Engineer; John Barree and McKinley Mertz/Heyer, Gruel & Associates, Village Planners Neglia Engineering Associates, Traffic Engineering Services
Site Plan Committee:	Jamie Fox, Jonathan Papietro, Diana Ruhl

The By-Laws of the Zoning Board were adopted.

The Resolution of Adoption in the Matter of Compliance with the Requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act was approved. The schedule of meetings for the year January 14, 2025 through December 31, 2025 were approved.

The Reorganization meeting was closed.

**Present:** Greg Brown, Diana Ruhl, Jonathan Papietro, Jason Curreri, Jamie Fox and Yelena Raytser were present. Also present were Bruce Whitaker, Esq., Board Attorney; John Barree, Village Planner; and Jane Wondergem, Board Secretary. Matthew Bandelt was absent.

**Minutes:** The minutes from December 10, 2024 were adopted.

Non-agenda items:

Board member comments – There were no comments at this time.

Members of the public comments – There were no comments at this time.

Public hearings

Old Business:

**NOAH CHRISTIANO & ANGELA YANG** – An application to permit the construction of a rear addition including 2-car attached garage which would result in a height of 34 feet, where 30 feet is permitted; side yard setbacks of 18.2 feet on the left, and 18.3 feet on the right, where 23.33 feet is required; coverage by above grade structures within 140 feet of the front lot line of 20.2%, where 20% is permitted and gross building area within 140 feet of the front lot line of 36.9%, where 34% is permitted at 68 Fairmount Road, Block 1503, Lot 4, in an R-1 Zone. (Continued from December 10, 2024, without further notice)

Darryl Siss, Esq., was present on behalf of the applicant and commented on the revisions made to address the concerns of the Board.

Roger Schlicht, architect, was previously sworn and testified regarding the plans, revised to 1/3/25. Mr. Schlicht stated that the driveway will remain on the left side of the property and the existing garage will be removed. The rear addition has been reduced and the covered porch has been reduced in size. Mr. Schlicht identified the variances.

Board members asked about the hardship, and Mr. Schlicht testified regarding the lot size, the location of the existing dwelling and how the house be the smallest in the neighborhood.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Siss made closing remarks and the hearing was closed.

Following Board deliberation, Ms. Ruhl made a motion to approve, Mr. Fox seconded and the application was approved.

New Business:

**RACHNA KAUL & MATTHEW LAURITA** – An application to permit the construction of an addition which would result in a front yard setback to Cambridge Road of 38 feet, and to Ponfield Place of 15.5 feet, where 40 feet is required; coverage by above grade structures of 23.43%, where 20% is the maximum permitted; and a setback between the principal and accessory structure of less than 12 feet at 468 Cambridge Road, Block 3002, Lot 2, in an R-2 Zone.

Darryl Siss, Esq., entered his appearance and made opening remarks.

Matthew Laurita, homeowner, was sworn and testified regarding the work being done on the house and the variances required.

Mr. Barree asked about the timeline on the improvements being made on the property. Mr. Laurita stated that they took out permits in August and proceeded with the work that did not need variances, but would like to enlarge the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and have now applied for variance relief.

Board members asked about the maximum building coverage identified on the zoning table which says the existing is over 20%. Mr. Siss said the architect will address this question. Mr. Laurita stated that they have not increased the existing footprint of the house. There were no questions from the public for Mr. Laurita.

Edward A Easse was sworn and his credentials as a professional planner and licensed architect accepted. Mr. Siss stated that Mr. Easse is not the architect who prepared the plans but that he is familiar with the application.

Mr. Easse testified that the coverage by above grade structures was over at the start of the project.

Mr. Easse testified regarding the zoning chart comparison and area study that he prepared. Mr. Easse gave testimony regarding the proposed addition and porch, stating that it fits into the neighborhood. Mr. Easse described the property as undersized and said the porch softens the effect of the addition. Mr. Easse stated that there is no substantial detriment to the public.

Board members asked about the pitch of the roof and the attic area. Mr. Easse said the attic will have pull down stairs and collar ties will limit the height. Mr. Barree said the calculation for any area over 7' in height will need to be added into the gross building area calculation. Board members asked if they would stipulate that the porch would never be enclosed.

There were no questions from the public.

There was Board discussion in regards to voting on the application without knowing the pitch of the roof and if the gross building area calculations would trigger an additional variance. Mr. Whitaker said the Board could vote, recognizing that there may be a variance.

Public comment:

Leonora Reynolds, 427 Ponfield Place, spoke in support of the application.

Bruce Reynolds, 427 Ponfield Place, said they lived across the street and supported the application as it is an improvement and will fit into the neighborhood.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Brown made a motion to approve with the conditions that were discussed and that there would not be any living space in the attic. Mr. Papietro seconded and the application was approved with 4 yes votes, one abstention and one no vote.

**MATTHEW COHEN** – An application to permit the construction of a one story and second-floor addition, new patio and deck, which would result in a left side yard setback of 10 feet and a right side yard setback of 11.67 feet, where 23 feet is required; coverage by above grade structures of 21.2%, and coverage by above grade structures within 140 feet of the front lot line of 27.3%, where 20% is the maximum permitted; and gross building area within 140 feet of the front lot line of 38.2%, where 34% is the maximum permitted at 72 Ridge Road, Block 2111, Lot 4, in an R-1 Zone.

Matthew Capizzi, Esq., entered his appearance and made opening remarks briefly explaining what is being proposed.

Jordan Rosenberg was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted.

Mr. Barree stated that the survey affidavit was submitted just before the meeting and that the right-of-way width of Ridge Road is 40 feet, so the required front yard setback should be 45 feet. Mr. Barree said no variance is needed for front yard setback but the zoning table should be updated.

Mr. Rosenberg testified regarding the plans he prepared, revised to 9-26-24. Mr. Rosenberg described the existing conditions on the property, the existing floor plans and deficiencies. Mr. Rosenberg described the proposed one story addition for the mudroom and kitchen and the

second floor addition over the existing first floor, stating that the side yard setback will match the existing and will not exacerbate the non-conformity. Mr. Rosenberg said the existing deck will be demolished and the new deck will be smaller.

Mr. Rosenberg went over the proposed floor plans and elevations, stating that the increase in volume will not affect the street view. Mr. Rosenberg said the existing brick would be difficult to match so siding for kitchen and master bedroom addition will complement the existing brick.

Mr. Rosenberg went over the zoning table, stating that the coverage by above grade calculations are reduced from the existing.

Mr. Rosenberg said if the lot was conforming there would be no gross building area variance and that the lot is the narrowest one on the block. Mr. Rosenberg stated that, architecturally, the house will be more in line with the massing of other homes in the neighborhood.

Board members asked about the shed on the property which is not shown on the survey or on the plans. Mr. Capizzi said there was a zoning permit for the shed. Mr. Rosenberg said the shed would have no impact on the above grade structure calculations, but it was determined that it would increase the variance request. Board members asked if the ac units were included in the calculations as they are not shown on the survey.

Matthew Cohen, homeowner, was sworn and stated that the two ac units shown on the plans currently exist and Mr. Rosenberg said the units could be relocated under the deck.

Board members said they would like to see an updated, accurate survey.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Capizzi asked if the Board could vote on the application. Mr. Whitaker said the Board can vote, but the resolution would not be adopted until the question regarding if a variance is needed for the location of the ac units is answered and an updated survey is submitted.

Mr. Capizzi made closing remarks.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Papietro made a motion to approve, Mr. Curreri seconded and the application was approved.

Resolution memorialization: The following resolution was memorialized:

- Ra, 334 Fairway Road, Block 3604, Lot 3

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Jane Wondergem, Board Secretary

Date Approved: January 28, 2025