

City of Englewood Zoning Board of Adjustment

Minutes

Regular meeting

Thursday, May 15, 2025 8:00 p.m.

REMOTE MEETING/ZOOM MEETING

Attorney Present: Michael Kates, Esq.

Advisors Present: Frantz Volcy PE, John Szabo., PP, AICP

Certified Court Reporters: Rhonda Reinstein, CCR, RPR

IT Consultant, Zoom meeting moderator: Asher Forst

Board Secretary: Oksana Leonovich

Call to Order

Vice Chairman Moche called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.

Statement of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act

Vice Chairman Moche confirmed that the meeting was in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call

Ms. Leonovich conducted the roll call:

Member	Present	Absent
Chairman David Maron		✓
Vice Chairman Uri Moche	✓	
Juanita Harris		✓
Kenneth Senkyire	✓	
Dr. Thom Kelly	✓	
Mateo Duque	✓	
Howard Shafer	✓	
Dr. Margaret Haynes		✓
Vanessa Beatriz Marquez	✓	
Milton Davis		✓
Dr. Suzanne Mullings		✓

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

March 24, 2025

Motion to approve: Mr. Shafer, Second: Ms. Marquez

Approved by a vote of 4 yes (Duque, Kelly, Shafer, Marquez) 0 no

New Hearing

File ZBA-25-006, Naftali and Sybil Cohen, 575 Next Day Hill Rd, Block 1301, Lot 6.02

The applicants are requesting C(1) AND C(2) variances to construct a garage and one-story addition above garage, a pool & pool patio, as well as retaining wall. Relief is sought for front and rear yard setbacks, location of the pool & pool patio in front yard, and maximum height of wall height.

Mr. Naftali Cohen introduced himself, stated that would be presenting the case through his architect Thomas Baio. He summarized the nature of the application and gave brief history of his residence in Englewood.

Mr. Kates confirmed that proof of notices was submitted. John Szabo stated that even though the application missed a few items, it was sufficient enough to proceed with hearing.

Mr. Baio presented his testimony. Architectural plan set dated 01/27/25 was submitted as evidence.

Key points from presentation were: property is a through lot, fronting on Next day Hill Rd and extending to Lydecker Street, the proposed pool would be located in the only suitable area of the property, which is technically a front yard due to the through lot configuration.

During Mr. Baio's testimony, Naftali Cohen testified that he and his wife owned the property since June 30, 2013. He also stated that he has good relationship with his neighbors and have not heard any objection to his proposed project.

The meeting was opened to public for questions. No one came forward.

The public portion of the meeting for questions was then closed.

Mr. Kent Rigg, the engineer for the applicant, presented his testimony. Marked was the following:

Exhibit A-1 Colorized version of the Site Plan, Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan dated 11/01/24, last revised on 03/18/25

The meeting was opened to public for questions. No one came forward.

The public portion of the meeting for questions was then closed.

Mr. Rigg noted that the lot was irregularly shaped with significant difference in grade. Because of the grade, the construction of the pool required leveling out and raising of the grade. Consequently, a portion of retaining wall must be rebuilt to a higher level and steps added to the pool location from Lydecker Street.

Mr. Kates raised concerns about the existing retaining wall's approval status and the proposed 7-foot wall.

Mr. Cohen testified that the construction of retaining wall and fence was under the supervision of the City and permits were obtained.

Mr. Rigg answered a question raised by Mr. Volcy concerning the current location and possible relocation of existing seepage pits on the property, as well as location of trench drain by the driveway. Mr. Volcy requested the applicants to produce an approval for construction of the existing retaining wall.

Need for variance for the existing retaining wall height was discussed, with the existing wall potentially exceeding the permitted 4.5 feet in height. It was decided that a condition would be added to have the applicants search their record to produce the issuance of approval for the construction of the existing retaining wall.

Mr. Cohen requested for the variance for the existing retaining wall to be included in the relief the applicants were seeking under current application.

The decision was made that the variance would be included in the current application. A condition would be added that the retaining wall will have to be examined and approved by an independent engineer which would be overseen by Mr. Volcy.

Mr. Cohen answered a question regarding landscape plan. There were no major landscaping planned associated with the construction, except for possible removal of one tree and planting of flowers. But no landscaping plan was prepared at the time.

The meeting was opened to public for questions. No one came forward.
The public portion of the meeting for questions was then closed.

The meeting was opened to public for comments. No one came forward.
The public portion of the meeting for comments was then closed.

Motion to approve: Mr. Shafer Second: Ms. Marquez
Approved by a vote of 6 yes (Moche, Senkyire, Duque, Kelly, Shafer, Marquez) 0 no

New Hearing

File ZBA-25-003 Cham Doen Presbyterian Church, 24 W Sheffield Ave, Block 2603, Lot 7.01 The applicant is requesting C(1), C(2), and D(2) variances to construct a 3-story addition. Relief is sought for parking requirements and expansion of pre-existing legal non-conforming use

Attorney: Santo Alampi, Esq.

Engineer: Mike Hubschman, PE

Architect: Ian Younhak Jeong, RA, AIA

Planner: Michael J. Pessolano, PP, AICP

Mr. Alampi presented his opening statement. He reminded the Board that the applicant was recently before the Board with subdivision application, but at the time the applicant did not have prepared plans for the addition.
Marked was the following:

Exhibit A-1 Affidavit of Service and Publication

Mr. Hubschman presented his testimony. Site Plan dated 11/15/24, with last revision date of 12/30/24 was admitted as evidence. Key points noted by Mr. Hubschman were: the existing building was approved and constructed in the year 2008, the current plan included an addition of 6 (six) parking spaced under the proposed addition. The proposed 3-story addition includes restrooms and a café on a first floor, and classrooms, multipurpose rooms, offices, and seminar/meeting rooms on second and third floors. The addition will be accessible from main existing building by a second-floor connection. The location of the property is in a flood-hazard area, and additional seepage pits were added as per proposed plan in westerly corner of the property. Mr. Hubschman stated that Mr. Volcy's report was reviewed and his recommendations would be complied with.

Mr. Hubschman answered a question raised by Mr. Volcy regarding parking requirements. The proposal for new addition would not increase parking requirements from existing prior approved parking nonconformities. Mr. Szabo noted that this is still a major expansion and he expects Planner's testimony regarding parking necessities and possibility of new operations beyond Sunday hours due to the new addition. Mr. Alampi reminded the Board that the agreement for additional off-site 49 parking spaces at the neighboring property was still in effect.

The meeting was opened to public for questions. No one came forward.
The public portion of the meeting for questions was then closed.

Mr. Jeong presented his testimony. Architectural plan set dated 01/15/25 was admitted as evidence. Marked was the following:

A-2 Color rendering of proposed addition from North East Side view

A-3 Color rendering of proposed addition from North West Side view

Key points of testimony were: the details of floor plans that included under building parking lot, connection passage from existing building to new addition, and multiple rooms and their use on second and third floors.

Questions were raised concerning the design of the façade and its compatibility with the existing neighborhood character, such as arrangement of windows which incorporated a mix of horizontal and vertical design, the façade materials, additional parking accessibility from the road, as well as question if the addition enabled expansion of seating from main sanctuary. Mr. Jeong noted that the architectural design incorporated traditional materials such as red brick, which was very common in current Englewood structures, he further stated that the design of windows was not random and included structural and modern elements that would be attractive to younger community, and the total design of the façade would aim to blend traditional and contemporary elements. The construction would not integrate the seating of main building into addition and the two buildings would be physically separated, except for the second-floor connection walkway. The plan for additional parking was designed in such a manner that complied with all state and municipal standards.

The meeting was opened to public for questions. No one came forward.
The public portion of the meeting for questions was then closed.

The case was continued to June 23, 2025 meeting without the need for further notice.

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Moche, Second: Mr. Shafer.

Without objections Vice Chairman Maron adjourned the meeting at 11:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Oksana Leonovich
Board Secretary