

The Northampton Zoning Board
Minutes of Meeting
January 11, 2024

Zoning Board Meeting 5:30 PM VIA ZOOM Teleconference

Members Present:		Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	David Bloomberg, Chair,	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sara Northrup, Vice Chair	5:35pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Silver, Member	5:30pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maureen Scanlon, Associate Member	5:30pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sherry Taylor, Associate Member	5:31pm
Staff Present		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carolyn Misch, Director, Office of Planning and Sustainability	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nathan Chung, Land Use Planner, Office of Planning and Sustainability	5:30pm

Quorum of three people required for the hearing achieved.

Others present were Felix Harvey, the owner-applicant of 24 Corticelli St; Louise and Michael Martindell, owners of 198 Nonotuck St; Mitch Parker, applicant for 198 Nonotuck St.

Documents shared for hearings: 198 Nonotuck St Plot Plan (Sheet 7 of the submitted site plan), staff photo of 198 Nonotuck St.

5:35 PM Elizabeth Silver started the meeting and introduced board members Maureen Scanlon and Sherry Taylor. Silver opened for general public comments not about the specific agenda item. There was **no** public comment. Nathan Chung added that the meeting is being Video Recorded.

5:35 PM The applicant for the Special Permit for 24 Corticelli St asked for continuance to 2/22/2024. The applicant proposed to convert the attached left-side garage of a two-family home with a nonconforming left-side setback of ~6' into an additional living space and to add a deck with a left-side setback of ~9' behind the garage by Felix Harvey at 24 Corticelli St, Map ID 22B-037. Hearing Publication Dates were December 28, 2023 and January 4, 2024.

5:37 PM Sara Northrup joined the meeting.

Scanlon made the motion to continue the public hearing to 2/22/2024 at 5:45pm. Taylor seconded. The board composed of Silver, Scanlon, and Taylor unanimously voted yes by roll call.

5:43 PM Board reviewed the minutes for the hearing on 12/14/2023. Scanlon proposed corrections. Chung and Silver explained Silver's proposed revision which has a more detailed description than the initial draft about the discussion on whether the applicant is using the 129 Riverbank Rd addition for storage.

Scanlon made the motion to approve the minutes with amendments. Northrup seconded. The board unanimously voted yes by roll call.

5:50 PM Scanlon recused herself from the next special permit hearing for 198 Nonotuck St. Sherry Taylor was voting instead.

5:50 PM Northrup opened the public hearing for the Special Permit to extend a single-family house and reduce its nonconforming right-side setback from ~9' to ~5' by Valley Home Improvement at 198 Nonotuck St, Florence, Map ID 23A-290. Hearing Publication Dates were December 28, 2023 and January 4, 2024.

Mitch Parker, the vice president of the applicant Valley Home Improvement at 340 Riverside Dr. in Florence, presented. The applicant was the owners' contractor. Parker described the proposed living space and bedroom addition. Parker explained not being able to add the addition on the left side of the house due to the driveway being there and needing to put the addition on the right side instead, which reduces the nonconforming side setback from 9' to 5'. Silver asked to confirm that the setbacks were measured from the eaves using survey pins. Parker confirmed.

Chung shared Sheet 7 of the submitted site plan showing the proposed changes.

The board and staff noted that there was a written comment from neighbors across at 201 Nonotuck, but no comments from the directly abutting neighbor at 202 Nonotuck St. Chung shared a photo of 198 Nonotuck and the directly abutting house. Louise and Michael Martindell said that the neighbor was understanding and supportive of the proposed project. Louise Martindell spoke about the unusual shape of both house lots. Chung noted that the initial setback measurements in the application was not accurate due to not using survey data and the applicant later used survey pins, gaining 3' than what was originally submitted.

The board asked for public comments.

Maureen Scanlon at 197 Nonotuck spoke in support. Scanlon said they are fabulous neighbors who improved the property. Scanlon said she will likely not experience any visual impact. Scanlon spoke about the neighborhood that is aging out and her wanting to encourage young people moving in and enabling them to creatively improve properties to enable them to stay. Scanlon spoke of the applicant's tree planting projects on the property.

Silver made the motion to close the public hearing. Taylor seconded. The board unanimously voted yes by roll call.

Chung shared staff-recommended three conditions on the screen. Silver wanted to remove the first condition while retaining the other two.

Silver made the motion to approve the special permit at 198 Nonotuck with the following two conditions:

1. The owner shall not add egress doors to the west/southwest side of the house.

2. All roof runoff shall be directed toward the rear lot and contained on site.

The board deliberated after Silver's motion. Taylor said that Northampton has many nonconforming lots and the project does no harm, adding that the direct neighbor had no objections and it will enhance the property and the lives of the owners. Silver noted that it in fact improves the neighborhood and is a project that should be encouraged. Northrup raised concerns about the egress door condition as she saw no harm in adding egress doors. Chung explained that the condition only limits doors, not windows, and there are some base zoning and building code restrictions on door opening too close to the lot line. Taylor asked if there are current plans to add egress doors. Applicant said no. Chung said the board can remove the egress door condition. Northrup did not feel strongly either way and Taylor noted it is redundant if there are existing regulations about it.

Taylor seconded Silver's motion. The board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the special permit application.

6:11 PM Chung explained the next meeting on 2/8/2024 and 2/22/2024. The Board noted that only Northrup and Scanlon would likely be available on 2/8 for a Finding hearing. Chung said he will check with the planning director whether two members are sufficient for a quorum for a Finding hearing. All four members who were present noted availability for 2/22 with Taylor noting that she will have to block out time from work if her presence is needed.

6:19 PM Upon motion by Silver and second by Taylor, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn.