



# Village of Saranac Lake

Community Development Department

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**DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
MEETING AGENDA 5:00PM  
TUESDAY, January 14, 2025**

**This meeting will be held in the Village Board Room and may be viewed through ZOOM Enter at the side door of the building, 39 Main Street**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5184919884?pwd=Nk5ISVZQNjgvdS9tbitMZG93M2xZUT09>

Meeting ID: 518 491 9884

Passcode: 704556

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Development Board Members:**

Elias Pelletieri, Chairperson, Present

Bill Domenico, Present

Meg Cantwell-Jackson, Present

Dan Reilly, Present

Rick Weber, Present

KT Stiles, Alternate, Present

## **A. Approval of Minutes**

### **Elias Pelletieri opened the meeting at 5:00pm.**

- Motion to approve December 3, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes by Domenico, seconded by Weber. Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.  
Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; Weber, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, meeting minutes approved.

## **B. Application of: Mark Legeza and Michaelle Chojnacki, 67 Old Military Road, Tax Map #32.150-1-17.000, Area Variance Application**

Mr. Legaza gives a project overview, stating that he is looking for 14.5 ft relief to the side yard setback/property line. He continues to review the criteria for an area variance, and proposing why an area variance should be given.

1. A detriment to the nearby properties.
  - a. Mr. Legaza states that it is not a detriment and according to the last meeting the neighbors advocated for it. Many other properties are near or on the property line. This addition will be nearly invisible to the street.
2. Will there be any other benefit?
  - a. Currently landscaping and outdoor equipment is stored outside and is aesthetically unpleasing. Potential for a 3<sup>rd</sup> bedroom or storage area. Potential for a larger family to live there in the future. This addition would result in increased taxes for the village.
3. Environmental impact.
  - a. Mr. Legaza states there is no impact. All other areas would cause an environmental impact.
4. Positioning.

- a. Location A is the Northside. It is too large in front of the house. Not attractive to neighborhood and would need to go through the garage to get in. It would be built on the current driveway so less parking would become available and it is environmentally unfriendly.
- b. Location B is the Westside, uphill touching the house at the toe of Mount Pisgah. Excavation is pricey and a lot of excavation with the instability. Up North, Down South quotes \$336,000 to build there. It would destroy the views for the neighbors. Four windows would be blocked and the property value would be decreased. It would still be 5 feet from the property line too.
  - i. Bill commented that this quote does not seem accurate. Michaelle commented that it was hard getting contracts without the variance. Dan said that is not outrageous for the cost of excavation and he is not surprised. He disagrees with Bill.
- c. Location C is behind the house, facing Park Ave. Mr. Legaza states this shouldn't be entertained because it is too steep.
- d. Location D is on the Eastside, which is the desired location. The architect advocates this location. It has minimal impact, privacy for neighbors, improves the flow of the current building. If it is moved closer, it would remove the breezeway, costing about \$273,000 because the entire structure and foundation would completely change. An additional \$150,000 for that location and it would lose the pantry and large doors. Dan said there is no location that doesn't require a variance.

### **Public Hearing**

- Public Hearing for the Application of: Mark Legeza and Michaelle Chojnacki, 67 Old Military Rd., area variance application seeking approval of side yard setback variance (14.5ft relief request) to build a garage addition to primary residence, Tax Map Parcel #32.150-1-17.000.
  - Motion to open the public hearing by Domenico Second: Cantell-Jackson Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.  
Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; Weber, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing opened.

Betsy Durranger, a neighbor, moved into the "sunshine" cottage many years ago and she loves the community and the neighbors. She states that the addition would block the sunlight if this is built as a 2 story. She would like it to be one story. The addition will change her quality of life.

- Motion to close the public hearing by Weber Second: Reilly Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.  
Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; Weber, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing closed.

### **Board Action**

- Application of: Mark Legeza and Michaelle Chojnacki, 67 Old Military Rd., area variance application seeking approval of side yard setback variance (14.5ft relief request) to build a garage addition to primary residence, Tax Map Parcel #32.150-1-17.000.

Chairman Pelletieri states that there are 5 criteria listed by the state for reviewing an area variance.

1. Undesirable change in the neighborhood.
  - a. Dan comments no.
  - b. Bill says there are already many not conforming homes in the area. Granting a variance seems appropriate, so yes.
  - c. Rick said there's a zero-lot line because to him 6 inches is still on the line and it is a concern for the neighborhood and height is an issue.

- d. Allie said no, a neighborhood is the people not the buildings. It is undesirable as 2 stories.
  - e. Meg stated that the property is very tight and the neighbor's thoughts should be considered.
2. Alternative to variance.
    - a. Bill said if cost was not an issue, then yes, there are. Estimates are very high, but he wouldn't go with the other estimates. There are no realistic alternatives.
    - b. Rick said that the applicant looked at the other alternatives and made a good effort in showing this. Finding the alternatives of the building mass have not been explored and the pricing is high. The preferred is least expensive and most feasible.
    - c. Allie commented that the applicant did a good job at looking at the alternatives. The bids look high, but it is hard to get people to look. Still falling on the other variance.
    - d. Meg agrees that they had proved their point with the higher bids.
    - e. Dan said no.
  3. Substantial Variance.
    - a. Rick says yes, technically substantial. Significant ask of use of a side yard.
    - b. Allie says it is substantial, due to other points it is but all other alternatives are as well.
    - c. Meg says yes.
    - d. Dan says no, because the height is separate from variance request. It affects no one but 3 people that share the driveway. This is the best spot for a garage and the neighbors want it.
    - e. Bill says it is an area variance vs a use variance. Technically, this question may not matter on the outcome.
  4. The impact on the environment.
    - a. Allie says no impact. Meg says it has the least impact, does have impact on the neighbor.
    - b. Dan says no.
    - c. Bill says the building site is not impactful. If anything, it would be small and minimal.
    - d. Rick said no adverse effect and the preferred location is the least.
  5. Self-created difficulty.
    - a. Meg says yes.
    - b. Dan says no, he addresses this well tonight.
    - c. Bill says technically yes.
    - d. Rick says yes but against other criteria, least weighted.
    - e. Allie says yes, but doesn't hold weight.
    - f. Meg agrees. All agree that it is self-created but think it shouldn't weigh it down.

The group further discusses the above criteria.

- Rick said the development board granting any variances should preserve, protect neighborhood and welfare of the community. Now it is the height concern, not as much of the footprint. Everything else is fine and unique to the character.
- Allie agrees with Rick that it may be better as a flat roof or slightly pitched roof. Meg said they could do a rubber roof. Allie said they could grant with a lower roof and as proposed.
- Rick suggests with a condition of 2 story lowered. Allie makes a motion to accept the project as is except for the height of the roof being lowered to 1.5. Dan Seconds the motion. Everyone in favor besides Rick.
  - Area Variances are a Type 2 action pursuant to SEQR. No further SEQR decision is required.
  - Motion to approve the Area Variance for a side yard principle building addition with condition to lower the height of the roof to 1.5.  
Motion: Pelletieri seconded by: Reilly  
Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.  
Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; Weber, no; and Pelletieri, yes.  
Declaration moved.

### C. Application of: Chairman Properties, LLC, Minor Subdivision for Tax Map #: 32.295-1-23.000

#### **Board Action**

- Application of: Chairman Properties, LLC, Minor Subdivision for Tax Map #: 32.295-1-23.000
  - No Board Action – Preliminary Review

This project consists of dividing a parcel into 3 separate parcels, inclusive of wetlands. The applicant wanted to present to the board to give them a chance to see it. There would be one house on each lot.

Lot 1:

- 1 acre in size, all public water and sewer proposed.

Lot 2:

- Turtle pond road access, about 12 acres.

Lot 3: 12.7 acres, with access off of Edward Street with building. Some steep slopes on that lot.

All proposed parcels will meet property setbacks. There is a trail on the property. Allie said that Lot 3 would need amended permit with the Development Board and the APA. The applicant agrees that he would get approval from the APA first, then Development Board. That would be the purchases responsibility. Bill says the applicant did an excellent job and was worried about it at first but believes there is value to larger lots in the Village. Rick appreciated the effort put into the details in Lot 3.

### D. Application of: Bramble & Thorne, Site Plan Review for Tax Map #: 447.69-7-17

This application consists of a Wine Bar on Woodruff Street. There are no variations to setbacks and they are using the existing building. Katrina commented that two businesses are permitted and parking is not required in this district. Isabella, the applicant, states that it is a wine bar in Scott's Florist. Ideal for date nights, a friend's gathering location and she states that the current space is underused. Katrina says they are already working with the Department of Health and the Liquor Authority.

#### **Public Hearing**

- Public Hearing for the Application of: Bramble & Thorne, Site Plan Review for Tavern for Tax Map #: 447.69-7-17
  - Motion to open the public hearing by Reilly Second: Cantwell-Jackson  
Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.  
Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Weber, yes; Reilly, yes; Stiles, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing opened.

Alex, the Director of the Youth Center, said she appreciates the florist owner and she asked the Youth Center kids about the next door expansion. Alec stated that she was more concerned and now after hearing a bit more about the project and it's purpose, she feels better about it being close to the Youth Center and the safety of the kids.

- Motion to close the public hearing by Stiles Second: Weber  
Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.  
Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Weber, yes; Reilly, yes; Stiles, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing closed.

#### **Board Action**

- Application of: Bramble & Thorne, Site Plan Review for Tavern for Tax Map #:447.69-7-17

Allie said that the design standards in this district does not require parking but they have plenty of it. He also states the need for a bike rack. Isabella responds saying that she can add a bike rack, there are plenty of spaces there.

Allie discusses the need for a pedestrian sidewalk across the front of the building and to the road.

Rick asks about the signage. Isabella had a mock up in the photos sent over. Any additional signage she will reach out to Chris McClatchie, code enforcement. Katrina said that Franklin County approved the signage and is pending our approval. Allie motions to approve the project with the condition to put a sidewalk across the front and side of the property and add a bike rack. Rick seconds, All in Favor.

- Motion to approve the Site Plan application with conditions to put a sidewalk across the front and side of the property and add a bike rack

Motion: Pelletieri seconded by: Weber

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Weber, yes; Reilly, yes; Stiles, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

#### **E. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **F. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **G. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Reilly Second: Stiles

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Cantwell-Jackson, yes; Weber, yes; Reilly, yes; Stiles, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Meeting was officially adjourned at 6:53 PM

Meeting Minutes prepared by; Community Development Assistant, Bayle Reichert