

**VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Meeting Minutes
FEBRUARY 24, 2026**

Opening:

The public meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Village of Ridgewood was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

Present: Greg Brown, Matthew Bandelt, Diana Ruhl, Jonathan Papietro, Jamie Fox, Jason Curreri (7:41 p.m.), Yelena Raytser (7:44 p.m.) and Matthew Swan were present. Also present were Bruce Whitaker, Esq., Board Attorney (via phone), John Barree, Village Planner, and Jane Wondergem, Board Secretary.

The minutes from February 10, 2026 were adopted.

Non-agenda items:

Board member comments – There were no comments at this time.

Members of the public comments – There were no comments at this time.

Public hearings:

Mr. Brown announced that the **Licare**, 153 John Street, application was carried to March 24, 2026 without further notice.

PAVAN RAYABARAPU & RAJANI NOMULA – An application to permit the construction of a new single family dwelling, on the existing foundation, which would result in a front yard of 38 feet and 34.9 feet, to the covered porch, where 40 feet is the minimum required, and would result in a rear yard of 11 feet where 30 feet is the minimum required. The expansion of the driveway and proposed retaining walls and fence which will result in a combined height of 11 feet, where 4 feet is the maximum permitted at 370 Upper Boulevard, Block 1910, Lot 3, in an R-2 Zone. (Continued from December 9, 2025; Carried from February 10, 2026 without further notice)

Ms. Raytser recused herself from this application.

Matthew Capizzi, Esq., was present on behalf of the applicants and went over the revisions, variances and improvements to be made.

Sean McClellan, Engineer, was previously sworn. Mr. McClellan testified regarding the revisions made on the site plan he prepared and went over the non-conformities and variances being sought. Mr. McClellan measured the distances of the neighboring homes for the property line and from the proposed addition, explaining that the lot is undersized.

There were no questions from the Board members or professionals.

There were no questions from the public.

Douglas Battersby was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Battersby testified regarding the plans prepared by Jordan Rosenberg, going over the elevation drawings, revised to January 26, 2026, showing the change from a gable roof to a hip roof and raising the first floor ceiling, but not the building height.

There were no questions from the Board members or professionals.

There were no questions from the public.

Christopher Karach, landscape architect, was previously sworn. Mr. Karach testified regarding the revised drawings, specifically about the driveway retaining walls, the fence and the planting.

Board members asked about the setback of the plants on Glen Avenue. Mr. Karach stated they were set back 14 feet on top of the wall.

There were no questions from the public.

Alexander McClean was sworn and his credentials as a Professional Planner accepted. Mr. McClean testified regarding his review process, described the property, the lot size and how it is undersized. Mr.

Mr. McClean identified the variances and went over the positive and negative criteria. Mr. McClean testified that there would be no negative impact on the neighbors.

There were no questions from the Board members or professionals.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Capizzi made closing remarks.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Bandelt made a motion to approve the application, Mr. Fox seconded and the application was approved.

New Business:

Ms. Raytser returned to the meeting.

WEI CAI – An application to permit the construction of an attic dormer which would result in a front yard setback on John Street of 22.4 feet where 40 feet is required; a front yard setback on Fairway Road of 43.6 feet where 45 feet is required; and a rear yard setback of 9.1 feet where 30 feet is required at 152 John Street, Block 3406, Lot 8, in an R-2 Zone.

James Delia, Esq., entered his appearance on behalf of the applicant and made opening remarks.

Po Yi Wu was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Wu testified regarding the plans he prepared. Mr. Wu identified the setbacks of the dormer and the

variances being sought as he went over the zoning table. Mr. Wu stated that there are no coverage variances and the setback variances are within the existing footprint.

Mr. Barree pointed out that the lot is more undersized than what was testified as the required front yard setback on Fairway Road would be 45 feet.

Mr. Barree asked if Mr. Wu had considered centering the dormer for aesthetic purposes and eliminating the setback variance on Fairway Road. Mr. Wu said the dormer could be moved 3 feet which would center it over the porch.

Board members asked if the dormer could have one larger window instead of two. Mr. Wu said that would not work with the floor plan. Board members asked why the dormer was not put on the back of the house. Mr. Wu explained that if the dormer were moved to the back, the stairs would also need to be moved.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Delia made closing remarks.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Bandelt made a motion to approve the application with the condition that the dormer is centered and revised plans are submitted. Mr. Brown seconded and the application was approved with five yes votes to two no votes.

GREGORY & VICTORIA IANNAcone – An application to permit the modification of the driveway which would result in a driveway width of 37 feet, where 25 feet is the maximum permitted at 178 N. Pleasant Avenue, Block 3402, Lot 7, in an R-2 Zone.

Mr. Bandelt recused himself from this application.

Gregory Iannacone, homeowner, was sworn.

Roger Schlicht was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Schlicht testified regarding the plans he prepared stating that the garage is being replaced with no variances. Mr. Schlicht explained the existing non-conforming patio is being modified. The driveway is being modified to have a turnaround to provide safe egress. Mr. Schlicht stated that the coverage by improvements will be reduced overall but will still exceed what is permitted. The curb cut will be conforming at a width of 20 feet.

Board members asked if they would be willing to plant arborvitaes around the k-turn. Mr. Iannacone stipulated that he would.

Mr. Iannacone testified regarding the traffic and queuing up on Linwood Avenue and the safety concerns.

Board members asked about the existing trees and if they will remain. Mr. Schlicht said they would not be removed.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Brown made a motion to approve with the conditions discussed, Mr. Fox seconded and the application was approved.

HENRY & MEGHAN KILLIAN – An application permit the construction of two-story and second story additions, open front porch, rear landing and steps, front walkway, extended driveway and rear patio, cellar door, generator and new a/c units which would result in a building height of 31.25 feet, where 30 feet is permitted, and side yard setback of 14.1 feet to the addition, and 13.88 feet to the porch, where 21.61 feet is required; side yard setback to the cellar door of 7.75 feet and 9 feet to the generator and a/c units, where 10 feet is required at 757 Hillcrest Road, Block 1404, Lot 21, in an R-1 Zone.

Henry Killian, homeowner, was sworn.

Jeffrey Gasnick was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Gasnick testified regarding the plans he prepared. Mr. Gasnick identified the variances being sought, explaining that the height of the addition is proposed to be 31.25 feet which is lower than the existing building height. The side yard setback variances are for the distance to the cellar door, the air conditioning units and the generator.

Mr. Gasnick identified the hardships as the location of the existing dwelling which is non-compliant, the deficient lot width and the existing building height.

Mr. Gasnick submitted a volumetric diagram to explain the layout of the proposed additions.

Mr. Gasnick testified that the proposed improvements conform to all other bulk requirements and went over the zoning table.

Mr. Barree explained that the side yard setback variances for the basement door and the mechanical equipment are separate variances according to Village Code.

Board members expressed concern regarding the bilco door and asked if an egress window could be used instead. Mr. Gasnick explained that the bilco door makes access to the basement easier. Board members were concerned about the noise of the air-conditioning units and the generator.

Mr. Gasnick said the basement door would be eliminated and explained that the generator would only be used for emergencies. The applicant agreed to plant around the mechanical equipment.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Bandelt made a motion to approve the application with the conditions discussed and that the porch would never be enclosed or screened. Mr. Fox seconded and the application was approved.

TES TJ REALTY LLC – An application to add signage for a tenant space with a common entrance where it is not permitted at 45 North Broad Street, Block 3804, Lot 23, in a B-1 Zone.

Benjamin Wine, Esq., entered his appearance on behalf of the applicant and made opening remarks explaining that they are proposing a second commercial sign where one is permitted. Mr. Wine explained that they applied to

Marcella Traina was sworn and her credentials as a professional planner accepted. Ms. Traina testified regarding a photo exhibit, marked as Exhibit A-1. Ms. Traina described the property on North Broad Street and used Google Map photos from October 2015, which showed signage on both store fronts at 45 N. Broad Street, and a photo from July 2025 showing the sign existing on the storefront. Photos of 7 North Broad Street shows a pattern of signs.

Ms. Traina testified that it would be detrimental for the business not to be permitted to have a sign.

Mr. Barree asked if the window signage would be removed. Mr. Wine said it would.

Board members asked if a second sign was being approved for this tenant only or if they would need to come back for future tenant signs. Mr. Barree said that his opinion would be that if the sign band would be permitted, a future tenant would not need to come back to the Board what would need to go to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Board members commented that having two similar signs would be preferred aesthetically, as shown on the photos of 7 North Broad Street.

Board members asked if they were looking at the store on the left or the right. Mr. Wine stated that the existing sign shown on July 2025 photo was moved to the storefront on the left and the proposed sign is for the storefront on the right.

There was Board discussion and it was determined that the Board is not opposed to the second sign being permitted. Mr. Whitaker said the second sign would run with the land, and the Board could pose conditions that regarding size and color. Mr. Barree explained what Village Code permits regarding size and that the proposed sign conforms.

Following further discussion and a poll of Board members, they want to see an architectural balance of the signs and similar color.

Mr. Wine proposed that the new sign be the bronze color discussed by the Board members, but that the existing 'My Third Base' sign be permitted to remain until that tenant leaves or changes their sign.

John LoRusso, property owner, was sworn. Mr. LoRusso said he would speak to the current tenant about changing their sign, and will ensure that any future tenant will be required to use the vintage sign style.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Following Board deliberation, Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the application with the condition that a revised sign be submitted for review by the Site Plan Committee. Mr. Bandelt seconded and the application was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Minutes submitted by:
Jane Wondergem, Board Secretary

Date Approved: March 24, 2026