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Town of East Haven  
**Zoning Board of Appeals**

Regular Meeting Minutes – October 19, 2023  
East Haven Senior Center, 91 Taylor Avenue

**I. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance**

In attendance: Judy Mison, chair, John Wobensmith, vice-chair, David Gersz, Cindy Sparago, and Bill Carbone (alternate).

Also in attendance: Joseph Budrow, Planning and Zoning Administrator/ZEO, and Attorney Lou Dagostine.

The meeting began at 7:05pm. Ms. Mison introduced the Board members present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Ms. Mison described the process of the meeting.

Mr. Budrow said there are no changes to the agenda.

**II. Review and Action on Prior Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** Ms. Sparago made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of August 24. Mr. Wobensmith seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried. 5-0.**

**MOTION:** Ms. Sparago made a motion to accept the amended meeting minutes of September 21. Mr. Wobensmith seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried. 5-0.**

**III. Public Hearings and Deliberation**

**Application No. 23-26 – on behalf of Teresa Rodriguez, 56 Charter Oak Avenue.**

Attorney Leonard Fasano presented. He said that Ms. Rodriguez was home taking care of her husband. He described the existing front staircase. She would like the stairs to remain in front and offers a new, smaller plan. Attorney Fasano described a smaller proposal for a landing and staircase. If the proposal is not reasonable to the Board, it could go off to the side.

There were questions and discussion about the proposed steps. Mr. Budrow asked if there was going to be a roof over the landing. The answer was 'no.'

Mr. Wobensmith verified that Ms. Rodriguez is now proposing a 3.5 foot deep landing by 8-foot wide that is now 22 feet from the street instead of 23.5 feet. Ms. Sparago asked if they can condition the approval without the front sketch. Mr. Budrow said he can request such a sketch at the time of a zoning permit.

There was no public comment.

**MOTION:** Mr. Gersz made a motion to close the public hearing for Application No. 23-26. Mr. Wobensmith seconded the motion. **All in favor. Motion carried, 5-0.**

**Deliberation:**

The Board mentioned making sure the proposal is for a 3.5-foot depth and a sketch is required.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wobensmith made a motion to approve Application No. 23-26. He made a condition that the amended plan is to be 3.5 feet deep and 8 feet wide with the stairs off the front. Mr. Gersz seconded the motion. Ms. Mison noted the decision was based on the findings in Zoning Regulations 51.7.2, 51.7.3, 51.7.4. Also, a sketch of the proposal shall be provided. **Motion carried, 5-0.**

**Application No. 23-23 – on behalf of Gerald Paprocki, 60 Green Street.**

Mr. Gerald Paprocki presented. He described the changes made since the last meeting.

Ms. Sparago asked Mr. Budrow what the new lot coverage is. He did a calculation and the answer was 23%. The original coverage was 30%. The floor area is now below 50%. Mr. Wobensmith verified all the changes and what current Regulations required variances.

Ms. Sparago asked him what the hardship is. Mr. Paprocki answered that the lot existed and changes were made over time. Ms. Sparago asked him what the average house size is in the area. He mentioned a few house sizes. Mr. Paprocki described the proposed house floor plan and layout. Mr. Budrow confirmed the Regulations now requiring variances.

Ms. Pam Cofrancesco, of 54 Green Street, spoke in opposition. She said the property is not a double lot.

Mary Mascola, of 42 Green Street, spoke in opposition. She said houses on the street are not that big.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wobensmith made a motion to close the public hearing for Application No. 23-23. Mr. Gersz seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried, 5-0.**

**Deliberation:**

Ms. Sparago gave an apology and said she got caught up in making the house smaller. She lost track of the Board's goal. She didn't see a hardship as the lot is a perfect

rectangle. She said he can build a house that didn't need a single variance. Mr. Gersz responded. Ms. Mison said there isn't a land-based hardship.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wobensmith made a motion to deny **Application No. 23-23**. There is no hardship. All presentations exceed the minimum variance. The proposal doesn't meet the findings listed in Section 51.7. Mr. Budrow verified that he meant 'land-based' hardship. Ms. Sparago seconded the motion. (Mr Wobensmith, Ms. Mison and Ms. Sparago) voted in favor of the motion. (Mssrs. Gersz and Carbone) voted against the motion. **Motion carried, 3-2.**

**Application No. 23-27 – on behalf of James Esposito for Country House Realty, LLC. 990 Foxon Road.**

John Mancini, with BL Industries, gave an overview of the existing property. He apologized for talking loudly earlier when he was talking to the neighbors of the property. The first map he showed was an aerial view. He pointed at a neighbor's driveway that crosses over the subject property. The applicant has decided to adjust the building and give a permanent easement so that the driveway does not have to move. The easement will be placed on the land records. He said the neighbors are happy with it. Mr. Budrow reminded Mr. Mancini that the Board does not have new site plans. Mr. Mancini went to get copies.

Matt Bruton presented and described the proposal. He described three hardships. There are frontages on two roads. Only the self-storage building needs variances for the height and front setback, and a dumpster location. He said the shape of the lot is unique and eighty percent of the lot is a road frontage. The final hardship is the slope that runs from Foxon Road to Old Foxon Road. They are proposing the storage building at the lowest grade on the lot.

Mr. Carbone questioned the interior traffic pattern. Mr. Mancini said a traffic study will confirm what he (Mr. Carbone) is saying. Mr. Mancini described the proposed traffic circulation. He described two different ordering processes for two of the proposed businesses.

Ms. Sparago asked if there was an intent to dig in when constructing the self-storage building. Mr. Mancini said 'yes' as he showed a page in the plan set that showed elevations. She verified that they did their best to get the building down. He said the building is proposed at 46 feet. They could do 44 feet. The top of the elevator comes to 46 feet. The top of the building is lower. Ms. Sparago said there aren't a lot places to put a dumpster. Mr. Bruton said there will be screening for it. Ms. Sparago confirmed that the building is at 42 feet. Mr. Mancini confirmed that height. The top of the elevator goes higher.

Mr. James Esposito, the property owner, spoke. He said he has owned the property since 1959 and this proposal is a gateway to East Haven. He feels other developers will come in when they see this proposal get built. Mr. Gersz says this development is a great idea.

Mr. Esposito said he has been closed for two years. Mr. Mancini added that he thinks there could be other economic improvements made along Route 80.

Mr. Gerry Iannone, of 320 Cosey Beach Avenue, said he has never seen such a great-looking project.

Mr. Frank Capone spoke in favor. He said it's a win-win. He said this project is good for the taxes. Also, it will bring jobs. He said the Town will be proud of it.

There was no one opposed to the proposal.

Ms. Mison asked if there will be something in writing for the easement. Mr. Budrow reminded the Board that there will be a change to the building shape. Mr. Mancini said that they can provide that.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wobensmith made a motion to close the public hearing for **Application No. 23-27**. Mr. Gersz seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried, 5-0.**

#### **Deliberation:**

Mr. Gersz said it's a great thing for the Town. Mr. Wobensmith likes the fact that the self-storage building will be set down. It's a great layout. Ms. Sparago said there are hardships there. She would like the dumpster screened on all visible sides.

Mr. Budrow confirmed a possible condition for the dumpster being screened with a fence and landscaping.

Mr. Carbone doesn't want to see a big investment that might not work. He pointed out a nearby strip plaza with one tenant.

**MOTION:** Ms. Sparago made a motion to approve **Application No. 23-27** and referred to Section 51.7.1, 51.7.2 and 51.7.4 of the Zoning Regulations. She also recommended a deeded easement be granted to the neighbor and the dumpster be screened. Mr. Gersz seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried, 5-0.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Wobensmith made a motion to continue the opening of the public hearing for **Application No. 23-28** until the next regular meeting. Mr. Gersz seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried, 5-0.**

#### **IV. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Mr. Wobensmith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 PM. Ms. Mison seconded the motion. **All were in favor. Motion carried, 5-0.**

Joseph Budrow  
Planning and Zoning Administrator  
Town of East Haven

