

August 5, 2025

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Members of the River Edge Land Use Board
Borough of River Edge
705 Kinderkamack Road
River Edge, New Jersey 07661

**RE: Proposed Addition, Alteration & Site Improvements
885 Park Avenue
Block 208, Lot 12
Borough of River Edge
Bergen County, New Jersey**

Dear Board Members:

Our office has reviewed the application and plans for the proposed addition, interior and exterior alterations, and associated site improvements at the above-referenced property. The subject site is located in the Residential (R-1) Zoning District and is characterized by an undersized, rectangular-shaped corner lot that does not conform to the minimum lot depth and lot area requirements of the R-1 Zone. The property is bounded by Park Avenue to east, Spring Valley Avenue to the south and single-family dwellings to the north and west. Existing site improvements include a two-and-a-half-story frame dwelling, shed, open porch, a concrete driveway, a paver patio, concrete stairs, masonry retaining wall, wood fence and chain link fence.

The Applicant is proposing a two-and-a-half-story addition at the north end of the existing dwelling, masonry walls, stone patio, panel fencing and arborvitaes. The proposed improvements will result in an increase in lot coverage and encroach into the front yard setback and rear yard setback, requiring variance relief. An analysis of the applicable R-1 District zoning requirements, the associated variances, and our comments based on the submitted application materials are provided below.

Aerial Photograph



Materials Reviewed

1. Architectural Plan, entitled “Addition and Alterations to the Martinez/Sanchez Residence, 885 Park Avenue, River Edge, New Jersey”, consisting of three (3) sheets, prepared by Joseph J. Bruno, AIA, dated May 18, 2025 and last revised July 7, 2025;
2. Survey entitled, “Boundary Survey, Tax Lot 12 Block 208, 885 Park Avenue, Borough of River Edge, Bergen County, New Jersey”, consisting of one (1) sheet signed by John J. Butler, P.L.S. of Butler Surveying Mapping, dated August 11, 2014;
3. Letter of Noncompliance from Stephen Depken River Edge Construction Official / Zoning Officer dated June 9, 2025 and last revised July 9, 2025; and
4. The Borough of River Edge Land Use Board Zoning Application.

Zoning Analysis

Zoning Requirements Residential (R-1) Zoning District				
Description	Required	Existing	Proposed	Variance
Lot Area	7,500 S.F.	5,012 S.F.	No change	None
Lot Width	75 Ft.	100.25 Ft.	No change	None
Lot Depth	100 Ft.	50.12 Ft. (EN)	No change	None
Front Yard Setback (Park Avenue)	30 Ft.	17.67 Ft. (EN) ⁽¹⁾	17.67 Ft.	Required
Front Yard Setback (Spring Valley Avenue)	30 Ft.	29.60 Ft. (EN)	29.60 Ft. ⁽²⁾	Required
Side Yard Setback	7.5 Ft.	36.30 Ft.	26.67 Ft.	None
Combined Side Yard Setback	18 Ft.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rear Yard Setback	25 Ft.	9.20 Ft.	9.20 Ft.	Required
Building Height	30 Ft.	28 Ft.	29.50 Ft. ⁽³⁾	None
Number of Stories	2 ½ Stories	2 ½ Stories	2 ½ Stories	
Building Coverage	25% (1,253 SF)	17.59% (882 SF)	19.43% (974 SF)	None
Lot Coverage (Excluding Yard Amenities)	30% (1,503.6 SF)	23.48% (1,177 SF)	27.47% (1,377 SF)	None
Lot Coverage (Including Yard Amenities)	35% (1,754.2 SF)	31.16% (1,562 SF)	37.75% (1,892 SF)	Required
Accessory Buildings and Structures				
Description	Required	Existing	Proposed	Variance
Maximum Height	12 Ft.	Not Provided	Not provided	None
Front Yard Setback	30 Ft.	> 30 Ft.	> 30 Ft.	None
Side Yard Setback	4 Ft.	7.60 Ft.	> 4 Ft.	None
Rear Yard Setback	4 Ft.	7.10 Ft.	6.00 Ft.	None
Setback from Single- Family Dwelling	5 Ft.	> 5 Ft.	0.60 Ft.	Required

Accessory Buildings and Structures				
Description	Required	Existing	Proposed	Variance
Aggregate Cover	30% of side or rear yard or 150 SF for roofed structures	Not provided	Not provided	None

(EN) - Existing Non-Conformity; N/A – Not Applicable

Notes:

- (1) See General Comment #11 below.
- (2) See General Comment #12 below.
- (3) See General Comment #1 below.

General Comments

1. The Architectural Plan shall be revised to include building height calculations in accordance with the definition of Building Height from §416-4.
2. The Architectural Plan shall be revised to include the lot coverage (excluding yard amenities) calculation.
3. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the proposed additions including material and style. We recommend the Applicant submit color renderings of the proposed addition.
4. The Applicant shall provide testimony in support of all requested variances from the bulk standards of the R-1 District.
5. The survey submitted is dated 2014. The Applicant shall provide testimony confirming that the existing conditions depicted remain accurate and reflective of current site conditions.
6. If the Applicant proposes to disturb more than 5,000 square feet of land, a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Certification must be obtained from the Bergen County Soil Conservation District. The Applicant shall confirm the total disturbance area and provide evidence of compliance with this requirement.
7. Per §416-13C(2) *Patios may be located in any side or rear yard, provided that they are not closer than five feet to any property line.* The proposed stone patio complies with this regulation.
8. The Architectural Plan shall be revised to include a construction detail for the proposed masonry wall.
9. The Applicant proposes to replace the existing wood and chain link fencing with a panel fence measuring six (6) feet in height along the side and rear yards, and three (3) feet in height in the front yard. The fence will be set back six (6) inches from the property line. This design complies with §416-29B.
10. The roof covering over the porch is not clearly shown, and it appears to encroach further into the setback than the indicated 17.67 feet. The Applicant shall confirm the extent of the encroachment and revise the plans accordingly.

11. Per §416-13(4), chimneys or flues are permitted within yard areas provided they do not exceed 75 square feet in total exterior area and do not project more than two (2) feet into any yard. The proposed fireplace complies with these standards.
12. Per §416-13(3) *Cornices, eaves, bay windows, balconies, cantilevered roofs and fire escapes may project not more than 2.5 feet into any yard area.* The proposed portico roof extending from the northerly side of the addition appears to meet this requirement; however, the site plan shall be revised to clearly show this projection to confirm compliance.
13. A note on the Architectural Plan states “a stormwater chamber to collect rain water from all new roof areas will be submitted at the time of building permit application. The chamber will be designed by a NJ licensed civil engineer.” The proposed stormwater system shall be designed in accordance with the requirements outlined in the comments below.

Engineering Comments

Utilities

1. The Applicant shall confirm there will be no changes to the existing utilities. If changes are proposed, the same shall be noted on the site plan.

Stormwater Management

1. The Applicant is proposing to increase the building coverage is by 330 square feet. Accordingly, stormwater management measures are required to mitigate the additional runoff associated with this increase. The system must be designed to accommodate a three-inch rainfall event. The site plan shall be revised to clearly show the proposed location, dimensions, and design specifications of the required stormwater management system.
2. All stormwater management systems, including seepage pits and drainage infrastructure, shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from all property lines.
3. All stormwater conveyance piping shall be constructed using Schedule 40 PVC.
4. Prior to the installation of the seepage pit, the Applicant shall confirm that the seasonal high groundwater table is at least two (2) feet below the bottom of the proposed stone layer. If this requirement cannot be met, the stormwater management design must be revised to ensure proper system functionality.
5. A permeability test shall be conducted on-site prior to the installation of the seepage pit. The results of this test shall be submitted to our office for review to confirm the suitability of the proposed stormwater management system and ensure it functions as intended.

Lighting & Landscaping

1. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding any proposed lighting, including fixture type, location, and potential impacts on adjacent properties.
2. The Applicant proposes arborvitae plantings at the northeast corner of the property, along the frontage and the northerly side of the driveway. Our office has no objections to these plantings.

Traffic

1. Per the Residential Site Improvements Standards (RSIS) §5:21-4.14 Table 4.4 a three-bedroom single-family dwelling is required to have two (2) off-street parking spaces. Per RSIS §5:21-4.14(d)2 a one-car garage and driveway combination shall count as 2 off-street parking spaces. The Applicant is proposing a one-car garage and driveway combination. Therefore, the Applicant is compliant with the off-street parking requirements of RSIS.

Grading

1. A grading plan has not been submitted. The Applicant shall provide testimony confirming whether any regrading of the property is proposed. If regrading is anticipated, a grading plan must be submitted showing both existing and proposed contours.
2. The Applicant proposes to replace the existing masonry walls along the northerly side of the driveway. Grading information shall be provided for both the top and bottom of the wall. If the new wall exceeds four (4) feet in height, including embedment, structural calculations signed and sealed by a New Jersey-licensed Professional Engineer must be submitted. Upon completion, a certification shall be provided confirming the wall was constructed in accordance with the approved plans and structural calculations.

Approvals Required

It is the Applicant's responsibility to determine what, if any, permits are required from outside agencies in order to construct the proposed development. Including, but not limited to, the following:

➤ **Bergen County Soil Conservation District**

General Requirements

1. The Applicant shall comply with the requirements of Borough Ordinance Chapter 354 regarding Soil Removal, if approved.
2. Construction activities may only be conducted during hours stipulated by Borough Ordinance.
3. Any adjacent structure, retaining wall, landscaping, curb, piping, pavement, fencing, etc. damaged during construction must be repaired or replaced.
4. If approved and upon completion of the proposed work a signed and sealed as-built shall be provided and shall include a breakdown of the building and lot coverage.
5. The Applicant's plans should indicate an appropriate notation and reference that all construction work for the project must be performed in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the New Jersey Uniform Code, and good construction and engineering practice as it pertains to safety.

The above comments are based on our review of the submitted application and plans. At this time, we recommend that the application be deemed **complete**. We have made every effort to provide a thorough review; however, any future submissions, depending on the nature of revisions, may require additional review and comments.

Should you require additional information or have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact our office at (201) 487-0015.

Very truly yours,

COSTA ENGINEERING CORPORATION



Robert L. Costa, P.E., P.P. & C.M.E.

Borough of River Edge Municipal Land Use Board Engineer

cc: Edwin Alter – Municipal Land Use Clerk (Email only)
Stephen Depken, River Edge Zoning Officer (Email only)
Thomas Behrens – Board Planner (Email only)
Marina Stinely, Esq. – Board Attorney (Email only)
Ernesto Martinez & Mayerling Sanchez (Applicant) (Email only)
Joseph J. Bruno, A.I.A. (Applicant's Architect) (Email only)