

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG  
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
DANIEL CRONHEIM, CHAIRMAN**

Regular Meeting [Virtual]  
August 11, 2022

**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
Adopted: 9/8/22**

Chairman Cronheim called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. DJ Hunsinger  
Mr. Richard Brown  
Ms. Sondra Fechtner  
Mr. PJ Panzarella  
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi

Mr. Wanye Hanlon  
Dr. Richard Steinfeld  
Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman  
David A. Stires, PE  
Alexander G. Fisher, Esq.  
Theresa Snyder, Board Clerk

Chairman Cronheim called the regular meeting to order. He read the statement indicating the meeting was being conducted according to Open Public Meetings Act, the Municipal Land Use Law requirements, and the recording of the Minutes as required by law. In order to comply with the Executive Orders signed by the governor, and in an effort to follow best practices recommended by the CDC and DCA for emergency meeting protocol, the meeting was held virtually for all board members, board professionals, the applicant and interested parties and members of the public.

He then led the flag salute to the American flag, and the Board members identified themselves for the record.

**MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Hunsinger, seconded by Mr. Taraschi, the Board adopted the regular meeting minutes of July 14, 2022, based on the following roll call vote:

**Roll Call:**

Ayes:	Mr. Hunsinger, Mr. Brown, Ms. Fechtner, Mr. Taraschi, Mr. Hanlon, and Chairman Cronheim
Nays:	
Not Eligible:	Dr. Steinfeld
Abstain:	
Absent:	

Mr. Panzarella joined the meeting at 7:35 pm after experiencing technical difficulties.

## APPLICATION

CASE NO.: BA 22-01; Anderson  
65 Vail Lane  
BLOCK: 7301 LOT: 10  
RR ZONE

Mr. King entered his appearance on behalf of the applicant. He contended the application was unique in that although a person may hear the words “assembly” and “construction” of fire arms, that was not why the applicant was before the Board. He clarified the request was for a home office in connection with an Federal Firearms License (“FFL”) for the design and assembly of accessories for firearms. The applicant would be his only witness.

Mr. Joel Anderson, as owner and applicant of 65 Vail Lane, was sworn in to give testimony. Mr. Anderson testified that he was not an armorer or a gun smith, nor did he participate in gun sales. His background was in software engineering. He was a technology executive for a data base company in New York. He worked in cyber security and machine learning for software engineering mostly in the defense industry and more recently in the commercial verticals. The product he was planning to build in his home office would be primarily a software product for image recognition and machine learning. The technical term was regional convolutional neural network. Basically, the product would be cameras and optics that attached to firearms which Mr. Anderson opined would be beneficial to society because it could prevent a gun from firing if improper force was detected. This product would not be commercial. It would be for law enforcement and military defense. Part of the process in the design stage would be to calibrate a prototype with the actual weapon. There would be robotics and mechanical pieces that would have to be calibrated for each specific firearm that a law enforcement agency or the military may have. A small part of Mr. Anderson’s business would be to have access to those various firearms to allow him to calibrate the prototype onto the firearm.

The scope of Mr. Anderson’s work was not the assembly or manufacturing of firearms for the intention or purpose of building things to be sold. His capacity would be in the design stage. His business was to develop accessories to attach onto firearms. In the Federal Firearms License definition of “assembly” of firearms, it could mean attaching accessories to the firearms. The proposed software design and procedure for fitting a firearm would be very precise and specific which requires the firearms be sent to Mr. Anderson’s house; therefore, he would need to be an FFL holder in order to receive firearms at his home. Most of his involvement in the process would be from behind his desk in the software development of the product. There would be no milling or machinery associated with manufacturing on premise. Basically, most of the work would be done from Mr. Anderson’s desk. He also had a 3D printer to print prototypes.

If Mr. Anderson designed a successful prototype, the prototype would be sent out to the law enforcement agency requesting the accessories. The manufacturing of the prototype would be sent out to a third party. There would be no foot traffic to or from his home. The shipping of firearms from the customers would be heavily regulated by the ATF. The shipping and receiving of firearms could only be through FFL holders. Mr. Anderson required the variance relief for the home office prior to applying for the federal firearms license. He testified there were over 200 FFL home offices in New Jersey, and the public information on that could be found from the ATF Bureau.

Mr. Anderson stipulated to Mr. Stires' memo dated 4/19/22, #1 in that there would be no activity outside of the home, nor would there be any improvements to the property inside or outside for the proposed use.

Mr. Anderson stipulated to Mr. Stires' memo #2 in that the proposed use was a home office which was permitted by the Borough Ordinance in residential zones. The scope of work would not include manufacturing of firearms, but simply creating prototypes.

Mr. Anderson stipulated to Mr. Stires' memo #3 in that the only traffic to the home would be hand deliveries. Further, as to the safety of the firearms delivered, Mr. Anderson testified that the firearms once delivered would be placed in safes that were bolted to the ground and surrounded by security cameras. He continued that the safety of the firearms was highly regulated by both federal agencies and state police. He would be subject to the ATF scheduling audits on premise.

Mr. Anderson stipulated to Mr. Stires' memo #4 in that he would obtain the FFL and all other regulatory approvals as needed.

Mr. Anderson stipulated to Mr. Stires' memo #5 that there would be no discharge of firearms, and he had no desire or intention to discharge firearms. There would be no advertisement for retail at the home.

Mr. Anderson stipulated to Mr. Stires' memo #6 that he would secure all permits and approvals with the police department. He testified there would be no impact to his home, and he opined it was a technicality that necessitated the d(1) use variance in order to receive the federal firearm license.

On question by Mr. Hunsinger as to the ammunition of the firearms, Mr. Anderson testified that all firearms would be sent without ammunition and there would be no discharging of weapons on the site.

On question by Mr. Hanlon concerning receiving firearms, Mr. Anderson testified that a physical signature from an FFL holder was required.

On question by Mr. Panzarella concerning the software development, Mr. Anderson testified there would be no data privacy concerns.

On question by Mr. Brown concerning the prototypes and number of deliveries, Mr. Anderson testified the prototypes would be made of plastic pieces, and there would generally be 2-3 rifles delivered from an agency. Further, Mr. Anderson would have to follow the regulated process of an FFL to ship the firearms back.

On question of Ms. Fechtner concerning the recipients of the proposed software design, Mr. Anderson testified the core applications would be with the police and defense. He commented that this would be a new category not yet created. There was no present commercial use; however, the software could potentially have an influence on security systems in homes.

On question of Mr. Brown in determining whether the weapon fires correctly, Mr. Anderson testified that the prototype would be calibrated as to the weight, sensors, and data of the specific firearm accessory being designed. A heavier gun would require more calibration. The software would use image data to interpret what the gun is aimed at.

Chairman Cronheim suggested Mr. Anderson consider using a PO Box number separate from his home address for safety.

The meeting was open to the public.

Rosemary Lisa, 125 Vail Lane, stated the Board members had addressed her questions. When she saw there would be guns on the premises and saw a picture of Mr. Anderson's family, she figured he would make it a safe environment.

The meeting was closed to the public.

Mr. Taraschi suggested a condition of approval would be that Mr. Anderson not only obtain all necessary permits but also maintain all necessary permits.

On motion by Mr. Hunsinger, seconded by Mr. Brown, the Board approved the application based on the following roll call vote:

Roll Call:

Ayes:	Mr. Hunsinger, Mr. Brown, Ms. Fechtner, Mr. Panzarella, Mr. Taraschi, Mr. Hanlon, and Chairman Cronheim
Nays:	
Not Eligible:	
Abstain:	
Absent:	

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no other comments from the public.

ADJOURN

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Theresa Snyder', is written over the text 'Respectfully Submitted,'.

Theresa Snyder  
Board Clerk