

**BRISTOL ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 3, 2025**

DRAFT MINUTES

By: Chairman Rafaniello

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Place: City Hall
Council Chambers
111 North Main Street
First Floor

MEMBERS		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:			
	Jerald Rafaniello (Chairman)	X	
	David Pecevich (Acting Chairman)	X	
	Richard Raymond (Secretary)	X	
	Alfred Radke, III	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:			
		X	
		X	
	Rory Ghio	X	
	Liza Salgado-Sirko	X	
	Jonathan Lukasiewicz	X	
STAFF:			
	Andrew Armstrong, Assistant City Planner	X	

1. Call to Order

Per the order of the Acting Chairman Pecevich the meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M.

Acting Chairman Pecevich reminded the Board the next Regular Meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals is: Tuesday, July 1, 2025.

2. Public Hearings

- a. Application #3819 - Variances for: 1) the enlargement of existing entry stairs extending more than three feet into the required yard and 2) a reduction of the minimum front yard at 44 Margerie Street; Assessor's Map 3, Lot 97; R-10 (Single- Family Residential) zone; Anthony Michaud, applicant.

Acting Chairman Pecevich designated himself, regular Commissioners Raymond, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello with alternate Commissioner Ghio to vote on Application #3819.

Amanda Michaud of 44 Margerie Street, applicant, explained this request came about after doing a walk-through with the fire marshal who critiqued the stairwell. The existing stairwell is narrow and very small. The fire marshal indicated that it would be dangerous because a larger person with heavy fire equipment and/or oxygen tanks on their backs may get stuck or damage the equipment. The expansion of the stairwell would also make it safer for the existing residents and any visitors.

Anthony Michaud of 65 Dayton Drive, Southington, further explained the stairwell needed to be expanded for access and there was a "paper" road that was not developed. Their goal was to update the building to allow for fire access to comply with their requirements and safety for tenants.

Acting Chairman Pecevich looked at the property and looked for clarification that the existing stairwell shown was enclosed and the building would be extended out and still enclosed. Mr. Michaud conformed that it would be enclosed.

Commissioner Raymond inquired if the depth could be setback. Mr. Michaud stated it was originally 5.8' and would be extended to 8'.

Acting Chairman Pecevich clarified the location of the entry.

Mr. Armstrong confirmed the existing structure was slightly non-conforming.

Commissioner Ghio asked for clarification on the grade at the exit. Mr. Michaud confirmed there would be one step and then it would be at-grade.

Mr. Michaud confirmed for Commissioner Raymond that nothing else would be added to the print later, which was confirmed.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.

No one spoke against the application.

The hearing is closed.

By: Raymond

Seconded: Ghio

For: Raymond, Ghio, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Commissioner Ghio stated they were trying to update a building with existing non-conformities and understands the nature of complying with fire code orders.

Commissioner Raymond agreed with Commissioner Ghio.

Commissioner Radke agreed as well. He reiterated the existing placement of the home, non-conforming stairwell, the safety hazard needing to be corrected based on the fire marshal suggestion and also felt the request minimally exceeded the existing location and was a well thought out plan.

Commissioner Rafaniello felt this was a valid safety issue and another factor was the front yard street had not been developed.

MOTION: Move to approve Application #3819 - Variances for: 1) the enlargement of existing entry stairs extending more than three feet into the required yard and 2) a reduction of the minimum front yard at 44 Margerie Street; Assessor's Map 3, Lot 97; R-10 (Single- Family Residential) zone; Anthony Michaud, applicant, in accordance with the plot plan and information submitted.

By: Raymond

Seconded: Ghio

For: Raymond, Ghio, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

The application is approved.

Mr. Armstrong explained the importance of recording the Variance form with the City Clerk in order for it to become effective.

- b. Application #3820 - Variances of: 1) minimum rear yard for a basement door and deck; 2) minimum side yard for a driveway at 60 Benham Street; Assessor's Map 3, Lot 136; R-10 (Single-Family Residential) zone; Habitat for Humanity North Central CT, Inc., applicant.

Acting Chairman Pecevich designated himself, regular Commissioners Raymond, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello with alternate Commissioner Liza Salgado-Sirko to vote on Application #3820.

Attorney James Ziogas, 104 Bellevue Avenue, representing the applicant, Habitat for Humanity described the request to develop a new home on the single-family home. The layout was designed to accommodate the new home within the yard requirements but

the rear yard had encroachments for a portion of the rear deck and basement door. Additionally, the driveway at the north end of the property would be 3 feet from the property line where 10 feet is required for paving. This home would be most likely for a first-time home buyer.

Commissioner Rafaniello clarified the project was for Habitat for Humanity. He further confirmed with Attorney Ziogas there would be no additional future handicap requirements needed for the resident.

Commissioner Raymond noted that there was not much the applicant could do to avoid a Variance due to the size limitations. He could not think of another solution and was a well-planned proposal.

There was a discussion of if there was a prior home on the lot. Mr. Armstrong seemed to recall that there was a prior home that may have been condemned.

Commissioner Rafaniello asked if there was a possibility of parking in front of the home. Attorney Ziogas was not sure the regulations allowed for parking in the front yard which was confirmed with Mr. Armstrong.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.
No one spoke against the application.

The hearing is closed.

By: Pecevich

Seconded: Radke

For: Raymond, Salgado-Sirko, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.
Against: None.
Abstain: None.

Commissioner Raymond noted there was not much that could be done to avoid Variances. He looked at the plan and considered various alternatives but ultimately this plan was as good as it was going to get.

Commissioner Radke noted this was a difficult property to develop and comply with the regulations. The 40-foot frontage was undersized. There was a previous driveway in the previous location. There is not much space to place cars considering the restrictions for parking and the side yard was an appropriate location. The property is small and does not have many options.

Commissioner Salgado-Sirko agreed that there was not much that could be done.

Commissioner Rafaniello agreed with the others, it was a difficult property to develop and would serve a higher purpose in the community.

Acting Chair Pecevich agreed with the others. The property and home are both very small. Basement access was needed and would not have an adverse effect on the neighbors.

MOTION: Move to approve Application #3820 - Variances of: 1) minimum rear yard for a basement door and deck; 2) minimum side yard for a driveway at 60 Benham Street; Assessor's Map 3, Lot 136; R-10 (Single-Family Residential) zone; Habitat for Humanity North Central CT, Inc., applicant, in accordance with the plot plan and information submitted.

By: Raymond

Seconded: NAME.

For: Raymond, Salgado-Sirko, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.
Against: None.
Abstain: None.

The application is approved.

- c. Application #3821 - Variances of: 1) minimum lot area 2) minimum side yard and 3) maximum building coverage for a new one-car garage at 34 Donovan Court; Assessor's Map 8, Lot 14; R-25 (Single-Family Residential) zone; Gary Sassu, applicant.

Acting Chairman Pecevich designated himself, regular Commissioners Raymond, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello with alternate Commissioner Lukasiewicz to vote on Application #3821.

Attorney James Ziogas, 104 Bellevue Avenue, representing the applicant, noted the applicant could not attend the meeting this evening and explained Variance requests. The property has obstructions by a well and septic system. The lot is only 6,200 square feet in size. Not having a garage has been difficult living in the location year-round. The garage was designed as 12 feet wide which is about the minimum width. The max building coverage would be slightly over due to the existing deck and shed being included. Attorney Ziogas outline various properties on Donovan Court with similar non-conforming front and side yards that show a similar development pattern and character in this area.

Commissioner Pecevich inquired about where the boat would be kept. Attorney Ziogas responded it would have to be moved off the property.

There was discussion about the storage area presented as part of the garage that would allow the residents more room in a small home.

Commissioner Rafaniello inquired if a different configuration would alleviate some Variances. Attorney Ziogas stated there was not much that could be done to avoid the front yard variance.

There was discussion about the orientation of the garage and if it were straighter if it would layout better. Attorney Ziogas noted the design would line up with the home and the garage and home entry. These were in the past, seasonal cottages that have become full time homes for residents. He further clarified the flat roof area of the home that they were attempting to line up with that particular area.

Commissioner Rafaniello asked the neighborhood support letter addressed to the Bristol Zoning Board of Appeals be read into the record:

Dear Commissioners, I have reviewed the proposed plans and wish to express our support for the approval of the variances. The proposed garage is consistent with other homes in the neighborhood and would not be a determinate to us.

Sincerely,

41, 42, 49, 17, 20, 35 and 9 Donovan Court.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.
No one spoke against the application.

The hearing is closed.

By: Raymond

Seconded: Ghio

For: Raymond, Lukasiewicz, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Commissioner Raymond noted the lot is non-conforming. Most people in the neighborhood were OK with the request and there is no opposition. He felt if you attempted a different layout, you would still need variances, the well and septic tank. He did not have an issue.

Commissioner Lukasiewicz agreed with the other statements.

Commissioner Radke agreed also. He felt the applicant tried other options and will still need to relocate utilities and other features. The well, placement, angle and size were difficult.

Commissioner Rafaniello felt the design was poor and would clutter the neighborhood.

Acting Chair Pecevich agreed if it were his property he would also seek variance relief. This area had a similar development pattern and did not have concerns.

MOTION: Move to approve Application #3821 - Variances of: 1) minimum lot area 2) minimum side yard and 3) maximum building coverage for a new one-car garage at 34 Donovan Court; Assessor's Map 8, Lot 14; R-25 (Single-Family Residential) zone; Gary Sassu, applicant, in accordance with the plot plan and information submitted.

By: Raymond

Seconded: Radke

For: Raymond, Lukasiewicz, Radke and Pecevich.

Against: Rafaniello

Abstain: None.

The application is approved.

- d. Application #3822 - Variance of minimum rear yard required for a new walk-in refrigerator and freezer at 1158 Farmington Avenue; Assessor's Map 46, Lot 15; BG (General Business) zone; Jon Rondeau, applicant.

Acting Chairman Rafaniello designated himself, regular Commissioners Raymond, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello with alternate Commissioner Ghio to vote on Application #3822.

Jon Rondeau introduced himself as the owner and applicant for the property known as "Cravings". He reviewed the property and request to allow for a new walk-in freezer recommended by the Health Department. He stated it was a non-conforming lot that was built out on both sides and the front. He had a structural engineer look at the back area as an alternative. The angle of the back property line created the need for a variance.

It was clarified that the Health Department recommended the freezer and also supported. Mr. Rondeau did not realize at that time it would require a variance to achieve this.

Shelby Rondeau, 55 Seagus Road, Burlington also spoke in favor and further explained the need for the freezer and expressed the Health Department's support for this request.

Mr. Rondeau explained there was not space inside to accommodate a new freezer inside. The existing situation was causing heating and cooling problems and in order for the business to stay in this location they needed the room for the expansion. It would also provide food safety and public safety. The current system is causing problems that caused problems.

There was a discussion about possible screening. Mr. Armstrong recommended bollards to protect the freezer and business from the adjoining parking lot next door.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.

No one spoke against the application.

The hearing is closed.

By: Raymond

Seconded: Ghio

For: Raymond, Ghio, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Commissioner Ghio understands the functioning and issues with heating and cooling of a restaurant and felt it was appropriate.

Commissioner Raymond noted he had been there and they needed the space. They needed the freezer to operate safely and efficiently.

Commissioner Radke agreed with other comments. He felt the origin of the Health department recommendation, heat problems inside the building, the back property line was at an angle, tried alternatives and felt this was appropriate.

Commissioner Rafaniello stated the shape of the lot and felt this was an exceptional business.

Acting Chair Pecevich stated the shape and angle of the back lot line was a hardship and agreed with the request.

MOTION: Move to approve Application #Application #3822 - Variance of minimum rear yard required for a new walk-in refrigerator and freezer at 1158 Farmington Avenue; Assessor's Map 46, Lot 15; BG (General Business) zone; Jon Rondeau, applicant, in accordance with the plot plan and information submitted.

By: Raymond

Seconded: Rafaniello

For: Raymond, Ghio, Radke, Pecevich and Rafaniello.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

The application is approved.

3. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting – May 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes were discussed. A potential revision was resolved. Meeting minutes are approved and filed.

4. Communications

Resignation Letter – Commissioner Raymond

Commissioner Raymond read into the record his resignation letter to the mayor. He stated he has enjoyed his time serving for 25 years and felt it was time for him to step down and allow a younger person to fill his position. His last meeting will be July 1st.

Commissioner Rafaniello thanked Commissioner Raymond and stated they had served together the past 25 years.

Commissioner Raymond stated he enjoyed it and would miss everyone.

Mr. Armstrong also thanked Commissioner Raymond for his service on behalf of City staff.

Mr. Armstrong reminded everyone the next meeting is scheduled for July 1st.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 P.M.

This meeting was taped.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Armstrong
Assistant city Planner

Jerald A. Rafaniello, Chairman

Richard Raymond, Secretary