Town of Trumbull
CONNECTICUT

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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2026, REVISED MINUTES

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of Trumbull was held at Trumbull Town Hall Council Chambers on Wednesday, September 2, 2026.

Member Present: Rob Saunders, Chairman
Matthew Reale, Vice Chairman
Kim DiCorpo, Secretary
Tim Cantafio
Matt Broder
Joseph Rescsanski, Alternate
Nancy Walkley, Alternate

Members Absent: Kevin McGee, Alternate

Also Present: Brian Fitzgerald, Zoning Enforcement Officer
Attorney James Cordone, Town Attorney
Gia Mentillo, Clerk
Trumbull Community Television

A quorum being present, Chairman Saunders called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

MOTION MADE (Cantafio), seconded (DiCorpo) to approve the August 5, 2026, minutes.
Vote: 5-0 **Motion Carried**

Public Hearing & Work Session

Application #26-20: 86 Chestnut Hill Road
Kaitlyn Walsh Patrick for 86 Chestnut Hill Road LLC

The applicant is requesting an 8,079 sq. ft. lot size variance, where 21,780 sq. ft. is required and 13,701 sq. ft. is proposed, and a 46.34' front road variance, where 125' is required and 78.66' is proposed, to construct a single-family home in Residential Zone A under Article III of the Trumbull Zoning Regulations.

Kaitlyn Walsh Patrick, 94 Henderson Road, Fairfield, stated a request for a lot size and road frontage variance to construct a single-family home. She stated a hardship based on the dimensions of the existing lot, which was created in 1939, noting that the proposed dwelling complies with all other zoning regulations for the Residential A Zone.

Per Vice Chairman Reale's inquiry, Ms. Patrick confirmed that the lot in question was created from a 150-lot subdivision and is similar in size to others in the neighborhood, adding that the relief being sought it to allow the construction of a home as was originally intended for the site.

Public Comment: Casey Sylvestro, 89 Chestnut Hill Road, raised questions and concerns regarding the proposed project, including whether there would be grading or blasting (and impacts to neighbors and foundations), the placement of the driveway, sight line issues, traffic and safety impact, what the final dwelling would look like, and if neighbor's would be notified of construction / site work in advance.

Steven Sinise, 18 Samuel Street, spoke in opposition to the application, stating that the proposed dwelling is large for the property (which was intended to be split between abutting properties in the past). He noted concerns for traffic and safety as well.

Ms. Patrick informed that sight lines would be improved by the proposed project as she is working to remove two large trees and a stone wall which are currently having a negative impact on lines of sight. She noted that the proposed dwelling falls within all zoning regulations other than lot size and road frontage and conforms to the lot coverage standards. Chris Bond, 94 Henderson Road, Fairfield, general contractor and property owner, informed that blasting was not anticipated to be necessary for this project, noting that test holes will be done in the coming weeks to confirm this. He stated all work would be done during normal business hours, the site would be kept clean, and every measure would be taken to be respectful of the neighbors and limit disruption to the area. He welcomed neighbors to contact him.

Per Commissioner Rescsanski's inquiry, Ms. Patrick clarified where the trees slated for removal are shown on the provided plans.

Work Session: Vice Chairman Reale noted that the request is not dissimilar to others that have come before the Board for lots that were created from subdivisions some time ago but were never built on. He stated that the lot was created from an approved subdivision, the proposed dwelling sits within the buildable envelope, and it complies with the majority of current zoning regulations. He noted that abutters raised fair concerns and stated that if the requested variances are granted the applicants would still need building permits which would ensure that codes and proper procedures are followed regarding construction.

Commissioner Broder questioned whether a smaller dwelling could be put on the lot and if that which is proposed is in character with the neighborhood. The Vice Chairman stated that, though he has similar concerns, the proposed structure lies within the buildable envelope.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that multiple letters of opposition were submitted with the application and posted publicly with the meeting materials.

Engineering comments: Prior to lot development, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the Town's Administrative Policy for Stormwater Management and Drainage Design Standards; and obtain driveway and sanitary sewer permits.

Motion Made (Reale), Seconded (Cantafio), to approve with conditions **Application #26-20: 86 Chestnut Hill Road, Kaitlyn Walsh Patrick for 86 Chestnut Hill Road LLC.**
Vote: 5-0 Motion Carried

Application #26-21: 17 Wildwood Drive
Stephen Cohen

The applicant is requesting a 4.2' garage height variance, where 15' is required and 19.2' is proposed at the average grade to construct a detached garage in Residential Zone AA under Article II, section 1.1.2 of the Trumbull Zoning Regulations.

Stephen Cohen, 17 Wildwood Drive, stated he is seeking a height variance of 4.2' to construct a detached two-car garage, noting that compliance with the 15' height requirement would create a hardship as it could lead to compromising the function, design, and integrity of the proposed structure. He noted that there would be no negative visual impact to abutters and the proposed is in character with the neighborhood. Mr. Cohen stated a hardship based on the existing topographical conditions of the property and their impact on the perception of building heights from abutting properties.

Vice Chairman Reale questioned whether a smaller garage with a lower roof could be installed. Mr. Cohen stated that the existing shed sitting in a similar location is roughly 16' or 17' tall and would be replaced by the proposed garage.

Public Comment: Chairman Saunders read a letter of opposition from Charles and June Irolla (5 Wildwood Drive) and Marc and Jessica Mojon (193 Canoe Brook Road) into the record.

Charles Irolla, 5 Wildwood Drive, spoke in opposition to the application, informing that his property sits uphill from and directly abuts 17 Wildwood Drive from which the proposed structure would be fairly visible. He questioned whether the proposed structure was truly comparable to the existing shed, voiced concerns for the impeded natural buffer between the properties and stated the proposed to much significantly larger than a typical two-car garage.

Mr. Cohen informed that the proposed would be built into the grade to be level with the existing driveway, he only intends to take down trees that are standing in the footprint of the proposed structure which would minimally change the existing natural buffer, the proposed will not encroach any further toward Mr. Irolla's property than that which currently exists, and if the existing shed is not currently visible from 17 Wildwood, the proposed would not be either.

Per Commissioner Rescsanski' inquiry, Mr. Cohen confirmed the proposed second story is not enclosed, adding that the proposed structure height is less than the height of the existing dwelling. Commissioner Rescsanski noted that if the structure were attached to the main dwelling, the requested height would be permissible as of right. Commissioner Broder noted that the letter of opposition submitted calls into question whether the proposed is taller than the existing dwelling and why it is so large for a two-car garage, and Mr. Cohen stated the proposed is not taller than the existing split-dwelling and confirmed that the structure is larger than a standard two-car garage.

Work Session: Commissioner Broder questioned whether the applicant was creating their own hardship in this case, noting it seems feasible to build a smaller structure. He stated he did not feel there was a clear hardship to form a basis for approval of the requested variance.

Vice Chairman Reale noted the non-conforming nature of the existing shed which exceeds the allowed height under current regulations. He stated the requested 4' variance to be di minimis in nature, adding that there are challenges associated with the topography of the property that impact the way the height is perceived. He stated the proposed structure to comply with all regulations other than height.

Engineering comments: Prior to engineering approval, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the Town's Administrative Policy for Stormwater Management and Drainage Design Standards.

Motion Made (Reale), Seconded (Cantafio), to approve with conditions **Application #26-21: 17 Wildwood Drive, Stephen Cohen.**
Vote: 5-0 Motion Carried

Application #26-22: 18 Botsford Place
Wilson Sanchez

The applicant is requesting a 12.8' front lot setback variance, where 50' is required and 37.2' is proposed to construct an addition in Residential Zone A under Article III of the Trumbull Zoning Regulations.

Wilson Sanchez, 18 Botsford Place, stated a request for a front lot setback variance of 12.8' to put an addition on his existing dwelling. Per Chairman Saunders's inquiry, Mr. Sanchez confirmed that the proposed addition would not encroach any further into the front setback requirement than the existing dwelling which is a pre-existing non-conformity.

Public Comment: There was no public comment made.

Work Session: Chairman Saunders noted that the proposed follows the existing front line of the home with no additional encroachment on the setback requirements.

Engineering comments: Prior to engineering approval, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the Town's Administrative Policy for Stormwater Management and Drainage Design Standards.

Motion Made (DiCorpo), Seconded (Broder), to approve with conditions **Application #26-22: 18 Botsford Place, Wilson Sanchez.**
Vote: 5-0 Motion Carried

Application #26-23: 4 Sycamore Street
Emelia Ferri for Hurd Realty LLC

The applicant is requesting an 8.2' retaining wall and fence height variance, where 6' is required and 14.2' is proposed; a 48' rear lot setback variance, where 50' is required and 2' is proposed, a 0' side lot setback variance where 20' is required and 20' is proposed and a 18.5' side lot setback variance, where 20' is required and 1.5' is proposed in Residential Zone A under Article I, sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and Article III of the Trumbull Zoning Regulations.

The Board agreed to hear applications #26-23 and #26-24 simultaneously.

Application #26-24: 6 Sycamore Street
Emelia Ferri for Hurd Realty LLC

The applicant is requesting a 7.3' retaining wall and fence height variance, where 6' is required and 13.3' is proposed, a 1.4' rear lot setback variance where 50' is required and 48.6' is proposed, a 20' side lot setback variance where 20' is required and 0' is proposed on both sides in Residential Zone A under Article I, sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and Article III of the Trumbull Zoning Regulations.

Charles Willinger, Willinger, Willinger & Bucci PLLC, representative of Hurd Realty LLC and the Ferri family, stated the applicants to be well known contractors with significant experience doing work in Trumbull. Atty. Willinger provided an overview of the history of the properties in question and the Sycamore Street neighborhood as a whole beginning in the 1980s, including ownership, lot and roadway creation, and construction of existing structures. He informed that during the original development of the properties and the abutting property to the rear, it was determined that retaining walls would be necessary to mitigate run off and erosion issues as well as risks of destabilization due to the significant topographical changes throughout the area. Said walls were constructed about 25 years ago. Atty. Willinger stated that the ZBA has granted several variances for the properties on three separate occasions from 1905 to 2023, noting these were granted based on findings of legal hardship. Through this process a condition of approval was imposed that the road known as Sycamore Street would be constructed at the expense of the property owner. The IWWC also approved construction for both properties on three separate occasions from 2015 to 2025. Atty. Willinger stated that the IWWC has approved the retaining wall at 4 Sycamore Street and is awaiting a decision from the ZBA before rendering a decision on the retaining walls at 6 Sycamore Street. He also informed that approximately a year ago it was determined that tainted fill exceeding the DEEP remediation standards was used to grade the properties in question. This was confirmed through environmental testing requested by the Town. Atty. Willinger proved an overview of this process, its findings, and the remediation plan agreed upon by the applicant, owner, and Town officials.

Atty. Willinger informed that repeated delays in finalizing the development of the properties have negatively impacted the neighborhood by creating an ongoing eye sore. He submitted a petition signed by all abutting neighbors (added to the record) in support of the approval of the requested variances. He provided an overview of the height and setback variances being requested for each property (as stated above). Using the plans submitted with the application, Atty. Willinger indicated the portions of each existing retaining wall that exceed the height limitations and setback requirements imposed by zoning regulations, noting that a versa lock wall will need to be installed behind a section of the retaining wall to support the integrity of the structure (images were submitted for the record). He stated the topography of the land as a legal hardship and basis for granting the requested variances, noting that permitting the retaining wall protects both the properties in question and abutting properties from run off, erosion, and stabilization issues. He informed that the applicant has fully cooperated with all requests from the Town regarding the properties and has invested significant time and money (upwards of $1 million) in this project.

Per Chairman Saunders's inquiry, Atty. Willinger stated that he could not address concerns regarding why the issues of retaining wall height and location were not addressed through previous variances applications to the Board. Per Commissioner Rescsanski's inquiry, Atty. Willinger confirmed that the retaining walls in question already exist on the two properties and Ms. Ferri clarified what walls were represented on the plans submitted with the applications. Ms. Ferri indicated that if the retaining walls were of lesser height that would negatively impact the slope of the rear yards for the properties in question, noting the existing heights to be the most modest yet viable option.

Chairman Saunders voiced concerns about the fact that the original general contractor and owner of the properties, Emilio Ferri, was aware that retaining walls would be needed for the properties but did not request the necessary approvals to do so in past applications. He questioned whether hardships being presented were self-imposed. Ms. Ferri stated she has only been with this project for the past 5-7 years

and could not speak to why variances were not sought for the retaining walls at the same time variances were sought for the construction of dwellings on the properties.

Per Vice Chairman Reale's inquiry, Ms. Ferri confirmed that the variances being sought were to grant relief for the height and location of the existing retaining walls and safety railing and that no relief was required for the adjourning versa lock wall. She stated relief was necessary due to the significant drop in elevation at the rear of the properties and overall topographical challenges of the land. Per Commissioner DiCorpo's inquiry, Ms. Ferri clarified that there are retaining walls along the rear and side of 6 Sycamore Street, and one retaining wall along the rear of 4 Sycamore Street.

Public Comment: There was no public comment made.

Work Session: Chairman Saunders read a statement from Assistant Town Engineer Tatiana Solovey into the record. The Chairman noted that ensuring the structural integrity of structures is the purview of other Town departments rather than the ZBA. He stated concerns regarding the fact that the ZBA previously granted variances to allow the construction of dwellings on the properties in question without the knowledge that significant retaining walls would be needed for the properties to have a usable rear yard.

Vice Chairman Reale stated that the Board cannot undo past approvals and must address the situation at hand as it relates to zoning regulations, noting that additional issues would need to be addressed by other Town entities. He voiced support for approving the requested variances for the height and location of the retaining wall(s) in question.

Chairman Saunders noted the overwhelming support submitted by neighbors for this application.

Engineering comments for Application #26-23: An IWWC permit is required, application #26-22 is currently pending.

Motion Made (Reale), Seconded (Broder), to approve with conditions **Application #26-23: 4 Sycamore Street, Emelia Ferri for Hurd Realty LLC.**
Vote: 5-0 Motion Carried

Engineering comments for Application #26-24: An IWWC permit is required, application #25-10 is currently pending.

Approval based on reasons as stated for above.

Motion Made (Reale), Seconded (DiCorpo), to approve with conditions **Application #26-24: 6 Sycamore Street, Emelia Ferri for Hurd Realty LLC.**
Vote: 5-0 Motion Carried

Chairman Saunders asked for a motion to adjourn, motion made (Broder) and seconded (Reale). The September 2, 2026, meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals adjourned at 8:32 p.m. with unanimous consent.

Dated at Trumbull, CT this 9th day of September 2026.
By: Gia Mentillo, ZBA Clerk