

**Zoning Board of Adjustment
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2025**

The Regular meeting of The Borough of Florham Park Board of Adjustment was called to order on Wednesday evening, October 1, 2025 at 6:30pm., in the Municipal Building, 111 Ridgedale Avenue, Florham Park, New Jersey.

Mr. Michael Cannilla, Chairman
Mr. John Novalis
Mr. Rick Zeien
Mr. Michael Shiviets
Mr. Ed Facas
Mr. Marc DeBoer (1st Alt)

Members Absent:

Mr. Jeffrey Noss, Vice Chairman
Mr. Brian O'Connor

Also Present:

Mr. Michael Mullen, Esq., Board Attorney

Call to Order:

Mr. Cannilla, Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Mr. Cannilla asked the Board Secretary if the statutory requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act had been met. Board Secretary Marlene Rawson responded that we are in compliance with the requirements.

Approval of Minutes:

1. Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2025 Meeting.
Mr. Facas made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Shiviets
Roll: All members present and eligible voted to approve the minutes

Resolution of Approval:

2. **Christina Anello** **Application # BOA25-7**
4 Puddingstone Way
Block 3703, Lot 14

Applicant is seeking approval for excess building coverage and excess improved lot coverage in connection with a new paver patio and roof additions to an existing deck and front porch.

Mr. Facase voted to approve the resolution, second by Mr. Shiviets

Roll: All members present and eligible voted to approve the resolution

C Variance:

3. Nick & Kim Buccheri
12 Sherbrooke Drive
Block 4002, Lot 7

Application # BOA25-8

Applicant is seeking approval for excess improved lot coverage and a rear yard setback in connection with a proposed patio and walkway, and louvered pergola structure and deck steps

Elena Gnatyuk, of Deck Remodelers remained under oath. Kim Buccheri was sworn in. Ms. Gnatyuk stated that they reviewed the plan and made some changes in an effort to reduce the coverage. They reduced the walkway from four feet wide to three feet wide. They also adjusted the curvature in the hardscape. The improved lot coverage is reduced from 32.25% to 31.29%. The stormwater management plan will be adjusted.

She reminded the Board members that the back yard is totally screened so this will not impact any neighbors. They cannot reduce the patio any more or the space cannot function. She also noted that the deck is pervious and there is natural surface underneath. The pergola is motorized. The leaders will go to the storm water basin.

Mike Cannilla asked if they investigated reducing the top of the driveway. Ms. Gnatyuk responded that they had the discussion but the homeowners need the space and it is not something they want to do. Mike Cannilla said that he hoped that they would close the pergola when raining so the water can filter into the ground naturally.

Rick Zeien complemented Ms. Gnatyuk on an impressive presentation. There were no other questions or comments.

Mr. Cannillia opened the meeting to the public. Seeing no questions or comments he closed the meeting. He called for a motion.

Mr. Zeien made a motion to approve the application, second by Mr. Novalis
Roll: All members present and eligible voted to approve the application.

4. Steven & Marian Gerges
16 Forest Drive
Block 2404, Lot 3

Application # BOA25-9

Applicant is seeking approval for a non-compliant rear yard setback in connection with the installation of a rear basement stairway.

Steven Azzolini represented the Applicant. He stated that the variance is for a minor setback line in the rear of the property. This is a corner lot with a new home under construction. The backyard plans include an in-ground pool. The setback encroachment is due to a walk out stairs that lead to the basement.

The foundation of the steps encroaches 42 inches into the rear yard setback. Outside access to the basement would primarily be used to reach a basement bathroom from the outside. Otherwise, the only access would be through the house. The property is a corner lot which creates issues. The rear yard is actually a side yard to the neighbor behind him. The setback relief is for 46.4 feet where 50 feet is required.

Andrew Clarke, PE, engineer and licensed surveyor for the applicant was sworn in. Steven Gerges, homeowner, was also sworn in.

Marc DeBoer asked the status of the new home. Mr. Gerges replied that they are not living in the home. It is under construction. They were very careful and worked with their architect to design the home within the standards of Florham Park. They have been looking in Florham Park for a long time and are anxious to move in.

Ed Facas asked if the setback request was only for the stairs. They responded that it is for that only.

Mr. Novalis asked if the masonry is already done for the stairs. Mr. Gerges replied that Superior Walls who provided the foundation masonry recommended installing it at the same time as the foundation. They checked with the construction official and the zoning official and both were okay with them proceeding at their own risk, with the understanding that if the variance was not approved, it would need to be removed.

John Novalis asked about water collecting at the bottom of the stairs and how that will be managed. Mr. Gerges said that there are drains in the floor. The footing drains lead to a sump pump. John Novalis asked if it would be better to be routed to the drywell.

Andrew Clarke replied that it would run as an overflow into the drywell which is not good. It is better to route to the sump pump. He explained the sump pump operation.

Andrew Clarke stated that the property is 1 ½% under on lot coverage even with the new walk out stair system. Mr. Zeien asked how long the entire span of the stair system is. Andrew Clarke replied that the entire length including the landing and steps is seventeen feet.

Andrew Clarke continued that the benefits outweigh the detriments. The ordinance allows sheds, pool houses and generators to encroach in the setback. These elements are more impactful than this set of steps. There is no massing involved. They are 46 feet away from the closest neighbor. That neighbor's home is an additional 26 feet from the property line. There will be a fence for screening and landscaping if needed. This is a beneficial function for the home. Corner lots are notoriously problematic to develop.

Mike Cannilla requested that the stair case remain open and not roofed.

Rick Zeien asked where the sump pump is located. Mr. Gerges replied that a sump pump is right next to the staircase. There is lots of gravel next to it. It does not discharge to the curb. Andrew Clarke confirmed that sump pumps no longer discharge to the curb. He also noted that the property is very sandy and there is no problem with any percolation.

The meeting was opened to the public. Seeing no questions, the meeting was closed to the public. Mike Cannilla called for a motion.

Mr. Zeien made a motion to approve the application, second by Mr. Novalis
Roll: All members present and eligible voted to approve the application.

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

October 1, 2025