

**BERGENFIELD ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 4, 2024**

Chairman Ben Cabrera called the meeting to order at 8:00 P.M.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. Meeting dates are confirmed at the Annual Meeting. Notice of this meeting was provided to the Record, Star Ledger, and Cablevision, posted on a municipal public notice bulletin board and published on the borough website.

Any board member having a conflict of interest involving any matter to come before the board this evening is reminded they must recuse themselves from participating in any discussion on this matter.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Board member Smith.

ROLL CALL

Present: John Smith, Amnon Wenger, Jose Morel, Jason Bergman, Ben Cabrera, Yitz Novak, Oriole Familia, and Nishant Desai

Also Present: Gloria Oh, Zoning Board Attorney, Antonios Panagopoulos, Zoning Board Engineer, and Hilda Tavitian, Zoning Board Clerk

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Read by Chairman Cabrera. Welcome to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Let me briefly explain what we do. We are appointed by the Bergenfield Council to decide when a property owner should get relief from the strict application of the zoning regulations that are set forth in Bergenfield's zoning ordinance. Typically, we hear two types of variances. The first is whether an applicant can vary from land use restrictions including rules on sideline distance, height, and lot coverage. That is commonly called a bulk variance. The second type of variance is a use variance, where an applicant wants to use the property for a purpose not permitted under the zoning ordinance in that zone.

In these cases, the applicant has the burden of meeting certain criteria set forth in the Municipal Land Use Law, which is available online. We carefully listen to the testimony, including objectors, and review all relevant documents. If a majority of the Board concludes that the applicant has satisfied those criteria for a bulk variance, we must grant the requested variance. Approval of a use variance requires five affirmative votes.

APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – September 9, 2024

Motion By: Mr. Smith

Second By: Mr. Bergman

All present voting in favor. None opposed.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one came forward.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Application: 16 Glenwood Drive North LLC
16 Glenwood Drive
Proposed New Single-Family House
Adjourned to December 2, 2024 Meeting

Board member Smith stated the Board was promised in September by the applicant's attorney they would receive the revised plans within a week. It's been over a week and they have not received the plans. He requested either the Board attorney or clerk send a letter asking the plans be submitted.

Chairman Cabrera stated they have done a couple of site visits to the location and would like to have the plans at least a couple of weeks before the December meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Applications: Gloria Cruz
69 Mackay Drive
One Car Garage

Chairman Cabrera stated the application is not complete and would normally defer it to next month. There seems to be some confusion and there needs to be a brief discussion to clear things up.

Board engineer Panagopoulos stated the applicant first submits documents and there's a list of items required. Once those items are submitted, the application is considered completed. He explained once the application is complete, a detailed engineering review is done. The application was deemed complete. However, there are several items that need to be addressed. The Zoning Officer relooked at the application and supplied a new denial letter.

Board member Smith inquired if they have responded to the new letter of denial.

Mr. De Pippa stated they received the first zoning denial letter May 30, 2023. It was denied for just side yard setback non-conformance. Mr. De Pippa explained they responded and had sent all required documentation. They had submitted 17 copies of the application, sent certified letters to residents within 200 ft., and had notice published in the newspaper once they were told the application was complete in September 2024. On October 30th, 2024, they received two letters, one a new denial letter with additional items listed from the building department and the other from the Board engineer. It is not fair to receive a letter four days before the meeting.

Board member Smith inquired if the applicant will be prepared to answer all of the additional items in the denial letter issued October 30, 2024 by the next meeting.

Ms. Gloria Cruz, applicant, stated she has video evidence of what happened. Ms. Cruz stated they were wrongly advised to by a contractor to seal the old garage. They are required to have a garage and the only possible place is next to the home. They never wanted to close up the garage as it is an additional cost. Ms. Cruz stated she had spoken with Mr. Ravenda and stated it was not fair to receive a new denial letter right before the meeting. They all have made a sacrifice to be before the Board and it has taken weeks to prepare everything.

Chairman Cabrera stated they were aware of the issues beforehand and it was going to be brought up. The Board now has a better understanding. The applicant needs to come back next month with no further notice necessary.

Mr. De Pippa stated he knew about the two side yard items. The house has been under construction and there are permits.

Board member Smith stated there will no further notice necessary. The residents will not receive a notice that the application is being carried to the December 2nd, 2024 meeting.

Ken Brown, attorney representing the next door neighbor, 79 Mackay Drive, introduced himself and inquired about the notice for next month.

Motion to Carry Application to December 2, 2024 Meeting with No Further Notice

Motion By: Mr. Wenger

Second By: Mr. Bergman

All present, voting in favor. None opposed.

Miriam Yael Wielgus
111 Greenbriar Street
An addition

Reuben Gross, 1205 W. Laurelton Pkwy, Teaneck, NJ, licensed architect, stated they are proposing to expand the existing single-family house by building a one-story addition to expand the kitchen and dining room on the first floor and a new master bedroom suite on the second floor. The existing house has a left side yard setback of 4.72 ft. where 5 ft. is required, a combined side yard setback of 9.84 ft. is existing and is proposed, where 10 ft. is required, and the maximum allowable improved lot coverage is 40%, where existing is 45.74%, and they are proposing to reduce it to 42.01%. The addition has no negative effect on the yards and they are reducing the coverage by 185 sq. ft.

Board member Smith inquired if they could use pavers instead of concrete, which would do away with one variance. Credit would be given.

Mr. Reuben stated they are removing the left side walkway and the front patio completely. The rear patio and the right side walkway is going to be reduced. They will be happy to use pavers instead of concrete and will work with the board engineer.

Questions & Public Comments

No one came forward.

Motion to Approve Application with Condition to Use Pavers

Motion By: Mr. Smith

Second By: Mr. Wenger

All present, voting in favor. None opposed.

2. RFQ's for 2025 Board Professionals

Board Clerk Tavitian stated the notice for RFQ's for Board Engineer and Board Attorney has already been published and are due December 6th, 2024. The Borough Administrator, Corey Gallo, had stated the Zoning Board should have Steve Lydon, the Borough's Planner, provide guidance regarding use variance applications.

Board member Smith stated he would like the engineering firm to continue to provide a Planner for use variance applications that come before the Board in 2025. Mr. Lydon's expertise is in Fair Share Affordable Housing.

Board member Bergman agreed with Mr. Smith's point of view, whether it's the Borough Planner or one appointed to the Zoning Board specifically. He suggested the Borough Administrator send a letter or present to the Zoning Board an explanation why he prefers the Borough's Planner over the Zoning Board having one.

Chairman Cabrera stated he will speak with the Borough Administrator regarding the appointment of a Board Planner.

Board Clerk Tavitian stated once she receives the RFQ's from the QPA, Kent Christner, she will forward them electronically to the Board members in advance of the January 6th, 2025 Reorganization meeting.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion By: Mr. Smith

Second By: Mr. Bergman

All ayes. None opposed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Hilda Tavitian, Clerk
Zoning Board of Adjustment

MINUTES – NOVEMBER 21, 2024
BERGENFIELD MAYOR'S SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting opened on Thursday, November 21, 2024 with the salute to the flag and a moment of silence for our service men and women, world peace and our own special intentions. All committee members were present. Also, in attendance was our liaison, Buddy Deauna.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Checking Account: \$ 6,290.50
Budget: .00

Minutes accepted as read. To date, expenses are being covered by the Borough. Checking account balance includes \$3,000.00 for our Christmas/Holiday luncheon.

OLD BUSINESS:

Food was ordered for about 140 seniors/guests an increase of about 40-50 guests. Also, cookie order was donated by the caterer Italian Connection. Food to arrive at 1:30 pm. Also, Bergenfield High School Guidance dept. is sending three (2), possible five (5) students to help some seniors with some physical difficulties. We always enjoy their company.

Attached is list of duties and purchases being done by committee members. Committee members to arrive at 12:45 pm for set up and at end of party for breakdown. Throw everything out. Looking forward to a good time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Vice President Marge Alfano has booked Hunterdon Hills Playhouse for March 13, 2025 for our first monthly trip for Andy Cooney Irish Cabaret \$85.00. More info to follow.

Our President Loretta Amara introduced our new committee member, Helen Folli.

The following are the upcoming venues booked to date:

No trips scheduled for January and February 2025 due to possible inclement weather
March 13, 2025 Hunterdon Hills Playhouse, Andy Cooney Irish Cabaret \$85.00.
More to come.

With no further business for discussion,
Meeting adjourned at 9:53 am
Submitted by: Annette Roge, Secretary
Next official meeting Thursday, January 2, 2025

Email: Buddy Deauna
bdeauna@bergenfieldnj.gov

Bergenfield Mayor's Council for Senior Citizens

Holiday Party

Sunday December 8, 2024 2-5 pm plans for 140 people

Task	Person/s Responsible
Master of Ceremonies	Loretta
Arrange for food with Italian Connection— dietetic cookies	Loretta
Check in	Barbara and Lorraine
Set tables, roll flatware, plate the snacks and place on tables, direct students	John, Joanne, Gwen, Pat
Wine—1 red gallon, 2 white gallons	Gary
Wine—4 bottles red	Buddy
Water—140 small bottles Beer—3 cases of 18 ea.	Steve
Soda—2 reg. coke, 2 diet coke & 2 reg. sprite, 2 diet sprite Ginger Ale—1 reg., 2 diet	Linda and John
Snacks—3 bags of chips, 3 bags of pretzels	Linda and John
Coffee, tea, paper products, flatware, tablecloths	Marge and Steve is going to help her
Milk—3, ½ gallons	Eileen
Set up coffee	Eileen
Lighter	Steve
Table decorations—how many...15	Annette
Card tables-2	Lorraine
Return food racks	Loretta
Students from high school	Loretta
Bar	Gary, Joe, Steve
Serve	All the ladies
No self service sign and extension cords	Pat
Save cup sign	Steve