

CITY OF NORWALK
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
DRAFT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - FEBRUARY 19, 2026
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

ATTENDEES: Danielle Sanchick (Chair), Ben Hanpeter (Acting Secretary), Keith Lyon, Anthony Simari, Steve Ferguson.

STAFF: Tammy Maldonado.

OTHERS: Kirk Hoegemann (Applicant for 26-0219-01), David Gold (Applicant for 26-0219-02), Mark Barrett (Applicant for 26-0219-03)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sanchick called the regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. on February 19, 2026.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Sanchick conducted roll call and a quorum was established.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. 26-0219-01 – Kirk & Angela Hoegemann – Variance to allow parking in the front setback for proposed conversion of existing two car garage into at grade entryway and living space at Single-Family Residence. Property located at 3 MacIntosh Rd. District 5, Block 1, Lot 212.

Ms. Sanchick announced the application and opened the public hearing. Mr. Hanpeter read the staff report into the record in detail. The report described the 1963 raised ranch home with an upper-level entry via exterior stone stairs and a lower driveway. The proposal converts the integral two-car garage into an at-grade entry and living space, eliminating garage parking and requiring the two mandated parking spaces in the driveway within the front setback.

The variance is requested as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, given Mr. Hoegemann’s multiple sclerosis diagnosis, which increasingly limits his ability to navigate stairs. The report noted prior permits in 2013 for unrelated renovations, emphasized that variances are not typically granted for personal hardships, but that ADA provides an exception, and concluded the accommodation appeared necessary and reasonable for ground-level access and living space.

Mr. Hoegemann identified himself (3 MacIntosh Road) and presented the case. He explained his proactive approach to his multiple sclerosis, noting stairs are becoming problematic and he wants ground-level living space to avoid future confinement to the upper level. He stated the garage is unused for parking and the conversion would provide flexibility for potential future needs, including wheelchair access.

Ms. Maldonado shared the property survey and architectural drawings on screen. The board reviewed the survey showing driveway configuration and setback encroachments (approximately 8 feet short of the required 30-foot setback at the narrowest point, with ample width for two vehicles). The architectural plans depicted demolition of the garage bays, a new at-grade entry door, conversion to living space that would link to existing finished areas, and a separate rear addition.

Board members asked detailed questions about space uses (no kitchen planned in the converted area at present, though a possible sink/kitchenette was mentioned), alternative designs (e.g., expanding the rear addition to retain garage parking), driveway capacity (described as massive, able to hold multiple cars), and prior discussions with staff/ADA coordinator (who deemed the request reasonable). Mr. Hoegemann reiterated the architect's recommendation and his intent to address mobility needs now while still working full-time.

The letter of support for reasonable accommodation from Bill Hnatuk, City of Norwalk ADA Coordinator was read into the record.

There were no additional public comments.

B. 26-0219-02 – David & Ashley Gold – Variance of Article 9, Definition of Dwelling Unit, to allow a proposed second Kitchen (Kitchenette) on the first floor, in addition to existing primary Kitchen on the second floor at an existing Single-Family Residence. Property located at 7 Shorehaven Rd. District 3, Block 78, Lot 39.

The property owner, Mr. David Gold presented the application. The plan designer, Sarah Blank was present and available for questions.

Extended discussion focused on Article 9's dwelling unit definition and whether adding a first-floor kitchenette (including a stove) while retaining the second-floor primary kitchen constituted a second unit or violated regulations. Members expressed concern that a stove (versus a mere wet bar/sink) could enable separate living quarters in the future, even if unintended by the applicants (who sought family convenience).

The board repeatedly noted no qualifying hardship (unique property condition/practical difficulty) was demonstrated under standard variance criteria. There was discussion regarding the regulatory language.

Floorplans were reviewed and possible alternatives like removing the second-floor kitchen were discussed but dismissed as outside the application's scope. Members expressed sympathy for the request but concluded the hardship was not demonstrated.

Five letters of support from neighbors were noted for the record.

C. 26-0219-03 – Mark Barrett & Jillian Majlak – Variance for rear setback for proposed alterations and additions which include connecting an existing Accessory Building

(Detached Garage) to the existing Principal Building (Single-Family Residence). Property located at 10 Winthrop Ave. District 5, Block 5, Lot 125.

Ms. Sanchick called Application 26-0219-03 into the record. The application requested rear setback variance relief to allow alterations and additions connecting an existing accessory building (detached garage) to the existing principal building at 10 Winthrop Avenue, District 5, Block 5, Lot 125.

Mr. Eric Jacobsen, architect for the homeowner explained that the proposal would connect the detached garage to the main residence to improve usability and internal access. He stated that the existing structures and lot configuration create a hardship in meeting the strict rear setback requirements if the connection is constructed.

Mr. Jacobsen described the scope of the proposed addition and noted that the design was intended to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. She stated that the overall building mass would not substantially increase beyond what is typical in the area.

Mr. Ferguson asked about the existing rear setback distance and the proposed encroachment. Mr. Jacobsen provided measurements and explained that the connection would minimally impact the rear yard area. Mr. Simari asked whether neighboring property owners had expressed concerns; Mr. Barrett indicated that no objections had been received. Mr. Lyon asked about stormwater considerations and drainage; Mr. Barrett stated that appropriate measures would be maintained.

Mr. Lyon read one letter of opposition into the record. This letter was submitted by Anthony Pavia who also acknowledged his attendance at the meeting.

The homeowner, Mr. Barrett stated that expanding the garage without connecting it to the home was not practical for his family. He added that the proposal is to add living space over the garage for his growing family.

Ms. Sanchick closed the public hearing on Application 26-0219-03.

IV. BOARD ACTION ON: A-C

A. 26-0219-01 – Kirk & Angela Hoegemann - Variance to allow parking in the front setback for proposed conversion of existing two car garage into at grade entryway and living space at Single-Family Residence. Property located at 3 MacIntosh Rd. District 5, Block 1, Lot 212.

The board deliberated. Members found the ADA reasonable accommodation compelling, noted the minor setback impact, large driveway capacity, dead-end street location with minimal traffic, and proactive medical need. One member raised a hypothetical future concern about second-floor kitchen access if mobility worsens but noted no such proposal existed and one main entry door aided emergency access. Another suggested the front setback regulation (30 feet) might warrant review by the Planning & Zoning Commission as overly restrictive in some cases.

****MR. HANPETER MOVED TO APPROVE THE VARIANCE APPLICATION 26-0219-01 AS SUBMITTED.**

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

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. 26-0219-02 – David & Ashley Gold – Variance of Article 9, Definition of Dwelling Unit, to allow a proposed second Kitchen (Kitchenette) on the first floor, in addition to existing primary Kitchen on the second floor at an existing Single-Family Residence. Property located at 7 Shorehaven Rd. District 3, Block 78, Lot 39.

The board discussed the regulatory language of the definition of dwelling unit and noted the lack of hardship.

****MR. SIMARI MOVED TO DENY THE VARIANCE APPLICATION 26-0219-02.**

****MS. SANCHICK SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. 26-0219-03 – Mark Barrett & Jillian Majlak – Variance for rear setback for proposed alterations and additions which include connecting an existing Accessory Building (Detached Garage) to the existing Principal Building (Single-Family Residence). Property located at 10 Winthrop Ave. District 5, Block 5, Lot 125.

The board discussed the paths of denying the application without prejudice or continuing the item to the next meeting for a revised plan.

****MR. FERGUSON MOVED TO CONTINUE THE APPLICATION OF MR. AND MRS. BARRETT.**

****MR. HANPETER SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

V. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

A. Action on Hearing Minutes (January 15, 2026)

Ms. Sanchick confirmed members had reviewed the January 15, 2026, minutes. No corrections were proposed.

****MR. HANPETER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 15, 2026, MEETING AS PRESENTED.**

****MR. STEVE FERGUSON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Maldonado reported that all board members remain in compliance with Act 2129 training requirements (four hours every four years/once per term), with compliance reported to the

council. She agreed to notify members of upcoming training opportunities, noting Corporation Counsel conducted a session the prior spring and similar may occur again.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business,

****MR. LYON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
**MR. HANPETER SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Baldwin,
Recording Secretary