

**VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD  
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
Meeting Minutes  
May 27, 2025**

Opening:

The public meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Village of Ridgewood was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

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

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:

Mr. Brown announced that the Fox, 325 Crest Road, application was carried to June 24, 2025, without further notice; and the Basov and Kalinina, 3 Paul Court, application was carried to July 8, 2025, without further notice.

Old Business:

Public hearings

Old Business:

**KENNETH & PATRICIA LEUNG** – An application to permit the construction of a one-story addition, an attached two-car garage, the conversion of an existing garage into a pool cabana, removal of existing pool and construction of a new in-ground pool and pool patio, and a sports court which would result in a front yard setback on Ivy Place of 34 feet to the garage, where 45 feet is required; gross building area within 140 feet of the front lot line of Carlisle Avenue of 5,147 SF, where 5,100 SF is permitted; and gross building area within 140 feet of the front lot line of Ivy Place of 20.5%, where 20% is permitted at 256 Ivy Place, Block 3910, Lot 2, in an R-1 Zone. (Continued from April 8, 2025 without further notice)

Mr. Papietro recused himself from this application.

Matthew Capizzi, Esq., was present on behalf of the applicant and briefly went over the revisions. Mr. Capizzi identified the variances which have been eliminated. The sports court coverage variance was eliminated, the pool patio setback variance was eliminated, and the curb cut width on Ivy Place was reduced, but a variance is still required for the width.

Jordan Rosenberg, architect, had been previously sworn. Mr. Rosenberg went over the revisions in more detail. Mr. Rosenberg identified the variances still needed. The gross building area within 140 feet of Carlisle Place, the gross building area within 140 feet of Ivy Place, the front yard setback on Ivy Place, and the driveway width.

Mr. Barree clarified the variances that remain.

Board members asked if the garage could be pushed beyond the 40 foot setback. Mr. Rosenberg said it would block the historical features of the house and because it is attached to the car port. Board members asked if the size of the garage could be reduced to eliminate or reduce the gross building area variance. Mr. Rosenberg said the client requested extra space for storage. Board members asked if the homeowner would stipulate that the fence would not be white PVC.

Questions from the public:

William Cubellis, 299 Woodside Avenue, asked about stormwater management. Mr. Rosenberg said the Village Engineer would review the plans in regards to stormwater management.

Brian Smith, 265 Ivy Place, asked if the sports court would be lighted. Mr. Barree said that artificial light is not permitted.

Barbara French, 269 Ivy Place, asked how long the project would take. Mr. Capizzi estimated that it could take 1½ to 2 years.

Andrew Cooper, 153 Carlisle Terrace, asked if the sports court would be used as a tennis or pickleball court. Mr. Capizzi said it could be used in any manner the code permits. Mr. Barree said tennis and pickleball would be permitted, but the court would be undersized.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that the plans could be modified to reduce the depth of the garage by 7 inches and shifted back 5 inches to increase the setback by 1 foot and reduce the width of the garage storage area for an overall reduction of 45 square feet. Mr. Rosenberg said the applicant stipulated that there would be no solid white vinyl fence and stated that a wrought iron fence and gate is proposed at the rear of the car port at a height of 4 feet.

Katherine Gregory was sworn and her credentials as a Professional Planner accepted. Ms. Gregory testified that she reviewed the site and the plans. Ms. Gregory distributed a photo exhibit which was marked as Exhibit A-2 and testified regarding the photos and aerial images. Ms. Gregory testified regarding the placement of the garage and explained that it is a better planning alternative to match the streetscape and have the garage next to the carport. Ms. Gregory went over the variances, the R-1 Zone district and the historic district.

Ms. Gregory testified regarding the positive criteria, stating that what is proposed is a better planning alternative due to the reduction in macadam and more recreational space. In regards to the negative criteria, Ms. Gregory said there is no substantial detriment to the public good.

Board members asked about the height of the garage addition.

There were no questions from the public.

Public comment:

Barbara French, 269 Ivy Place, was sworn and submitted photos taken from her house which were marked as Exhibits O-1 and O-2. The photos showed a magnolia tree which Ms. French said contributed to their life and the street scape. Ms. French also stated her concern about the length of the project and the issues it will cause due to the narrowness of the street.

Kristin Lee, 275 Ivy Place, was sworn and spoke in support of the application.

Rachel Higgins, 129 Foster Terrace, was sworn and spoke in support of the application.

Yael Tamuz, 296 Woodside Avenue, was sworn and spoke in support of the application.

Mr. Capizzi said the applicant agreed to further reduce the left side of the garage. The garage will have a setback of 35 feet and then jog into a setback of 45 feet on the left side. Mr. Capizzi said the fence will be aluminum or wrought iron. Mr. Capizzi said the seepage pit would be relocated under the driveway, and they will attempt to save the magnolia tree near the driveway. If the tree cannot be saved, a new magnolia tree will be planted near that location. Revised plans will be submitted prior to adopting a resolution.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Brown made a motion to approve with the conditions discussed, Mr. Abdalla seconded and the application was approved.

New Business:

**ANDREW & MEAGHAN SCHMIDT** – An application to permit the construction of a second story addition which would maintain a side yard of 11.41 feet, where 16.64 feet is the minimum required, and would maintain aggregate side yard of 24.66 feet where 24.75 feet is the minimum required, and would result in total gross building area of 35.32%, where 32% is the maximum permitted, and gross building area with 140 feet of the front lot line of 37.8%, where 32% is the permitted at 739 Parsons Road, Block 1304, Lot 19, in an R-1 Zone.

Meaghan Schmidt had submitted an affidavit giving Amanda DeNaro, architect, permission to act on her behalf for the hearing.

Amanda DeNaro was sworn and her credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Ms. DeNaro testified regarding the drawings she prepared and identified the variances being requested. Ms. DeNaro explained that the addition will add 69 square feet of living space above the existing stoop. Ms. DeNaro described the lot as being undersized.

Board members asked about the brick patio. Ms. DeNaro stated that it is existing and was part of a prior application.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

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

**NICHOLAS & BRITTANY LOUROS** – An application to permit the construction of a new single-family dwelling with attached garage, pool and patio which would result in a front yard setback on Briarcliff Road of 25.29 feet, where 40 feet is required; side yard setback to raised patio of 4.55 feet, where 10 feet is required; gross building area within 140 feet of the front lot line of Orchard Place of 38.5%, where 32% is permitted; coverage by above grade structures within 140 feet of the front lot line of Orchard Place of 23.35%, where 20% is permitted; and a fence height of 6 feet where 4 feet is permitted at 220 Orchard Place, Block 2311, Lot 5.01, in an R-2 Zone.

Matthew Capizzi, Esq., entered his appearance and made opening remarks describing the property conditions as insufficient in width and identified the variances.

Stephen Koestner was sworn and his credentials as a licensed engineer accepted. Mr. Koestner testified regarding the existing conditions on the property and said the proposed condition will be an improvement. Mr. Koestner testified regarding the proposed seepage pits. Mr. Koestner stated that the cedar trees along Briarcliff Road will be removed and replaced with Green Giant arborvitae. Mr. Koestner testified regarding the coverage variances within 140 feet of the front lot line, stating that the deficient lot width is the hardship.

In response to Mr. Barree's report, Mr. Koestner said the patio will be lowered so it will be at grade.

Mr. Barree explained to the Board that the property in question was the subject of a Planning Board subdivision/consolidation application and the Planning Board indicated that no variances would be sought. The Planning Board approval was for the lots only.

Board members asked if all existing structures on the property were to be removed. Board members asked if the patio could be relocated to conform. Board members asked why they couldn't make everything conform as they are starting with a blank slate. Mr. Capizzi explained that the lot is narrow. Board members asked about the coverage calculations. Mr. Koestner went over the zoning table.

Public questions:

Michael Francesco, 256 Briarcliff Road, asked about drainage and ground water.

Jordan Rosenberg was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Rosenberg testified regarding the plans he prepared and submitted a renderings of the proposed home from the views of Orchard Place and Briarcliff Road. The renderings were marked as Exhibits A-1 and A-2. Mr. Rosenberg testified that the existing home is setback 18 feet from Briarcliff Road, with the new dwelling pushed back to enhance the light, air and open space. Mr. Rosenberg went over the elevations.

Board members asked why the patio was placed next to the neighbors within the required setback. Mr. Rosenberg said that was driven by privacy, function and use and to keep a green area.

Board members asked if the pool and patio could be reduced. Board members asked about the setbacks of the houses to the left on Briarcliff Road. Board members asked about the necessity of the six foot fence.

Public questions:

Norma Francesco, 256 Briarcliff Road, was concerned about the 6 foot fence.

The hearing was carried to June 24, 2025 without further notice.

**LINOY MATHEW** – An application to permit the construction of a two-story and second story addition with an exterior terrace, new rear patio, new detached garage, extended driveway and circular driveway which would result in a front yard setback of 41.9 feet, where 55 feet is required; a left side yard setback of 12 feet and a right side yard setback of 17.1 feet, where 20 feet is required; and driveway curb cuts with a combined width of 25.34 feet, where 12.97 feet is permitted at 314 South Van Dien Avenue, Block 4107, Lot 19, in an R-125 Zone.

Lino Mathew, homeowner, was sworn.

Thomas Mesuk was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Mesuk testified regarding the plans he prepared, noting that there are no coverage variances being requested. The variances being requested are for the width of the curb cuts and front yard and side yard setbacks.

Mr. Mesuk testified that the reason for the proposed circular driveway is due to the proximity to the nursing home and that there are often trucks going in and out of the nursing home driveway,

and there is a fire hydrant near the driveway.

Mr. Mathew distributed photos he took of trucks parked adjacent to the driveway. The photos were marked as Exhibits A-1, A-2 and A-3.

Mr. Mesuk testified that the applicant is converting the existing two-family home to a one-family home with a one-car detached garage.

Board members asked if the applicant would consider adding a turnaround behind the home and eliminating the circular driveway.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Mathew agreed to withdraw the request for variance relief as it pertains to the circular driveway and driveway width.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Bandelt made motion to approve the application, Mr. Brown seconded, and the application was approved.

Resolution memorialization: The following resolution was memorialized:

- Kantrowitz, 126 S Hill Road – Extension of variance approval

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Jane Wondergem, Board Secretary

Date Approved: June 10, 2025