



**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2024**

45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604
(203) 576-7217 Phone
(203) 576-7213 Fax

ATTENDANCE: Ira Nachem, Chair; Mary Gaits, Secretary, Tiheba Bain,
Paul Miller, Greg Breland

OTHERS: Paul Boucher, Zoning Official; Atty. Russell Liskov;
Jackson Strong, Design Coordinator; Chris Russo

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nachem called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and acknowledged the Commissioners in attendance. A quorum was present.

Chairman Nachem reviewed the rules and explained it was a give and take process where all participants have a chance to speak and rebuttal. He added that following the closure of public hearing there will be discussion by the Commissioners, followed by decision session.

DEFERRED BUSINESS

D-1 (#2) 317 Mountain Grove St. – Petition of Mountain Grove, LLC – Seeking a certificate of location approval for a used car sales and service use in a 12,647-sq. ft. portion of an existing building in the I zone.

Mr. Chris Russo came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. He explained that the location was in industrial zone, provided schematic and photos of the property and explained the plan to add some shrubs for landscaping as a buffer between the edge of the property.

Mr. Jackson Strong came forward and outlined the non-conforming of the area and rationale for the variance. He added that they recommend approval with the condition of a landscape buffer along the edge of the property of three feet between the curb as a provision.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

#1 694 Chopsey Hill Rd. – Petition of Anew M&M Renovations, LLC – Seeking a variance of sec.3.120.4 of the minimum lot area and of sec.120.5 of the maximum driveway width and the garage door width for the creation of two new lots, and the construction of a single-family house in the N4 zone.

Ms. Marcia Macedo came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. She presented drawings of the renovation plans she explained that the location was in N4 zone.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing

#2 146 Andover St. – Petition of Bar Bridgeport, LLC – Seeking a variance of sec. 9.50.4C(4) to allow wall signs on the existing building at a height greater than the allowable 25-feet in the I zone.

Mr. Chris Russo came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. He explained that the location was in industrial zone, provided schematic and photos of the property and explained the plan to add some shrubs for landscaping as a buffer between the edge of the property.

Mr. Jackson Strong came forward and outlined the non-conforming of the area and rationale for the variance. He added that they recommend approval with the condition of a landscape buffer along the edge of the property of three feet between the curb as a provision.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing.

#3 132 Andover St. – Petition of Bar Bridgeport, LLC – Seeking a certificate of location approval for light vehicle sales and services, vehicle storage and detailing in the I zone.

Mr. Chris Russo came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. He explained that the location was in an industrial zone, provided schematic and photos of the property and explained the plan to add some shrubs for landscaping as a buffer between the edge of the property.

Mr. Jackson Strong came forward and outlined the non-conforming of the area and rationale for the variance. He added that they recommend approval with the condition of a landscape buffer along the edge of the property--three feet between the curb as a provision.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing.

#4 355 Lake Ave. – Petition of Stephen Brady – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.100.5 to allow for the garage door location to be closer than 20-feet to the primary façade on the existing 1-family dwelling under renovation in the N2 zone.

Mr. Stephen Brady, property owner, came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. He presented architect plans and schematic outline of the property for an extension of the garage door for his renovation construction.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application, and the following individuals came forward:

1. Dayten George, 351 Lake Avenue, Bridgeport spoke in opposition for reasons that the height of the addition blocks the sun in his family room and yard and lowers the value of his house. He presented a printout of a power point presentation with photos of the houses in the neighborhood and described the renovation as not in conformity with other houses on that block.
2. Salvatore Rivaldi, Woodbridge spoke as the owner of the house where his daughter and son-in-law live. He stated that the neighborhood is a quaint area and the renovations by Mr. Brady are not in line with the community.
3. Janine Sjonvall, 370 Lake Ae, Bridgeport read an email and spoke in opposition to the variance sought. The garage is situated so close to the addition and would be aesthetically detrimental to the historical aspects of Blackrock. She added that the owner is actually a resident of Montana, doing work himself periodically and not following best practices for construction, demolition and removal of debris.

Mr. Brady asked to speak in rebuttal and stated he lived in CT his whole life and work on the house is up to code and the neighbors comments of his work are not relevant to this variance sought.

Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing on item #4 355 Lake Ave.

#5 270 Bunnell St. – Petition of Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.80.5 to allow for a 2nd driveway, and sec. 3.80.4 of the rear setback, and sec. 3.80.8 of the building entrance location to convert from a 1-family dwelling to a 2-family dwelling in the NX2 zone.

Mr. Kevin Moore, Director of Housing Development for Habitat for Humanity came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. He presented architect plans and schematic outline of the property for renovation and repositioning of the frontage of a single-family house for conversion to a 2-family dwelling. Comments and questions from the Commissioners were addressed regarding the frontage of the house to be repositioned as Deacon Street.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing.

#6 706 Burnsford Ave. – Petition of Ronald M Cascone – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.100.6 to allow for a 2-1/2 story height for an additional bedroom on the 3rd floor in the existing 1-family dwelling in the N2 zone.

Mr. Chris Russo came forward and noted the paperwork was submitted as required. He explained that the regulations for height were revised amidst renovations in progress. He provided schematic and photos of the property and explained the conversion of pre-existing non-conformity of the property.

Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Nachem asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Nachem closed the hearing.

Decision Session

D-1 (#2) 317 Mountain Grove St. – Petition of Mountain Grove, LLC – Seeking a certificate of location approval for a used car sales and service use in a 12,647-sq. ft. portion of an existing building in the I zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PETITION WITH CONDITIONS AS NOTED:**

1. Vehicles are to be loaded and unloaded on-site.
2. A maximum of 10 vehicles for sale at any given time.
3. Vehicles will be stored indoors during non-business hours.
4. Visitor and employee parking will be accommodated on-site.
5. A 3' wide landscaping buffer for the parking area on Mt.Grove St. and Ash St.to be installed.
6. Replace the asphalt sidewalk on Mt. Grove St. per city standards.

REASONS:

1. No adverse impact to the neighborhood.
2. The existing building is large enough to accommodate the additional use.

**** COMMISSIONER BAIN SECONDED THE MOTION .**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#1 694 Chopsey Hill Rd. – Petition of Anew M&M Renovations, LLC – Seeking a variance of sec.3.120.4 of the minimum lot area and of sec.120.5 of the maximum driveway width and the garage door width for the creation of two new lots, and the construction of a single-family house in the N4 zone.

There was discussion on the timing of the previous denial and the size of the property if the driveway can be counted as part of the easement. It was noted that the hardship conditions are the size of the lot is under old regulations.

**** COMMISSIONER BRELAND MOVED TO APPROVE THE PETITION WITH CONDITIONS AS NOTED:**

1. A sidewalk built to city standards shall be installed in the city's ROW at the front property line.
2. The new house will be built according to submitted plans.

REASONS:

1. Similarly sized lots in the area have been subdivided.
2. An additional building lot is in keeping with the context of the area.
3. The new lot square footage and frontage are greater than many of the existing properties with existing 1-family dwellings in the immediate area.

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#2 146 ANDOVER STREET – Seeking a variance of sec. 9.50.4C(4) to allow wall signs on the existing building at a height greater than the allowable 25-feet in the I zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PETITION**

REASONS:

The granting of the variance is consistent with previous sign height variance approvals along the I-95 corridor.

**** COMMISSIONER NACHEM SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#3 132 Andover St. – Petition of Bar Bridgeport, LLC – Seeking a certificate of location approval for light vehicle sales and services, vehicle storage and detailing in the I zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PETITION WITH CONDITIONS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Landscaping is to be installed on Andover St. frontage.
2. There will be no outside storage of vehicles.
3. The barbed wire on the perimeter fencing is to be removed.

REASONS:

1. No adverse impact to the neighborhood.
2. The building is well suited for its intended new use.

**** COMMISSIONER NACHEM SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#4 355 Lake Ave. – Petition of Stephen Brady – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.100.5 to allow for the garage door location to be closer than 20-feet to the primary façade on the existing 1-family dwelling under renovation in the N2 zone.

There was a discussion on the hardship and how the neighbors' comments impact the petition. It was noted that the construction related comments are not part of the purview of this zoning board. It was agreed that there was no hardship other than financial

**** COMMISSIONER BRELAND MOVED TO DENY THE PETITION.**

REASON: There is no hardship for granting a variance.

**** COMMISSIONER NACHEM SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO DENY PASSED WITH THREE VOTES IN FAVOR (BRELAND, NACHEM, MILLER) AND TWO VOTES OPPOSED (BAIN, GAITS).**

#5 270 Bunnell St. – Petition of Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.80.5 to allow for a 2nd driveway, and sec. 3.80.4 of the rear setback, and sec. 3.80.8 of the building entrance location to convert from a 1-family dwelling to a 2-family dwelling in the NX2 zone.

There was a discussion on the hardship, and it was agreed that the setback at minimal deviation was a condition.

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PETITION WITH CONDITION AS NOTED:**

The development will be built according to submitted plans.

REASONS:

1. There was no opposition to the petition.
2. The variances granted are a minimal deviation from the standards.
3. The additional unit provides needed affordable housing.

**** COMMISSIONER GAITS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#6 706 Burnsford Ave. – Petition of Ronald M Cascone – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.100.6 to allow for a 2-1/2 story height for an additional bedroom on the 3rd floor in the existing 1-family dwelling in the N2 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER BAIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE PETITION AS NOTED:**

REASONS:

1. An additional bedroom is needed for a growing family.
2. There are no adverse impacts to the neighborhood.

**** COMMISSIONER GAITS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Approval of ZBA Minutes for December 12, 2023 –**

Present: Chairman: Ira Nachem; **Secretary:** Mary Gaits; **Commissioners:** Tiheba Bain, Charles “Greg” Breland and Paul Miller. **ZBA Clerk:** Paul Boucher.

Commissioner Nachem asked for corrections on page 2, paragraph 2, line 4 'should' should be showed; Page 3 line 6: insert 'a before letter. Paragraph 2 last sentence add a before school; Page 5 at the bottom add Commissioner Nachem in favor of the motion to approve Item D-35.

- ** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2023 AS AMENDED WITH CHANGES NOTED.**
- ** COMMISSIONER GAITS SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 12, 2023 MEETING PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COMMISSIONER NACHEM MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COMMISSIONER BAIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned was at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Telesco Secretarial Services.