

GERMANTOWN ZBA
MINUTES
May 15, 2025

The meeting was held at the Town Hall with the following members in attendance: Chairwoman Teresa Repko, Rachel Levine and Bill Shannon. Member AmyJo Davison attended via Zoom audio/video.

The meeting was opened at 7:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

The draft minutes of April 17, 2025 were reviewed and on a motion by Rachel, seconded by AmyJo, with all in favor and none opposed were accepted as written.

One letter of correspondence opposing the Area Variance application of 230 Church Avenue was received, read and will be filed for the record.

Public Hearing:

Liam Turkle returned before the board for the continued review of the proposed Area Variance to allow a reduced Front Yard Setback for the construction of a single-story accessory garage at the property located at 230 Church Avenue. Mr. Turkle stated that additional documentation requested by the board was submitted for review.

Member Rachel made a motion to open the Public Hearing, seconded by AmyJo, with all in favor and none opposed.

The board, after review of all submitted documents, discussed the following with the applicant:

- Moving the garage inwards as far as possible
- Diagram showing the existing farmland corridor to be preserved
- Diagrams showing alternative locations for the garage
- Applicant feels new locations are less desirable to both the owner and surrounding neighborhood
- Removal of trees would increase the visibility from the road or obstruct a farmland corridor
- Street view of 12' height behind the hedge row (without leaf coverage)
- Existing non-complying accessory apartment across the street is approximately 2' from the road
- Renderings of the 1-story garage: double garage with one open bay low slope roof and vertical cedar cladding

- Member asked about disturbance of ground seen at site visit: applicant stated it could be from existing structure
- Another location suggestion and request of renderings for the garage at dumpster location or at a diagonal position
- 5ft move closer to driveway would make turn radius too tight

Chairwoman Teresa asked all in attendance in audience or by zoom attendance for any comments and none were received.

The applicant will return with requested new renderings at the June meeting.

On a motion made by Bill, seconded by Rachel, with all in favor and none opposed the Public Hearing was adjourned.

New Business:

Arthur Jackson of the Small Building Company along with owner Elizabeth Dee appeared before the board for the proposed Area Variance to allow a reduced Front Yard Setback from 100 feet to 69'10" ft for the construction of an Accessory Structure- Detached Garage at the property located at 155 Hilltop Road. The applicant reasoned the following of why the building of a new garage in the current barn location is a poor choice:

- Existing barn is not in compliance with the side setback
- Existing barn is located at the edge of a steep and erodible slope
- Limited space in the current location for a safe turnaround
- There is about 36' between the top of the slope and the base of a 6' high mounded landform that rises between the street and the house
- From the road, much of the house is hidden behind the mound and trees
- Only the barn is clearly visible

And additionally reasoned that the proposed location is a superior choice:

- Safety: the mound prevents a turnaround
- New location would remove most of the remaining driveway and maintain second curb for occasional parking, keeping parking off the street
- Removal of the existing garage allows the land to slope more gradually
- The neighborhood impact is reduced as the new barn tucked into the mound would feature a roof top garden, eliminating view of garage doors
- Limit daily vehicle uses to one curb cut

Members of the board are in agreement to conduct Site visits and the owner agrees.

Member Rachel made a motion to set a Public Hearing for June 19, 2025, seconded by Amy Jo, with all in favor and none opposed.

Other Business:

- Member Joe Guida will not be in attendance until September

Old Business:

- N/A

The meeting was closed at 7:50pm on a motion by Rachel, seconded by Billy, with all in favor and none opposed.

Jami L. DelPozzo
Planning and Zoning Secretary

