

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
 Regular Meeting
 Thursday, May 15th, 2025 7:30pm

OFFICIAL MINUTES
Adopted on:
ROLL CALL

Chairman Cronheim read the Call to Order Open Meetings Act statement as required by law at 7:30pm. Then everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Mr. Hunsinger called for a motion to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from April 3rd, 2025, seconded by Mr. Van de Castle.

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Present	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Present
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Present	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- Absent	David A. Stires, PE, PP, Board Engineer – Present
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Present	Matthew Flynn – Attorney Present
George Sopko - Present	Graeme Birrell - Present
Mr. John Van De Castle – Present	Catherine Furlan, Board Clerk -Present

Mr. Hunsinger called for a motion to accept the Regular Session Minutes from April 3rd, 2025, seconded by Mr. Van de Castle.

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Aye	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Aye
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Aye	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- P - Absent	Mr. John Van De Castle – Aye
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Ineligible	Graeme Birrell - Aye
George Sopko - Aye	

Mr. Hunsinger called for a motion to accept the Executive Session Minutes from April 3rd, 2025, seconded by Mr. Van de Castle.

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Aye	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Aye
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Abstained	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- P - Absent	Mr. John Van De Castle – Aye
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Ineligible	Graeme Birrell - Aye
George Sopko - Aye	

SIGNAGE REQUEST

Greek Fest; May 30, 31 and June 1 in Westfield. Temporary lawn signs around the lake and Somerset Street by the Police Department. On motion to approve by Mr. Hunsinger and seconded by Mr. Terrezza

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Aye	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Aye
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Aye	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- Absent	Mr. John Van De Castle – Aye
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Aye	Graeme Birrell - Aye
George Sopko - Aye	

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution BA25-R9

CASE NO.; BA21-05 SK Morris; (Second 1 year) Extension for 1375 Plainfield Ave. Mr. Benjamin Wine from Prime Tuvel & Miceli was on hand representing the applicant. He approached and provided background. He clarified that the site has 24 units total and 5 affordable units. The extension would go through until July 14th of 2026. On motion to approve by Mr. Hunsinger and seconded by Mr. Terrezza.

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Aye	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Aye
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Aye	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- Absent	Mr. John Van De Castle – Aye
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Aye	Graeme Birrell - Aye
George Sopko - Aye	

CASE No: BA 25-1 Betancourth

45 Dug Way
Block 40.06 Lot 35
ZONE: RR
Expiration: 07/30/2025

[Click Here for Plans](#)

The Applicant is requesting approval to install an inground pool to the north and behind the dwelling and patio area. The allowable maximum lot coverage for the R-R District is 25% (section 28-404 d of the LDO). Due to the steep slopes, the developable lot area is reduced to 39,020 SF (net) from 60,996 SF (gross). The lot coverage proposed is 37.5% and requires a variance (section 23A-3.2 a (9) of the Municipal Code).

Mr. Betancourth approached the podium and was sworn in by Mr. Flynn. Mr. Flynn advised the Board that the notices were sufficient and Board has jurisdiction to hear the case. Mr. Betancourth provided background on his application and the property at 45 Dug Way. His property contains steep slopes and the pool would be located in the back of the property, which slopes down toward his home. The Board discussed square footage, impervious coverage and the layout of the property. Applicant confirmed he would be installing an aluminum fence. Mr. Flynn asked the Board if they require dry well maintenance in resolutions? Mr. Stires said that could be added to the resolution. The Chairman opened it to the public, hearing none, it was closed. Mr. Hunsinger made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Terrezza.

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Aye	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Aye
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Aye	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- Absent	Mr. John Van De Castle – Aye
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Aye	Graeme Birrell - Aye
George Sopko - Aye	

CASE No.: BA 25-02; Msallem

46 Orchard
Block 4307 Lot 10.02
ZONE: RR
Expiration: 07/17/2025

[Click Here for Plans](#). The subject property is located on the west side of Orchard Road, several hundred feet north of Valley Road. The site contains an existing two-story single-family dwelling and associated site improvements including a lengthy drive, rear patio and inground pool. The property slopes from west to east and there is an area of wetlands located in the front yard along Orchard Road. The property is in the R-R Residential zoning district.

The Applicant’s pool equipment is located along the rear (west) of the property and is 1.8 feet from the property line. The ordinance requires a rear yard setback of 20 feet for accessory pool structures (section 28-404 B-2). In addition, the pool fence (section 28-502) follows the rear lot line but does slightly traverse onto the neighbors (Lot 12.01).

Mr. Flynn noted he reviewed the notices and found them sufficient and determined the Board had jurisdiction to hear the case. Mr. Msallem approached the podium, sworn in, and provided background on the application. Mr. Msallem came to the Board after the Borough Engineer discovered the violation during an as-built inspection. The fence is also encroaching onto the neighbor’s property and Mr. Msallem said he would move the fence back onto his property. Mr. Flynn said a condition of the resolution would be putting the fence back onto his property.

There was some discussion about where the pool equipment was supposed to go and if there would be screening of the equipment. The Board asked if Mr. Msallem considered moving the equipment? Yes, but it is too difficult so that is why he is requesting the variance. Mr. Hunsinger asked how far away the other house is from the equipment (150-200feet). Mr. Terrezza asked if he could screen the equipment with landscaping for something. Mr. Flynn opened it up to the public for comments and questions.

Mr. Lou Miller approached the podium from 157 Valley Road, Watchung, NJ 07069 and was sworn in. Mr. Miller approves of the application if Mr. Msallem plants trees, or bushes and provides some screening. The Board asked if Mr. Msallem would plant some additional landscaping.

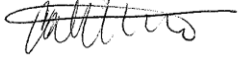
Next, Mr. Fred Hinkley approached the podium and was sworn in from 17 Sunbright, Watchung, NJ 07069. Mr. Hinkley expressed concern over pool water being released toward their house when backwashing or draining. Mr. Miller also expressed concern over drainage and the well at Eaton House and 157 Sunbright. No other comments were made, so the public portion was closed. Mr. Flynn reviewed the variance being sought and conditions set forth; moving the fence back to proper property, water draining away from neighbors and any screening that could be applied. On motion to approve with conditions by Mr. Hunsinger and seconded by Mr. Terrezza.

Mr. Daniel Cronheim, Chairman -Aye	Mr. DJ Hunsinger – Aye
Mr. PJ Panzarella – Aye	Alex Xie – Absent
Mr. Mitchell Taraschi- Absent	Mr. John Van De Castle – Aye
Mr. Anthony Terrezza - Aye	Graeme Birrell - Aye
George Sopko - Aye	

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm on motion by Mr. Hunsinger and seconded by Mr. Terrezza and unanimously accepted. The next Regular Meeting will be Thursday, June 12th, 2025.

ADJOURN

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Furlan', written in a cursive style.

Catherine Furlan
Board Clerk