

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, CT 06786
www.plymouthct.us

Zoning Board of Appeals
Tel: 860-585-4043
Fax: 860-585-4015

Minutes

July 29, 2025

Call to Order: Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw called the scheduled April 29, 2025, Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., in the Community Room, Plymouth Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present were Zoning Board of Appeals Member/Chairman Marty Sandshaw, Zoning Board of Appeals Member Sarah Sandshaw, Zoning Board of Appeals Member Thomas Tracy and Zoning Board of Appeals Member Chip Wilcox. Also in attendance were Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr, and Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan.

Pledge of Allegiance

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw led the Zoning Board of Appeals Members and the Public Audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw requested a Moment of Silence in honor of Plainville Firefighter Ray Maro.

Public Introduction by Acting Chairman

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw read the following statement into the record: "A peculiar or unique feature of a particular piece of property that prevents the landowner from making a reasonable use of the property in conformance with the existing zoning regulations. A hardship has nothing to do with the personal circumstances of the landowner. The fact that the owner might be able make a more profitable use of the land if it were not for the zoning regulations does not equate to hardship. Proof of a true hardship is a legal requirement for a zoning board appeals to issue a variance."

Public Comment: Requested limit of no more than 3 minutes in duration. **Note:** Public Comment is for non-agenda topics; for agenda related items, comments need to be made during agenda item discussion for inclusion in the record on that issue

Variance request at 23 Meghan Boulevard, Terryville, CT

Application of Property Owner Stephen Butler for Variance of Side Yard Setback Requirement in Residence R-40 District, Section 4.C. of the Zoning Regulations, for construction of second attached garage at 23 Meghan Boulevard/Assessor Parcel Number 019-017-003-3

Application of Property Owner Stephen Butler for Variance Cont'd.

Stephen Butler stated he wanted to propose the attached garage noting it was over three years in the making. He further stated his plans had included the gazebo, the inground swimming pool and the garage, plans were drawn up in 2022 and Bob Green did the plot plan for the garage so they could decide where they wanted to/could put the pool, the gazebo and the garage. Stephen Butler stated the leech fields come up behind the garage so that kept him from going deeper like he wanted to so he could only go 36 feet deep. The pool was built right after the plans were drawn up. They want to go with the 42 feet because he wants to put a camper on one side and his late father's antique car on the other side and briefly elaborated. Stephen Butler stated there will be a door and a little roof connected, so they can walk out to the existing garage in inclement weather. It will be esthetically pleasing to the neighborhood; and that he had sent letters to both sides of his neighbors and received no opposition to the construction.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated the driveway is on the southern side of the property, and the septic fields are on the north side of Stephen Butler's property, noting the patio pavilion and pool are closer to the neighboring property.

Stephen Butler stated that when he applied for the permit, he was told by Torrington Area Health Department (TAHD) that a plot plan was not required by the Town to do the pool and that he only needed to show the TAHD and the Town where the concrete would be. He further stated he thinks it is 45 to 50 feet from the property line in to where the actual fence is located.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated the way the property is organized and where Stephen Butler wants to put the garage is the only logical place it can be, noting it is where the driveway is.

When questioned by Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan, Stephen Butler stated the sunroom came with the house when he purchased it nine years ago in 2016.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr questioned why the sunroom wasn't on the blueprint.

Stephen Butler stated he has pictures of the sunroom before he bought the house.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated the sunroom should have been shown on the survey.

Stephen Butler stated he does not know why Bob Green didn't show it on the survey.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated having the sunroom pushes the rear plane of Stephen Butler's property back and briefly elaborated.

Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting
July 29, 2025
Page Three of Eight Pages

Application of Property Owner Stephen Butler for Variance Cont'd.

He further stated regardless of what Stephen Butlers does; he must follow the 25 foot setback requirement unless he gets a variance and briefly elaborated.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated he would like to see a site plan with all the buildings that are currently on the property, including the swimming pool. Marty Sandsahw stated an eleven foot side yard is more than 50 percent of the Zoning Regulations.

Robert Allen, 17 Meghan Boulevard, Terryville, stated he can see Stephen Butler's backyard from his yard, noting he is on the North side and that Stephen Butler meticulously takes care of his property, so he's not worried about him destroying his home value.

Robert Allen stated the previous neighbor was the worst. Robert Allen stated even the height of the garage doesn't matter to him because Stephen Butler has a tall tree line, noting Stephen Butler had planted pear trees on his side.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated the property to the South (31 Meghan Boulevard) is vacant and is owned by Solange and Kenneth Castonguay.

Kenneth Castonguay, 31 Meghan Boulevard, Terryville, stated he doesn't live on the property.

Solange Castonguay, 31 Meghan Boulevard, Terryville, stated there may be a problem selling their lot if the garage is too high and the potential buyer might complain, noting once it's built there will be nothing they can do about it.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated he is in agreement with Chairman Marty Sandshaw noting the Site Plan is incomplete.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated the Commission would need official documentation showing what is currently located on the property so they can make a proper decision.

Stephen Butler stated he spoke with Bob Green before the meeting and noted it will cost him over one thousand dollars to get the requested documentation. He further stated he has no problem with doing that but to spend it on an "if" and asked if the Commissioners could see where he was coming from.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated he also has a problem with the size of the garage and wants to know why the garage has to be 36 feet x 42 feet when Stephen Butler already has a three car garage attached to the house.

Stephen Butler stated he already explained why he needs that size garage citing the camper and the antique car on a storage lift.

Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting
July 29, 2025
Page of Four of Eight Pages

Application of Property Owner Stephen Butler for Variance Cont'd.

Stephen Butler stated the stairs that go to the loft also affect the size so they can pass by it, so he can't shrink it. Stephen Butler stated he has 25 to 30 foot arborvitaes on Mr. Castonguay's side of his property so the garage will not be visible. He further stated campers are 12 feet to 13 feet in height and the one he wants is 35 feet in length. Stephen Butler stated he doesn't want to keep his camper outside. Stephen Butler stated the second floor would only be used for storage and would be open with a floor. He further stated Bob Green told him by going 36 feet they could just bump it out a little bit and he wouldn't have to get a variance.

When questioned by Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan, Stephen Butler stated the size of the doors on the proposed garage are larger than the doors on the existing garage to accommodate the camper.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated that along with the map Stephen Butler would need a Zoning Table because there are a lot of items not being shown such as the hoop house, the pool, pavilion for the pool, and a land/sea container.

When questioned by Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan, Stephen Butler stated the trucks and the earth moving equipment on his property belong to his buddies and he only tinkers with them, noting they will be gone. He further stated the bobcat does belong to him and will go into one of the bays, so most of the stuff in the yard will be put into the existing and new garages.

Stephen Butler stated all that stuff is temporary, noting he didn't know he needed a permit for the hoop house. He further stated the items in the hoop house and the storage container will be put into the garage.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated if the structure is on the property for longer than six months it is permanent according to the Building Code.

Solange Castonguay questioned if Stephen Butler has a business on the property.

Stephen Butler stated the trucks on his property are for tax purposes. He further stated the white truck he has needed Department of Transportation (DOT) numbers, noting you cannot get a DOT number without a business, so he created a business. Stephen Butler stated he works for Eversource full time.

When questioned by Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan, Stephen Butler stated because of the weight of the vehicle a DOT number is required but it is still considered to be a personal vehicle. He further stated he couldn't register it as being personal, so he had to get a commercial DOT number in order to have the truck.

Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting
July 29, 2025
Page Five of Eight Pages

Application of Property Owner Stephen Butler for Variance Cont'd.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated the truck and the email is in Stephen Butler's name and so it is a business. He further stated if he had more time he would issue a cease and desist because Stephen Butler is operating a business in a residential neighborhood.

Stephen Butler stated he doesn't operate a business and he already went through the Assessor Office about it, noting he works twelve hour shifts for Eversource and it was the only thing he could do to get a DOT number.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Sarah Sandshaw stated it changes the registration, and it is registered as a commercial vehicle.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated the truck is registered under Stephen Butler's Construction business name.

When questioned by Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw, Stephen Butler stated his business mailing address is Meghan Boulevard.

Stephen Butler stated he had previous conversations with Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr about concrete blocks which he had on the property, noting he has since removed them. Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated the septic is also not labeled on the plot plan. Marty Sandshaw stated the Public Hearing could be continued when Stephen Butler has a complete site map and the hardship can be documented, noting the Commission is protecting Stephen Butler.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated the site map should show all the structures on the site including the septic location, maximum building coverage, and the maximum lot coverage.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Chip Wilcox stated he would like to see the sunporch on the plan as well.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated he would like to see the shed on the plan even if Stephen Butler plans on removing it, noting that it needs to be labeled.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated Bob Green can use arrows showing what structures will be removed and what structures will be staying.

Open and close Public Hearing on Application

When questioned by Stephen Butler, Marty Sandshaw stated he did not need to send out letters to the neighbors again.

**Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting
July 29, 2025
Page Six of Eight Pages**

Open and close Public Hearing on Application Cont'd.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated the Public Hearing will be continued. He further stated there is no action to take at this time.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated because both neighboring property owners are present this evening, the Town would not have to publish notice again. Marty Sandshaw stated the next scheduled meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals Commission will be held on August 26th.

Deliberate and take action on Application

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated he reviewed Stephen Butler's permits for the last nine years, noting he did not see a permit for the sunroom, so his date may be off.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated Stephen Butler did not pay for the pool permit, not he did pull a permit but that is all and the pool is already installed. Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated he will work on the pool and the business, noting he may not do anything about the business on the property until the Commissioners see the new maps. Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated that he has documents showing that he has been chasing Stephen Butler for the past three to four years for the wood piles, large blocks, etc., noting this property keeps him busy.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated he and Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr will put together a history of the property for administrative purposes. Margus Laan stated he recommended that all the Commissioners do a drive or walk by of the property to see what the situation is.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated when Meghan Boulevard was paved Stephen Butler wanted the island removed so he could back equipment onto his property and they started to remove it but then put it back.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated he feels Stephen Butler is running a business on the property, noting that it would also be clear to anyone who does a drive by of the property.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated it's clear he has a business on the property, noting the equipment has been there for years.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Thomas Tracy questioned why Stephen Butler would need an MS-50 for a personal truck.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Chip Wilcox stated he would need it for heavy equipment.

Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting
July 29, 2025
Page Seven of Eight Pages

Deliberate and take action on Application Cont'd.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr there is dump truck body with a six foot bed that's all rusty sitting in his driveway, noting it has been there for years.

Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman Marty Sandshaw stated the size of the garage will compromise the character of the neighborhood. He further stated there isn't another house in the neighborhood with that size of a garage that is so close to the property line.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated Stephen Butler is trying to squeeze the garage in when he already has the pool and the cabana, noting he wasn't without thinking about the project ahead of time.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Thomas Tracy stated Eversource is a very button down company, noting they have plans down the road if you work for them. He further stated it is instilled in you to think about things. Thomas Tracy stated Stephen Butler is coming to the Commission after he's done half of his work, noting it does not hold a lot of water.

Director of Economic Development and Planning Margus Laan stated he does not understand how Bob Green could draw a building like that, noting it doesn't make any sense, and it's only three years old. He further stated the sun porch is also missing from the drawing.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated there is a dump truck hidden on the side of the shed.

When questioned by Thomas Tracy, Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated Bob Green will let the Commission know if Stephen Butler is within all the setbacks and the lot coverage, building coverage, and we will go from there.

Sarah Sandshaw stated that she drove by Stephen Butler's property, noting the pool is on the north side of the house, there's a section between his house and the neighbor on the right who spoke on his behalf and is unsure where the property line is, noting it is very cluttered there is a lot happening in a small area.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Castonguay is correct in questioning what the humongous garage will do to the value of her property.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr you can't miss the garage, it sticks out. He further stated years ago he had many complaints from the neighbors, noting he was surprised that Stephen Butler was able to find someone to speak out on his behalf.

**Zoning Board of Appeals Regular Meeting
July 29, 2025
Page Eight of Eight Pages**

Deliberate and take action on Application Cont'd.

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Sarah Sandshaw stated that she knows from experience you do not need to start a business to get DOT numbers you just need to have it registered as “not for hire” in order to get the commercial registration.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Scott Eisenlohr stated that Stephen Butler registered a dump truck in his name but said he does not have a business, noting Stephen Butler also has business insurance for his equipment.

Review, deliberate and motion and vote to approve, to amend or reject the minutes of April 29, 2025 Regular Meeting

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Sarah Sandshaw made a motion, seconded by Chip Wilcox, to accept the April 29, 2025, Minutes as presented. This motion was approved unanimously.

Administrative Matters

Zoning Board of Appeals Member Chip Wilcox stated he will be turning in his resignation because he is moving out of Town. He further stated it will be effective as soon as he sells his house. If the meeting comes within the time he is still a resident he will be in attendance.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Board of Appeals Member Thomas Tracy made a motion, seconded by Zoning Board of Appeals Member Chip Wilcox, to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. This motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Patricia A. Hale
Recording Secretary