

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF RIDGEFIELD**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**September 7, 2022**

**NOTE:** These minutes are intended as a rough outline of the web-based Zoom proceedings of the Board of Appeals on Zoning of Ridgefield held on September 7, 2022. Copies of recordings of the meeting may be obtained from the Administrator.

The Chairman called the web-based special meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. Sitting on the Board for the evening were: Terry Bearden-Rettger, Sky Cole, Mark Seavy, Joseph Pastore and Robert Byrnes.

**ROTATION OF ALTERNATES**

The rotation for the meeting was first, Mr. Lockwood; second, Mr. Stenko; third Mr. Byrnes. Mr. Fincham was unable to attend the meeting. Since Mr. Byrnes was present for the August 1 meeting, he sat for Mr. Fincham for the continued hearing and the new application. Thus, the rotation for the next meeting will be: first, Mr. Lockwood; second, Mr. Stenko; third Mr. Brynes.

**CONTINUED APPLICATION**

**Application 22-015**

**Thomas Montanari, d/b/a 58 Prospect Ridge LLC**  
**58 Prospect Ridge and 62 East Ridge**

Mr. Montanari appeared for his application along with his attorney Ward Mazzucco and architect Jeff Mose. Mr. Mazzucco shared with the Board a submitted tax map that showed the surrounding lots, many of which were high density dwelling units, some created under the 8-30G rule. Mr. Mazzucco stated that the presence of these high-density surrounding units made 58 Prospect Ridge no longer practical as a single-family property. The proposed 5 units on the lot was a more practical future use for the lot. Mr. Mazzucco listed other options for the property including a zone change which could be considered spot zoning. Mr. Montanari could apply for an 830-G application for the property but he feared a domino effect for the neighborhood, creating numerous high density lots. The proposed plans for 5 units on the lot, along with the existing house on 62 East Ridge, would create a transition buffer lot between the higher density lots. Mr. Mazzucco stated 58 Prospect Ridge and 62 East Ridge proximity to these surrounding high density lots was a hardship and justifies the granting of the requested variances.

Architect Jeff Mose presented a submitted video of the proposed plans for the 5 units from the East Ridge entrance. He stated the new units are somewhat hidden from the existing Victorian home currently on the lot at 62 East Ridge. One of the 5 units planned was already a converted barn structure on 58 Prospect Ridge. That converted barn unit did not meet the setbacks, but all new proposed units do meet the setback. Each unit was approximately 2500-2700 sq ft. with garages. Mr. Montanari stated that his family has owned the properties for 76 years.

Mr. Cole asked for the hardships to be explained. Mr. Mazzucco stated that there was no uniformity of uses in the surrounding lots and the property was no longer suitable for a single-family residence. The impact of the high-density surrounding properties was the hardship. Mr. Pastore asked if there was any case law that supported this hardship. Mr. Mazzucco replied he was not aware of any case law. Ms. Bearden-Rettger asked if a lot subdivision was discussed with the planning and zoning commission. The applicants replied that the property would be considered a condominium complex. Mr. Montannari confirmed that the accessway to the properties off on 58 Prospect Ridge would be kept.

Steve Zemo, the owner of several of the surrounding 830-G properties appeared. Mr. Zemo asked if any of the planned units were deemed affordable. Mr. Montanari replied they were not to be affordable. Mr. Zemo asked if the coverage totals submitted included the driveways and if wetlands were flagged in the rear of the lot. Mr. Mose replied that if

the project was approved by the Board, there were still many more layers of approval within the Town to complete the project.

No one appeared to speak for or against the application and the hearing was concluded. A decision can be found at the end of these minutes.

**NEW APPLICATION**

**Application 22-019**  
**Chris Ferrara**  
**20 South Shore Drive**

Architect William O’Neil appeared on behalf of the applicant. Mr. O’Neil stated they were adding an addition to an existing house and the overhang on one corner of the addition would fall into the setback. The lot was 1.27 acres in the RAAA zone with a required 50 ft setback. The submitted survey showed the overhang at 48.3 from the setback, but Mr. O’Neil requested a 2’ variance be granted.

No one appeared to speak for or against the application and the hearing was concluded. A decision can be found at the end of these minutes.

**DECISIONS**

**Application 22-015**  
**Thomas Montanari, d/b/a 58 Prospect Ridge LLC**  
**58 Prospect Ridge and 62 East Ridge**

REQUESTED: Variances of Sections, 3.5.C., density, 3.5.F., maximum lot coverage, 3.5.G., maximum floor area ratio, 3.5.H., setbacks, and 3.2.C.5, interior lot and accessway, to allow 5 single-family homes on a lot that will not meet the dimensions standards listed; for properties in the RA zone located at 58 Prospect Ridge and 62 East Ridge.

DATES OF HEARING: July 6, August 1, September 7, 2022  
DATE OF DECISION: September 7, 2022

VOTED: To Deny, variances of Sections, 3.5.C., density, 3.5.F., maximum lot coverage, 3.5.G., maximum floor area ratio, 3.5.H., setbacks, and 3.2.C.5, interior lot and accessway, to allow 5 single-family homes on a lot that will not meet the dimensions standards listed; for properties in the RA zone located at 58 Prospect Ridge and 62 East Ridge.

VOTE: To Grant: 0 To Deny: 4 To Abstain: 1  
In favor Abstaining  
Bearden-Rettger, Byrnes, Pastore  
Cole, Seavy

The Board voted this action for the following reasons:

1. The hardships presented to the Board by the applicant did not justify the granting of the variances sought in this application. The Board felt that alternatives exist with the Planning and Zoning department to pursue the project.

Application 22-019  
Chris Ferrara  
20 South Shore Drive

REQUESTED: a variance of Section 3.5.H., setbacks, to allow an addition with roof overhangs that are located within the minimum yard setback; for property in the RAAA zone located at 20 South Shore Drive.

DATE OF HEARING: September 7, 2022  
DATE OF DECISION: September 7, 2022

VOTED: To Grant, a variance of Section 3.5.H., setbacks, to allow an addition with roof overhangs 2' within the minimum yard setback; for property in the RAAA zone located at 20 South Shore Drive.

VOTE: To Grant: 5 To Deny:

In favor  
Bearden-Rettger, Byrnes  
Cole, Pastore, Seavy

Opposed

As there was no further business before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the hearing at approximately 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Kelly Ryan*  
Administrator