

**CITY OF NORWALK
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 26, 2025
DRAFT MINUTES**

BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

ATTENDANCE: Andy Conroy, Kathy Olsen, Lee Levey, Ben Hanpeter, Keith Lyon

STAFF: Tammy Maldonado

OTHERS: Atty. Liz Suchy, Jairo Castro, Craig Flaherty, Oliver Cope, Azure Dee Sleicher, Michael Angelakis, Patsy Gill, Daniela Alfaro, Caitlin Drury, Arnold Coello, Amy Kule

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Conroy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Conroy called the roll. A quorum was present.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. 25-0417-03

Plant Court, LLC (Continued from April 17, 2025 & May 15, 2025) - Variances to elevate and alter existing SFR, parking in front setback, replacement pool, replace retaining wall section and reduce mean high tide buffer. CD-1S Zone and Coastal Area Management Overlay. Property located at 46 South Beach Drive.

Ms. Olsen introduced the continued variance application, including plans to raise and modify a home, add front yard parking, replace a pool and retaining wall, and reduce the coastal buffer. Updates include lowering the pool to grade and eliminating a deck. A decision is due by July 17, 2025.

Atty. Suchy explained the elevation is required for FEMA compliance. Variances for height and setbacks are mostly unchanged, with the deck and cupolas removed. A height variance is needed due to flood rules, not new construction.

Mr. Cope detailed revisions: one roof wing was lowered 2.5 feet, and a cupola and chimney were removed. About 4% of the house exceeds height limits. No new living space was added.

Mr. Conroy emphasized variances must meet hardship criteria and raised concerns. Atty. Suchy said lowering the main roof would require full redesign. Mr. Conroy disagreed that construction difficulty qualifies as hardship.

Mr. Lyon asked for specifics on the footprint expansion. Mr. Cope said it was due to stairs and pier placement for elevation. Garage bays shifted, and rooflines were extended to maintain scale. Atty. Suchy clarified the expansion was minimal and necessary.

Mr. Levey called the house complex and said further height reduction would require major redesign. Mr. Conroy maintained the house is still too high and encouraged roof adjustments. Mr. Levey suggested a clipped gable roof to reduce visual height, though others questioned its impact.

Ms. Olsen supported the revisions, citing FEMA rules and loss of functionality if height is reduced further. Mr. Angelakis added the house, built in 2013, complies with updated codes and is not expanding. Support from neighbors was noted.

Mr. Lyon agreed the changes were reasonable. Mr. Conroy acknowledged improvements but remained concerned about a 3-foot extension toward the street and overall height, though terrain contributes to the perception.

Mr. Cope presented a revised pool plan, now lowered to ground level, improving views and complying with flood regulations. Ms. Drury shared the updated landscape plan, including fewer new trees and replacing a shed with a tree.

Board members agreed the revisions improved the project visually. Most members agreed the applicant made sufficient changes and were ready to vote.

There was a letter of support from a neighbor.

No one wished to speak in support of this application.

No one wished to speak in opposition of this application.

B. 25-0515-01

ACR Property, LLC – (Continued from May 15, 2025) - Variances of front yard setbacks at Lane Rd and East Rocks Rd, parking within the front setback at Lane Rd and East Rocks Rd and proposed backout space adjacent to Lane Rd property line to construct new Single-Family Residence. CD-1M zone. Property located at 6 Lane Road.

Ms. Olsen introduced an application for multiple variances at 6 Lane Road to build a single-family home on an undersized corner lot. Variances requested included reduced front yard setbacks on Lane Road and East Rocks Road, parking within setbacks, and a back-out space near the property line.

Ms. Maldonado raised a concern about a potential notice violation, stating she received an email from a neighbor alleging the required zoning notice sign had been removed and not reposted. The applicant's architect, Ms. Gill, confirmed she instructed the owner to repost the sign, but had not verified it. The owner, Mr. Coello, admitted the sign was taken down after the first meeting and claimed it was later replaced, but couldn't confirm its current presence.

Ms. Kule came forward to speak against this item. She confirmed the sign was not up as of the previous day. The Board expressed concern over the lack of proper notice, equating it to missing certified mailings.

Board members unanimously agreed the hearing could not proceed due to the notice issue. The application was continued to the July meeting. Staff instructed the applicant to repost the sign immediately and ensure it remains up until a decision is made.

C. 25-0626-01

Daniela Alfaro - Variance to allow parking within the front setback (30' required, 0' proposed) and tandem parking following after the fact conversion of 1 car garage to living space at existing Single Family Residence in CD-1S Zone. Property located at 34 Garner St.

Ms. Olsen introduced a variance request for 34 Garner Street to allow tandem parking within the front setback, following the unpermitted conversion of a garage to living space. The property is also under zoning violation for operating as a rooming house with separate locks and an unauthorized second kitchen. Additional complaints included unpermitted animal care activities and an Airbnb listing.

Ms. Maldonado explained the issue was self-created and restoring the garage would eliminate the need for a variance. Ms. Alfaro, the homeowner, said the garage was converted for her elderly mother, not for Airbnb use, and confirmed the kitchen was removed.

Board members raised concerns about the ongoing violations, lack of permits, and insufficient parking. Due to an unprepared presentation and missing visuals, the hearing was continued to July. The applicant was instructed to provide full documentation and keep notice signs posted.

IV. BOARD ACTION ON: A-C

A. 25-0417-03

Mr. Levey recognized the applicant's efforts since the initial review and felt the height reduction request would require unrealistic demolition. He said the setbacks were minimal and the revised pool and terrace were positive changes. Other board members, including Ms. Olsen and Mr. Hanpeter, agreed the applicant had made significant efforts.

**** MR. LYON MOVED TO APPROVE THE NON-CAM VARIANCE.**

**** MR. LEVEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (MR. LEVEY, OLSEN, MR. LYON, MR. HANPETER) ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. CONROY).**

**** MR. LEVEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CAM APPLICATION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (MR. LEVEY, MS. OLSEN, MR. LYON, MR. HANPETER) ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. CONROY).**

Ms. Maldonado announced that the applications for 6 Lane Road and 34 Garner Street were continued to the July 17th meeting.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

A. Action on Hearing Minutes – April 17, 2025, and May 15, 2025

**** MR. CONROY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2025, AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. CONROY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 15, 2025, AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (MR. CONROY, MR. LEVEY, MR. LYON, MS. OLSEN) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (HANPETER)**

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. OLSEN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

**** MR. LYON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.