

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Reorganization Meeting
January 14, 2025
—MINUTES—

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman Foose called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT:

ANNOUNCEMENT; Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act N.J.S.A.10:4-6. On January 9, 2024 proper notice was sent to the Courier News and the Star-Ledger and filed with the Clerk at the Township of Bridgewater and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building. Please be aware of the Zoning Board of Adjustment policy for public hearings: No new applications will be heard after 10:15 pm and no new testimony will be taken after 10:30 pm. Hearing Assistance is available upon request. Accommodation will be made for individuals with a disability, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), provided the individual with the disability provides 48 hours advance notice to the Planning Department Secretary before the public meeting.” However, if the individual should require special equipment or services, such as a CART transcriber, seven days advance notice, excluding weekends and holidays, may be necessary.

3. SALUTE TO FLAG:

4. OATHS OF OFFICE

Mr. Oller administered the required oaths of office.

5. ROLL CALL

Donald Sweeney-	Absent	Jeff Foose-	Present
Bruce Bongiorno-	Present	John Gayeski-	Present
James Weideli-	Present	Claudio Vescio-	Present
Jeffrey Sicat-	Present	Andrew Fresco-	Present
Pushpavati Amin-	Present	Chris Gabbett-	Present*
John Kulak	Present		

Others present: Board Attorney Rich Oller, Esq., Ms. Katherine Sarmad, Board Planner, Mr. Bill Burr, Board Engineer, Ms. Nancy Probst, Land Use Administrator and Mr. Kevin Lewthwaite, Zoning Officer.

*Mr. Gabbett arrived late.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Board Chairman

Ms. Probst called for the election of Board Chairman.

Ms. Amin nominated Mr. Foose and Mr. Bongiorno seconded the nomination. With there being no further nominations, this portion was closed.

The Board voted to appoint Mr. Foose as Board Chairman based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicat,
Mr. Vescio & Mr. Foose
Nays:
Ineligible:
Abstain:
Absent: Mr. Sweeney

Board Vice Chairman

Chairman Foose called for nominations of Vice Chairman.

Mr. Foose nominated Mr. Weideli and Mr. Bongiorno seconded the nomination. With there being no further nominations, this portion was closed.

The Board voted to appoint Mr. Weideli as Vice Chairman based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicat,
Mr. Vescio, Mr. Gabbett & Mr. Foose
Nays:
Ineligible:
Abstain:
Absent: Mr. Sweeney

Board Secretary

Chairman Foose called for nominations of Board Secretary

Mr. Wiedeli nominated Mr. Fresco and Mr. Gayeski seconded the nomination. With there being no further nominations, this portion was closed.

The Board voted to appoint Mr. Fresco as Board Secretary based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicat,
Mr. Vescio, Mr. Gabbett & Mr. Foose
Nays:
Ineligible:
Abstain:
Absent: Mr. Sweeney

Board Asst. Secretary

Chairman Foose appointed Ms. Probst as the Assistant Board Secretary.

7. APPOINTMENT OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS

On motion by Mr. Weideli, seconded by Mr. Fresco, the Board voted to appoint the Board Professionals based on the following roll call vote, as follows:

Mr. Richard Oller, Board Attorney
Mr. Bill Burr, Board Engineer
Ms. Katherine Sarmad, Board Planner
Mr. Michael Sullivan, Consulting Planner
Mr. Bruce Eisenstein, Consulting Radio Frequency Engineer

Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicat,
Mr. Vescio, Mr. Gabbett & Mr. Foose
Nays:
Ineligible:
Abstain:
Absent: Mr. Sweeney

Designation of Meeting Dates

On motion by Ms. Amin, seconded by Mr. Weideli, the Board voted to adopt the meeting dates based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicat,
Mr. Vescio, Mr. Gabbett & Mr. Foose
Nays:
Ineligible:
Abstain:
Absent: Mr. Sweeney

Designation of Official Newspapers

On motion by Mr. Weideli, seconded by Mr. Bongiorno, the Board voted to designate the official newspapers as the Courier News & Star Ledger based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicat,
Mr. Vescio, Mr. Gabbett & Mr. Foose
Nays:
Ineligible:
Abstain:
Absent: Mr. Sweeney

With there being no other business, the Reorganization portion of the meeting was closed. Chairman Foose called to order the Regular Meeting.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting specifying the time, place and manner in which such notice was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, eq. Specifically, on April 19, 2023 proper notice was sent to the Courier News and the Star-Ledger and filed with the Clerk at the Township of Bridgewater and posted on the Municipal bulletin board. Please be aware of the Zoning Board of Adjustment policy for public hearings: No new applications will be heard after 9:30 pm and no new testimony will be taken after 10:00 pm. Hearing Assistance is available upon request. Accommodation will be made for individuals with a disability, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), provided the individual with the disability provides 48 hours advance notice to the Planning Department Secretary before the public meeting. However, if the individual should require special equipment or services, such as a CART transcriber, seven days advance notice, excluding weekends and holidays, may be necessary.

3. SALUTE TO FLAG

4. ROLL CALL

5. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER/MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Members of the public wishing to address the Board on any matter not listed on the agenda may do so at this time.

6. BOARD MINUTES

November 26, 2024 Regular Meeting

On motion by Mr. Weideli, seconded by Ms. Amin, the Board voted to adopt the minutes as presented based on the following roll call vote:

- Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,
Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Kulak, Mr. Sicut,
Mr. Vescio & Chairman Foose
- Nays:
- Ineligible:
- Abstain: Mr. Gabbett
- Absent: Mr. Sweeney

7. RESOLUTIONS

Application # 24-024-ZB ; Assante & Prokopczyk
Block 906, Lot 47 (10 Assante Lane)

On motion by Mr. Weideli, seconded by Mr. Bongiorno, the Board voted to adopt the resolution as amended based on the following roll call vote:

- Ayes: Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski,

Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Sicat, & Chairman Foose

Nays:

Ineligible: Mr. Kulak, Mr. Vescio & Mr. Gabbett

Abstain:

Absent: Mr. Sweeney

8. LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Application #23-011-ZB; 1200 Route 22 Land Investors & 1200 Route 22 LLC Holding Block 221; Lots 1.02, 1.03, 1.04, 2 & 2.01 (1210 & 1220 Route 22)
Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval with D Variance(s), Bulk Variance(s)

This application was carried to the February 11, 2025 Regular Meeting for scheduling purposes only.

Application #24-021-ZB; Visions & Pathways Block 508, Lot 4.01; 8 Third Ave.
Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan w/ Variances

This application has been carried to the February 11, 2025 Regular meeting without further notice, for scheduling purposes only.

Application #24-005-ZB; 821 Bridgewater LLC & JCC of Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Block 477, Lot 45&46 (821 & 831 Route 202-206)
D(1), D(4), D(5) Variances

This application has been carried to the February 25, 2025 Regular meeting without further notice for scheduling purposes only.

Application #23-014-ZB; CX Towers Block 163, Lot 6.01 (719 Route 202)
Preliminary & Major Final Site Plan with D Variance, C Variance (s)

This application was carried to the March 11, 2025 Regular Meeting pending new notice.

Application #23-010-ZB; Bellie Holdings LLC Block 249, Lot 40 (19-21 Mount Pleasant Ave)
D Variances, Bulk Variances

This application was carried to the March 11, 2025 Regular meeting pending new notice.

Application #23-023-ZB; Bridgewater Realty II LLC (Starbucks) Block 222, Lot 6.01 (1288 & 1298 Rt. 22 & Morgan Lane)
Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan, Use Variance, Bulk Variances

This application was carried to the March 11, 2025 Regular Meeting pending new notice for scheduling purposes only.

**Application #24-011-ZB; St. Bernard of Clairvaux
Block 400, Lot 26; 551 Route 28**
Preliminary & Final Site Plan, D Variance, C Variances

This application was carried to the February 25, 2025 Regular Meeting without further notice.

**Application #24-028-ZB; Paul Miller Auto Group
Block 559, Lot 5.02; Route 22 West)**
Preliminary and Final Site Plan with Bulk Variance and D(1) Use Variance

Summary: Use Variance with associated bulk variances to permit new automotive dealership.

This application was carried to the January 28, 2025 Regular Meeting pending new notice for scheduling purposes only.

**Application #24-009-ZB; Gurmukh Oil, LLC
Block 319, Lot 8; 24 FINDERNE AVE.**
Amended Site Plan, D Variances, Bulk Variances

Summary: Expansion of pre-existing, non-conforming gas station use with addition of new food mart.

This application was carried to the March 25, 2025 Regular Meeting without further notice.

**Application #24-016-ZB; Cravatts
Block 703, Lot 12; 1823 Middle Road**

Mr. Mark Cravatts and Ms. Mary Ellen Cravatts were present to represent their application. Sworn testimony was provided by Roger Grutzmacher, Professional Architect.

Mr. Grutzmacher described the three proposed additions to the house and stated the applicant needs a variance for the rear yard setback of 75.67'. He described the rear yard as dense shrubbery and advised the residence on Ridge Rd. is an additional 80' from the applicant's residence.

Mr. Grutzmacher displayed the first-floor plan and described it in detail. He identified the right-side addition for the primary bedroom suite. He identified the left side addition to add additional garage space. Lastly, he identified the kitchen expansion addition.

Mr. Grutzmacher reviewed the joint memo issued by Mr. Burr and Ms. Sarmad and discussed drainage and stormwater runoff. Mr. Grutzmacher then opined that the granting of the variance does not create any detriment to the public good.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Grutzmacher confirmed the existing shed will conform with the required setbacks.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Cravatt's described the proposed additions and advised the curb appeal won't be changing much. Mr. Grutzmacher compared the proposed residence to existing residences in the neighborhood. He then proposed square footage of the house is approximately 6,528 SF.

Chairman Foose opened the meeting to the public for questions and comments. With there being no questions or comments from the public, this portion of the meeting was closed.

Mr. Grutzmacher provided a brief summation of the project. Mr. Oller reviewed conditions for the resolution and the Board deliberated.

On motion by Mr. Gayeski, the Board voted to approve the application, with conditions, based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski, Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Sicat, & Chairman Foose
Nays:	
Ineligible:	Mr. Kulak, Mr. Vescio & Mr. Gabbett
Abstain:	
Absent:	Mr. Sweeney

**Application #24-017-ZB; O'Brien
Block 602, Lot 12; 1397 Coriell Drive**

Mr. Christopher O'Brien was present to represent his application. Sworn testimony was provided by Mr. David Stires, Professional Engineer and Mr. Tom Mannino, Professional Architect. Exhibits were entered as follows:

- A1 1-14-25 Sheet 2 of Variance Plan**
- A2 1-14-25 11x17 Architectural Drawings & Renderings**
- A3 Photo Sim View from the Driveway**
- A4 1-14-25 Right Side Elevation**

Mr. O'Brien advised his residence burned in a fire in 2023 and the family was displaced. He advised the purpose of the application is to make changes to the residence resulting in a rear yard setback variance and FAR variance. He then identified the preexisting nonconformities of the lot.

Mr. O'Brien introduced Mr. David Stires as his Professional Engineer. He was sworn and accepted by the Board.

Mr. Stires oriented the Board to the subject lot using exhibit **A1 1-14-25 Sheet 2 of Variance Plan**. Mr. Stires indicated the removal of the driveway area that reduces the ILC as well as the rear patio that will be restructured.

Mr. Stires reiterated the preexisting conditions of the lot and identified the variances requested due to the expansion of the residence. Mr. Stires identified the FAR variance the applicant is

requesting to build the 3,193 SF residence. This number includes the garage which is not supposed to be included under the Township ordinances.

Mr. Stires reviewed the joint memo issued by Mr. Burr and Ms. Sarmad. He then reviewed the steep slopes ordinance and drainage for the site in detail.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Stires described the history of Sunset Lake, describing it as a previous vacation area with smaller residences and uncommonly shaped lots.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Stires advised the driveway to be expanded to line up with the proposed garage.

Chairman Foose opened the meeting to the public for questions.

Ms. Debbie Perez of 1396 Catalpa Drive, Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Perez advised the garage could not be switched to the opposite side of the residence due to safety concerns. Ms. Perez spoke in favor of the application and Chairman Foose advised Ms. Perez to participate in the public comment portion.

With there being no further questions from the public, the Board closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. O'Brien introduced Mr. Tom Mannino as the Professional Architect. He was sworn and accepted by the Board.

Mr. Mannino used exhibit **A1 1-14-25 Sheet 2 of Variance Plan** to discuss landscaping.

Mr. Mannino introduced drawing A1 of the submitted package. He used the drawing to orient the Board to proposed residence and identify the proposed expansion. Mr. Mannino described the proposed home as a split-level residence. He then used drawing A2 to identify the new sunroom area.

Mr. Mannino introduced exhibit **A2 1-14-25 11x17 Architectural Drawings & Renderings** and described them for the Board.

Mr. Mannino then introduced and described exhibit **A3 Photo Sim View from the Driveway** in detail.

Mr. Mannino introduced exhibit **A4 1-14-25 Right Side Elevation** and described the area that will become the sunroom and primary bedroom on the second floor. He then described the materials to be used, describing the proposed residence as a "modern farmhouse."

Mr. Mannino reviewed the joint report prepared by Mr. Burr and Ms. Sarmad and stated the proposed residence will stay within the existing footprint of the home except for the proposed garage addition. The increased FAR comes from the proposed second floor addition.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Mannino described the proposed steps that were relocated to create an additional parking space within the garage.

Chairman Foose opened the meeting to the public for questions. With there being no questions from the public, the Board closed this portion of the meeting.

Chairman Foose opened the meeting to the public for comments. Chairman Foose announced that there were approximately 10 families/neighbors that showed support for the application. With no member of the public wishing to speak, the Board closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Oller reviewed conditions for the resolution and the Board deliberated.

On motion by Mr. Weideli, seconded by Mr. Fresco, the Board voted to approve the application, with conditions, based on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	Mr. Weideli, Ms. Amin, Mr. Fresco, Mr. Gayeski, Mr. Bongiorno, Mr. Sicat, & Chairman Foose
Nays:	
Ineligible:	Mr. Kulak, Mr. Vescio & Mr. Gabbett
Abstain:	
Absent:	Mr. Sweeney

9. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

There was no other Board Business.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted



Jo-Ann M. Ricks
Board Secretary Certified

