

MINUTES – ZONING BOARD – October 24, 2022

The Cranford Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. was conducted virtually in order to avoid potential impacts from Covid-19.

This meeting is in compliance with the “Open Public Meetings Act” as adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the Westfield Leader and the Star Ledger with the agenda specifying the time, place and matters to be heard having been posted on a bulletin Board in the Town Hall reserved for such announcements and the filing of said agenda with the Township Clerk of Cranford. Formal action may be taken at this meeting.

The workshop portion of the meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Ms. Daly, Chair.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Ms. Daly
Mr. Marotta
Mr. Lucas
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Rees

Members Absent:

Mr. Aschenbach
Mr. Ashrafi

Alternates Present:

Ms. Oliver
Mr. Cukierski

Alternates Absent:

Also in attendance: Mark Rothman, Esq., and Kathy Lenahan, Board Administrator, Jacqueline Dirmann, Board Engineer, Graham Petto, Board Planner (Topology)

COMMUNICATIONS:

None

MINUTES:

None

RESOLUTIONS:

1. Application #ZBA 22-005
Michael & Jillian Rodman
178 Mohawk Drive
Block: 582 Lot: 19, R-4 Zone

Applicant is requesting c(2) variances for the construction of a new covered porch and garage extension. The minimum prevailing front yard setback is 20.9' and 18.5' is proposed. §255-34, Attachment 1, Schedule 1. The maximum building coverage is 30% and 30.7% is proposed, §255-34, Attachment 1, Schedule 1.

The Resolution of Memorialization was reviewed by the Board. After discussion, a motion to approve the resolution, as amended, was made by Mr. Lucas, seconded by Mr. Marotta and passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Application #ZBA 22-002
Tower Homes LLC
318 Union Ave S
Block: 415 Lot: 23, R-4 Zone

Applicant is requesting a c(2) variance for renovations and an addition of the existing home. The maximum permitted is 2.5 stories, where 3.5 stories is proposed due to the definition of a story above grade §255-34, Attachment 1, Schedule 1.

The Resolution of Memorialization was reviewed by the Board. After discussion, a motion to approve the resolution, as amended, was made by Mr. Marotta, seconded by Mr. Lucas and passed by unanimous voice vote.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

None.

The workshop portion of the meeting concluded at 7:45 p.m.

PUBLIC PORTION:

A public meeting of the Cranford Board of Adjustment was called to order by Ms. Daly on October 24, 2022, at 7:45 p.m. via Google Meet. Ms. Daly announced in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Open Public Meetings Act, the Westfield Leader and the Star Ledger have been notified and the agenda posted in the municipal building as required.

Ms. Daly explained the protocol, purpose and procedure that will be followed during the hearing.

1. Application # ZBA 21- 013 – Continued from August 8, 2022
Cold River Realty Corp
85 Winans Avenue
Block 527 Lot 7, C-2 Zone

Applicant is requesting a d(1) and d(4) variance for the construction of a new two-family dwelling. A d(1) variance for a new two-family dwelling where only two-family dwellings existing as of 2014 are allowed §255-36D(1) and a d(4) variance to allow a floor area ratio of 1.03 where a maximum of .6 is allowed §255-34 Attachment 1, Schedule 1.

Adam Brown, Esq. appeared for the applicant. Reviewed the application and revised plans that were submitted. Listed the witnesses that will testify.

Daniel Roma appeared and was sworn in.

Questions from Mr. Brown to Mr. Roma ascertained the following:

Presented a seven-page document which included site plans, floor plans and elevations. Reviewed the changes since the last meeting. Stated they reduced the size of the house and enlarged the side yard. Compared it to if the building was across the street in the R-5 zone. Reviewed where they would and would not comply if the building was across the street.

The side yard has changed from 5.2 feet to 7.5 feet on each side. The building will only be 35 feet in width and 60.75 in length. The front yard is still 20 feet. The steps are in front of the building with access

to the two apartments. Reviewed the floor plan for each of the apartments. Each apartment mirrors the other. Reviewed the front elevation using cultural stone, stucco and fire cement siding. Property is more than five feet from the property line. The back of property has sliding doors. There will be landscaping and patios (which will be reduced to comply with maximum impervious coverage).

Providing a rendering of the house (six pages) marked as Exhibit A-1.

Questions from the Board for this witness ascertained the following:

The landscaping on Exhibit A-1 is not accurate, it is just for show. There will be grass in the front and landscaping between the driveway and the sidewalk that connects to the house. Site plan shows landscaping between the two apartments. The lighting will be on the eaves. The left side will be cultural stone, the right side will be stucco, and the back will be cement siding. The second-floor bedroom on left will have two windows, it is missing on the drawing. The lighting will be on the roof in a downward direction.

Questions from Graham Petto, Board Planner, for this witness ascertained the following:

The length of the building does not include the overhang. Front to rear would be 63.09. To comply with the 30%, would need to reduce the building by four feet. Could change the size of the kitchen and the living room to comply.

Ms. Daly asked if anyone from the Public had questions for this witness, no one appeared.

John McDonough appeared and was sworn in. His qualifications were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert in Planning.

Questions from Mr. Brown to Mr. McDonough ascertained the following:

Presented photos of neighboring properties marked Exhibit A-2 (2 photos). Sheet One is an ariel view showing a vacant lot and almost entirely surrounded by multifamily dwellings. There is a commercial building in the back. Second sheet shows footprint of the homes. Feels the project is compatible with the neighborhood.

Discussed the criteria for the relief being requested. The building coverage and impervious coverage complies along with the setbacks. Site is suitable for the use, based on historic use. Reviewed Purpose A and Purpose M under the MLUL. Will have no impact on the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Questions from the Board for this witness ascertained the following:

Stable neighborhood, homes around this property are permitted uses in the zone. Good planning to provide for positive integration. It is a production-oriented zone. Not impairing the vision. 13 of the 18 properties on the street, are not one family.

Ms. Daly asked if anyone from the Public had questions for this witness, no one appeared.

Mr. Rothman asked Mr. Brown to confirm that the applicant has agreed to reduce the overall building by four feet.

Mr. Roma stated the building is 32.21%, if he reduces by four feet it is 30% and would not need the variance; however, he would like to reduce by two feet and would be at 31% and have a nicer living area. Reducing by two feet will be over by 1%.

Daniel Pereira, owner of Cold River Realty, stated he would agree to a 2-foot reduction of the building.

Questions from Graham Petto, Board Planner, for this witness ascertained the following:
The property's bulk standards are in the C-2 zone and maximum allowable cover is 40%, no relief is needed, only needed on the floor area. There is a variance requested for the side yard setback and combined yard in the C-2 zone. They do comply with the R-5 zone, but not the C-2 zone.

Ms. Daly asked if anyone from the Public had questions for this witness, the following appeared:

Michael Fountain – 92 Winans Avenue – Asked about the direction of the neighborhood.

Mr. McDonough stated everything should be considered. Generally, from a planning perspective, you look at the immediate neighborhood. There are 18 homes within the 200-foot area.

Ms. Daly asked if anyone would like to make a public comment on the application, the following appeared:

Michael Fountain – 92 Winans Avenue appeared and was sworn in. Stated there are two new homes that are single family in the last 15 years and one single family that has had major alterations. Feels the direction of the immediate neighborhood is going toward single family. The previous structure was less than half the square footage of the proposed and also included off street parking for 6-8 vehicles and two on street spots. Winans has a shortage of parking. The width of the driveway in the revised plan, will reduce on-street parking by two spaces.

Gerry Grillo – 4 Seneca Road appeared and was sworn in. Stated there was a new two family built about 8 years ago. On the corner of North Lehigh, there is a new 25-unit multifamily building. Believes the block is moving in the two family, multifamily direction. There is heavy commercial down the street and behind the street. He is for the application.

Mr. Brown summarized the application. Stated this is the second hearing on the application. Applicant has made modifications to the application. Has spoken with the Town and made the proposed changes. Will be a benefit to the neighborhood.

Board comments consisted of the following:

Appreciate the applicant making modifications to the design. Is an investment in the community. Designed the building to fit into neighborhood. Is in favor of the two-foot reduction of the building. Modifications are appreciated and fits well in the zone. One extra curb cut, will not significantly take away from the parking situation. Testimony was helpful to understand what they want to do with the property. A one family or a commercial property would have same issue with parking.

Ms. Dirmann, Board Engineer, requested the items in her review letter of October 17th be contingent and be included in any resolution.

Mr. Brown stated his applicant will consent to the items in the Engineering letter.

A motion to approve the application with adjustments, (reduction of 2% of the structure) was made by Mr. Marotta, seconded by Mr. Quinn and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Daly, Mr. Marotta, Mr. Lucas, Mr. Quinn, Mr. Rees, Ms. Oliver, Mr. Cukierski

Opposed: None

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PUBLIC PORTION:
None

The next meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2022.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 9:06 p.m.

Kent Lucas, Alternate Secretary