

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF RIDGEFIELD
MINUTES OF MEETING

February 9, 2026

NOTE: These minutes are intended as a rough outline of the special proceedings of the Board of Appeals on Zoning of Ridgefield held on February 9, 2026. Copies of recordings of the meeting may be obtained from the Administrator.

The Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. Sitting on the Board for the evening were: Mark Seavy, Robert Byrnes, Alexander Lycoyannis, Michael Stenko and Sky Cole.

ROTATION OF ALTERNATES

The rotation for this meeting was first, Mr. Cole, second Mr. Stenko; third, Mr. Santini. Mr. Cole sat for Mr. Lycoyannis who was unavailable. Mr. Stenko sat for Ms. Bearden-Rettger who was unavailable. Thus, the rotation for the next meeting will be: first, Mr. Santini; second, Mr. Cole, third Mr. Stenko.

NEW APPLICATION

Matthew Fishman
Application 26-002
194 High Ridge Avenue

Owner Matthew Fishman appeared for the application. A variance was granted in 1987 to the property to allow construction of a 2nd-floor apartment above an existing detached garage. That apartment was never built. The current application requests that the garage structure be converted into an accessory dwelling unit on the first-floor level. No second story was planned. Since the property contained a two-family dwelling, an ADU was not allowed under the zoning regulations, so a variance was required. A variance was also required to waive the requirement a property owner must reside on the premises. Mr. Fishman listed hardships similar to what was decided in the 1987 variance, 87-059 including the shape of the lot with a rear driveway. The lot was in the R 7.5 zone at .3 acres. The lot was surrounded by both multi-family and single-family homes. Mr. Fishman further stated that he was seeking less relief than what was granted in 87-059 as that variance granted additional coverage with the addition of a staircase to the 2nd floor apartment and an overhang for the staircase. The current application would use the same footprint as the existing garage structure.

Mr. Stenko questioned if the garage structure was already located on the property, would the undersized lot or shape of the lot matter for the current application. Also, no specific hardships were listed for the garage structure. Mr. Fishman replied that the structure was not expanding the footprint and no additional coverage was now needed for the staircase to the upper level, therefore he was seeking less relief than what was granted in 1987 by eliminating any unnecessary vertical expansion. The property plan showed 8 parking spots.

The Board reviewed the Decision in variance 87-059. Mr. Lycoyannis stated that the Board in 1987 already decided the hardships for the lot and the current plans reduce the conformity granted in that 1987 variance. Mr. Cole stated that the hardships exist for the totality of the lot, not specifically the house or garage.

The zoning enforcement officer prior to the hearing asked that if granted, the variance for 87-059 be abandoned to avoid the property adding a 2nd story to the structure as originally granted. Mr. Fishman agreed to that Condition.

No one appeared for or against the application. A decision can be found at the end of these minutes.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Meeting Minutes

The Board voted for approval of the January 5, 2026 meeting minutes.

DECISION

Matthew Fishman

Application 26-002

194 High Ridge Avenue

REQUESTED: variances of Sections 3.3.B.2.b. and 3.3.B.2.d, Accessory Dwelling Unit, to allow an accessory dwelling unit as an accessory to a two-family dwelling and without the owner residing on the premises; for property in the R 7.5 zone located at 194 High Ridge Avenue.

DATES OF HEARING: February 9, 2026

DATE OF DECISION: February 9, 2026

VOTED: To Grant, variances of Sections 3.3.B.2.b. and 3.3.B.2.d, Accessory Dwelling Unit, to allow an accessory dwelling unit as an accessory to a two-family dwelling and without the owner residing on the premises; for property in the R 7.5 zone located at 194 High Ridge Avenue.

VOTE: To Grant: 4 To Deny: 1

In favor
Byrnes, Cole
Lycoyannis, Seavy

Deny
Stenko

CONDITIONS:

This action is subject to the following conditions that are an integral and essential part of the decision. Without these conditions, the variance would not have been granted:

1. The addition shall be located exactly as shown on plans and drawings presented to the Board during the hearing and made part of this decision.
2. The plans submitted for the building permit application shall be the same as those submitted and approved with the application for variance.
3. The previous variance granted to the property, #87-059, which granted a second story on the existing detached garage, shall be abandoned.

The Board voted this action for the following reasons:

1. This property was granted a variance, #87-059 to allow a second story apartment on the existing detached garage. Hardships found in #87-059 still apply to the current application including the undersized lot, .3 acres in the R 7.5 zone and the odd shape of the property.
2. It is noted that the approved plans reduce the lot coverage on the property from what was granted in variance #87-059 since an attached staircase to the second story and overhangs will no longer be needed.
3. The proposal is in harmony with the general scheme of development in the area and will have no negative impact on surrounding properties or on the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.

As there was no further business before the Board, the Chair adjourned the hearing at approximately 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Ryan
Administrator