#### DRAFT MINUTES 081924

#### TOWN OF PITTSFORD ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AUGUST 19, 2024

Minutes of the Town of Pittsford Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held on June 17, 2024 at 6:30PM local time. The meeting took place in the Lower-Level Meeting Room of Pittsford Town Hall, 11 S. Main Street.

PRESENT: George Dounce, Barbara Servé, Phil Castleberry, Tom Kidera

ABSENT: Jennifer Iacobucci, Mary Ellen Spennacchio-Wagner, Jim Pergolizzi

ALSO PRESENT: April Zurowski, Planning Assistant; Naveen Havannavar, Town Board Liaison

ATTENDANCE: There were 5 members of the public present.

Chairman George Dounce called the meeting to order at 6:32PM.

#### **NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**2185 W Jefferson Road, Tax ID 163.02-1-52** – Applicant is requesting relief from Town Code Section 185-17 B. (1) for the construction of an addition extending past the building line. This property is zoned Residential Neighborhood (RN).

Chairman Dounce opened the public hearing.

Scott Newman, of Ameribuilt Construction, introduced the application. Chairman Dounce asked Ms. Zurowski to address the noted fence concern. Ms. Zurowski stated that the existing fence does not meet the current Town Zoning Code, but Mr. Newman has stated his intent to relocate the fence after the addition is built to meet the Code. Mr. Newman confirmed that the fence will be relocated. Chairman Dounce stated that the relocation of the fence is proposed as a condition of approval.

Chairman Dounce asked when the addition is planned for construction. Mr. Newman stated that construction is planned to begin immediately following Design Review and Historic Preservation Board approval.

Board Member Castleberry motioned to close the public hearing, seconded by Board Member Kidera; all ayes, none opposed.

**17 E Park Road, Tax ID 151.17-2-50** – Applicant is requesting relief from Town Code Section 185-17 B. (1) for the construction of a covered porch and second-story bedroom addition extending past the building line. This property is zoned Residential Neighborhood (RN).

Chairman Dounce opened the public hearing.

Chris Hennessey, of CKH Architecture, introduced the application. She stated that the intent for the addition is to provide a larger foyer and covered entryway on the first floor and an expanded closet on the second floor. Chairman Dounce asked if the applicant spoke with the neighbor across the street. Ms. Hennessey confirmed.

Chairman Dounce asked when the addition is planned for construction. Ms. Hennessey stated that construction is planned to begin immediately following Design Review and Historic Preservation Board approval.

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Chairman Dounce motioned to close the public hearing, seconded by Vice Chairperson Servé; all ayes, none opposed.

**165 French Road, Tax ID 151.13-1-8** – Applicant is requesting relief from Town Code Sections 185-113 B. (1) and (3) for the construction of an oversized pergola forward of the rear wall of the main structure. This property is zoned Residential Neighborhood (RN).

Chairman Dounce opened the public hearing.

Meghan Crough, of 165 French Road, introduced the application. Vice Chairperson Servé asked if the pergola could be relocated to the side of the house covering the existing deck. Chairman Dounce asked the applicant to share her reasoning for the pergola's proposed placement. Ms. Crough stated that the property has a steeply sloped backyard, so the front yard is the only usable space. She stated that the pergola could be over the deck, but she has future plans to enclose the deck into a three-season room.

Vice Chairperson Servé asked when the pergola is planned for construction. Ms. Crough stated that construction is planned to begin immediately following Design Review and Historic Preservation Board approval.

Chairman Dounce asked if Ms. Crough spoke with her neighbors about the proposal. Ms. Crough did not speak with the apartment renters but did speak with her other neighbor who was supportive.

Board Member Kidera motioned to close the public hearing, seconded by Board Member Castleberry; all ayes, none opposed.

**55 Mitchell Road, Tax ID 164.11-2-12.11** – Applicant is requesting relief from Town Code Section 185-121 A. for the installation of a 4-foot-tall fence in front of the front setback with decorative fence posts extending taller than 6 inches. This property is zoned Residential Neighborhood (RN) and Local Waterfront Overlay District (LWOD).

Chairman Dounce opened the public hearing.

Zachary Steele, of Steele Landscape Architecture, introduced the application. He stated that the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board has requested the applicant to apply for a variance for the fence in order to keep the historic nature of the property.

Chairman Dounce motioned to close the public hearing, seconded by Vice Chairperson Servé; all ayes, none opposed.

#### **OTHER DISCUSSION:**

Chairman Dounce motioned to approve the minutes of July 15, 2024. Following a unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved, none opposed.

Chairman Dounce opened the discussion surrounding revisions to the Town Zoning Code section involving keeping of chickens. He stated that the Town Board has requested comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals on this matter.

Chairman Dounce stated that he was a member of the Comprehensive Plan committee that put together and reviewed the current Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan does not mention intent to revise the code for keeping chickens. It was not discussed by residents or the committee at the time. He asked Ms. Zurowski to address why code changes are now proposed. Ms. Zurowski stated that during the Zoning Code

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update process, a few residents have expressed interest to revise the code, both for and against the keeping of chickens. Chairman Dounce stated that though the Zoning Board of Appeals has not reviewed many area variances for chicken coops, the applications that were received caused neighbor concerns.

Vice Chairperson Servé shared concern over the proposed lot size and setbacks. She asked the Town Board to consider larger lots and larger setbacks.

Chairman Dounce stated that he is not in favor of changing the code from 150-foot setbacks from all property lines. Vice Chairperson Servé agreed.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar stated that the Town does not currently have clear regulations for chickens. Ms. Zurowski stated that the current code provides clear setbacks and maximum coop size but lacks a maximum number of chickens or open-air regulations required by NYS Agriculture and Markets Law.

Board Member Kidera suggested fewer than 12 chickens permitted on lots smaller than one acre. Ms. Zurowski stated that according to NYS Agriculture and Markets Law, chickens must be sold in multiples of six.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar agreed that 25-foot setbacks may be too close to neighbors.

Chairman Dounce stated that farm animals should not be permitted in residential neighborhoods and that allowing such would impact the character of the Town.

Vice Chairperson Servé shared concern for enforcement of the code. She asked if the Town would have enough Code Enforcement staff to accommodate more permitted chickens.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar stated that more Code Enforcement staff could be proposed in the budget to accommodate the new code. The Board was not in favor of increasing the Town budget to accommodate anticipated enforcement complaints surrounding chickens.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar stated that the Town Board is attempting to provide equity to residents who cannot currently have chickens. Chairman Dounce stated that this does not provide equity, as all residents would not be allowed to keep chickens.

Board Member Castleberry shared concern for the anticipated burden on Town staff for permitting and enforcement. He agreed with Chairman Dounce that this change would impact residential neighborhoods in a negative way. He lives on a one-acre lot and feels that chickens would not be appropriate.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar shared his idea for neighbor approval forms and stated that there would be limited residents with chickens, as neighbors may oppose the proposal. Chairman Dounce stated that anticipated neighborhood opposition should guide the Town Board to a decision on the proposed code.

Ms. Zurowski stated that she will assist with sharing the Board's comments with the Town Board.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar asked if the Town Board could adopt a code to allow Town staff to approve certain variances. Ms. Zurowski stated that approving all "minimal" variances would defeat the purpose of the code. For example, if all 200 square-foot sheds were approved, where 180 square feet is the maximum, the Town should just change the code to allow for a 200 square-foot shed.

Town Board Liaison Havannavar asked if the Board had any need for an increased budget next year for additional Zoning Board of Appeals processes. No budget increases were needed.

Chairman George Dounce closed the meeting at 7:32PM.

Respectfully submitted,

April Zurowski Planning Assistant

OFFICIAL MINUTES ARE ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

#### **RE: 2185 W Jefferson Road**

### Tax Parcel: 163.02-1-52 Applicant: Scott Newman (Ameribuilt Construction) on behalf of Robert Greenbaum Zoned: Residential Neighborhood (RN)

I move that the Town of Pittsford Zoning Board of Appeals grant the above applicant relief from Town Code Section 185-17 B. (1) to allow for the construction of an addition 23 feet from the front property line where 50 feet is required by code, at the above location and bearing the above tax parcel number. The within resolution follows a public hearing held on August 19, 2024, and review by the Board of all written and oral submissions, together with due deliberation and consideration.

This application is a Type II Action under 6-NYCRR §617.5(c)(17) and, therefore, is not subject to Environmental Review under SEQRA. This application is exempt from review by the Monroe County Planning Department based on an agreement with Monroe County dated October 7, 2008.

The within resolution is based upon the following specific Findings of Fact and subject to the following specific Conditions of Approval:

# **FINDINGS OF FACT**

# As to the issue of whether an undesirable change will be produced in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties created by the granting of the application, the Board finds, as follows:

There will be no undesirable change produced in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties. The existing residence is a corner lot, and already sits forward the front setback on Park Square Lane, and the proposed addition is in line with the existing house. Further, the addition will have cedar siding and asphalt shingles that match the existing façade. The yard frontage along Park Square Lane has very mature vegetation, which minimizes the view of the house and the addition by others.

It should be noted that there is an existing illegal 6-foot-tall fence forward of the front setback on Park Square Lane. The applicant has stated that the fence will be relocated following construction of the addition to meet Town Zoning Code. The Town has stated to the applicant that a Certificate of Compliance for the addition will not be granted until the fence is relocated.

## As to whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by other feasible means:

Given that the existing house already sits forward the building line, combined with the internal layout of the house, location of mechanicals, and medical needs of the owner, there are no other feasible means to achieve the desired benefit.

# As to whether the application represents a substantial variance from Code, the Board finds, as follows:

The application does represent a substantial variance from code but is mitigated by not encroaching any further into the Park Square Lane front setback than the existing house already does.

# As to whether the requested variance will have an adverse impact on physical and/or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or District, the Board finds, as follows:

The variance will have no adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood. The applicant has also indicated that the residence sits at an elevation that allows for proper shedding of water to appropriate areas of the lawn without impact to any neighbors.

# As to whether the difficulty alleged by the applicant is self-created, the Board finds, as follows:

- 1. The Board understands that, under New York State Town Law Section 267-b (3)(b), the issue of self-created hardship is relevant to the Board's decision, but shall not, necessarily preclude the granting of a requested variance.
- 2. The need for this variance is self-created but is mitigated by the location of the existing residence past the building line, minimal impact to neighbors, and the fact that the applicants' property has two front setbacks.

# CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

The Board, in granting the within application, hereby imposes the following specific conditions:

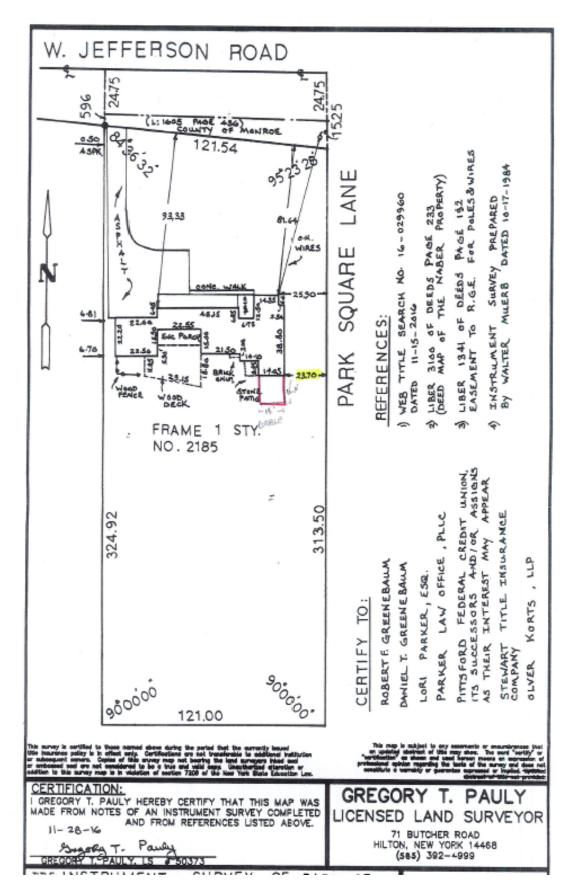
- 1. This variance is granted only for the attached plans submitted and prepared by the applicant dated July 8, 2024, and attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- 2. Construction of the addition must be completed by December 31, 2026.
- 3. Relocation of the illegal 6-foot-tall fence must be completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance for the addition.

The within Resolution was moved by Zoning Board of Appeals Member Phil Castleberry, seconded by Board Member Tom Kidera, and voted upon by the Board, as follows:

Phil Castleberry voted	Aye
James Pergolizzi voted	Absent
Barbara Servé voted	Aye
Thomas Kidera voted	Aye
Mary Ellen Spennacchio-Wagner voted	Absent
Jennifer lacobucci voted	Absent
George Dounce voted	Aye

The Zoning Board of Appeals adopted the above resolution on August 19, 2024.

**EXHIBIT A** 



#### RE: 17 E Park Road

### Tax Parcel: 151.17-2-50 Applicant: Elizabeth Rowland Zoned: Residential Neighborhood (RN)

I move that the Town of Pittsford Zoning Board of Appeals grant the above applicant relief from Town Code Sections 185-17 B. and E. (1) to allow construction of a two-story addition to the front of the home 43 feet from the front property line where 50 feet is required by code at the above location and bearing the above tax parcel number. The within resolution follows a public hearing held on August 19, 2024, and review by the Board of all written and oral submissions, together with due deliberation and consideration.

This application is a Type II Action under 6-NYCRR §617.5(c)(17) and, therefore, is not subject to Environmental Review under SEQRA. This application is exempt from review by the Monroe County Planning Department based on an agreement with Monroe County dated October 7, 2008.

The within resolution is based upon the following specific Findings of Fact and subject to the following specific Conditions of Approval:

# **FINDINGS OF FACT**

# As to the issue of whether an undesirable change will be produced in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties created by the granting of the application, the Board finds, as follows:

The proposed variance will result in no undesirable change in the neighborhood or create a detriment to nearby properties. The addition will only add 78 square feet of internal gross floor area. The covered porch will add an additional 17 square feet of unenclosed space. This will enhance the front exterior. There is no neighborhood opposition.

## As to whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by other feasible means:

The benefit sought by the applicant cannot be achieved by other feasible means. A covered front porch/entryway and increased second floor closet space can only occur in this location.

# As to whether the application represents a substantial variance from Code, the Board finds, as follows:

The request for the 7-foot variance is not considered a substantial variance from code (14%).

# As to whether the requested variance will have an adverse impact on physical and/or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or District, the Board finds, as follows:

The requested variance will have no impact on the physical and/or environmental conditions in the neighborhood.

# As to whether the difficulty alleged by the applicant is self-created, the Board finds, as follows:

- 1. The Board understands that, under New York State Town Law Section 267-b (3)(b), the issue of self-created hardship is relevant to the Board's decision, but shall not, necessarily preclude the granting of a requested variance.
- 2. The need for this variance is self-created but is mitigated by the practical need for additional closet space and a covered front door, so the variance is not precluded.

# **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

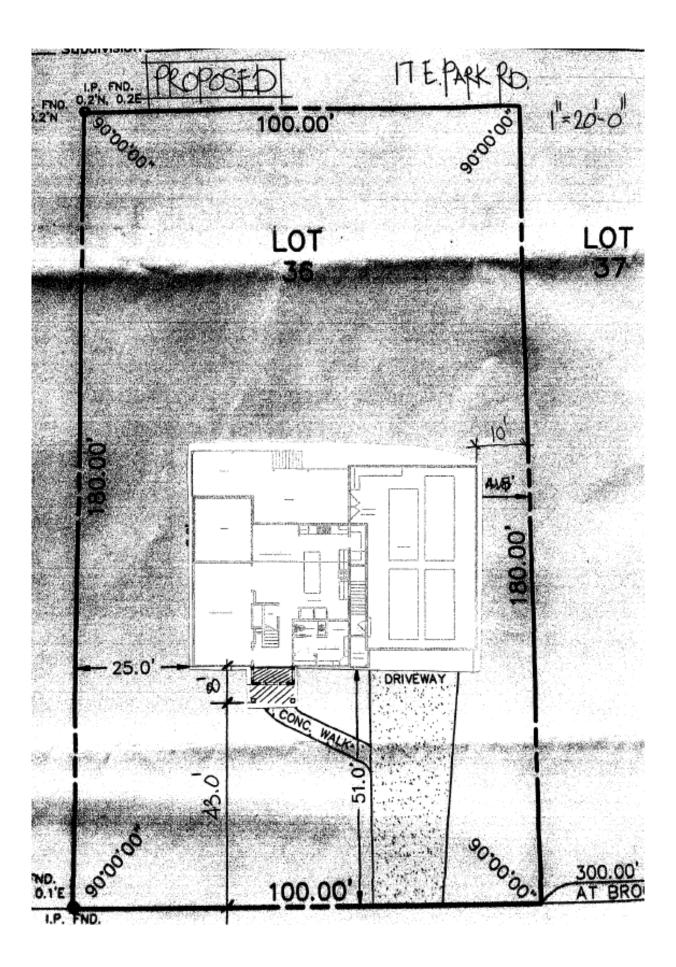
The Board, in granting the within application, hereby imposes the following specific conditions:

- 1. This variance is granted only for the plans submitted and prepared by the applicant dated July 11, 2024, and attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- 2. All construction of the addition must be completed by December 31, 2025.

The within Resolution was moved by Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman George Dounce, seconded by Board Member Tom Kidera, and voted upon by the Board, as follows:

Phil Castleberry voted	Aye
James Pergolizzi voted	Absent
Barbara Servé voted	Aye
Thomas Kidera voted	Aye
Mary Ellen Spennacchio-Wagner voted	Absent
Jennifer lacobucci voted	Absent
George Dounce voted	Aye

The Zoning Board of Appeals adopted the above resolution on August 19, 2024.



# **RE: 165 French Road**

### Tax Parcel: 151.13-1-8 Applicant: Meghan Crough Zoned: Residential Neighborhood (RN)

I move that the Town of Pittsford Zoning Board of Appeals grant the above applicant relief from Town Code Sections 185-113 B. (1) and (3) to allow construction of an oversized pergola forward of the rear wall of the main structure where code requires accessory structures to be placed behind the rear wall of the main structure at the above location and bearing the above tax parcel number. The within resolution follows a public hearing held on August 19, 2024 and reviewed by the Board of all written and oral submissions, together with due deliberation and consideration.

This application is a Type II Action under 6-NYCRR §617.5(c)(17) and, therefore, is not subject to Environmental Review under SEQRA. This application is exempt from review by the Monroe County Planning Department based on an agreement with Monroe County dated October 7, 2008.

The within resolution is based upon the following specific Findings of Fact and subject to the following specific Conditions of Approval:

# **FINDINGS OF FACT**

# As to the issue of whether an undesirable change will be produced in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties created by the granting of the application, the Board finds, as follows:

There will be no undesirable change produced in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties by the granting of this variance. The property borders the entrance to Pittsford Village Estates and Carriage Hill apartment complexes. The eastern property line is screened from the apartments. The pergola is proposed closest to the apartments and is away from the single-family residential neighbor to the west. The resident has an unusable steep backyard and is already using the front and side yards for recreation.

Presently, there is a shed located forward of the rear wall that was approved by the ZBA in 2022.

## As to whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by other feasible means:

The benefit sought by the applicant may be able to be achieved by other feasible means. Although the backyard is steep and mostly unusable, the applicant could propose the pergola over the existing deck located on the side of the home, thus alleviating a second structure in the front yard. The variance would be the same request, an oversized pergola forward of the rear wall of the main structure but will have a lesser impact on the neighborhood and District.

# As to whether the application represents a substantial variance from Code, the Board finds, as follows:

The requested variance for a 240 SF pergola is considered substantial from the 180 SF maximum permitted by code (33%). The requested variance to place the pergola forward of the rear wall of the main structure is also considered substantial. Accessory structures are rarely permitted to be placed in the front yard.

# As to whether the requested variance will have an adverse impact on physical and/or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or District, the Board finds, as follows:

There will be no adverse impact on the environmental/physical conditions in the neighborhood or District. There is an existing patio where the pergola will be placed to provide coverage.

# As to whether the difficulty alleged by the applicant is self-created, the Board finds, as follows:

- 1. The Board understands that, under New York State Town Law Section 267-b (3)(b), the issue of self-created hardship is relevant to the Board's decision, but shall not, necessarily preclude the granting of a requested variance.
- 2. The need for this variance is self-created but is mitigated by the inability to use the backyard for recreation, so the variance is not precluded.

# CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

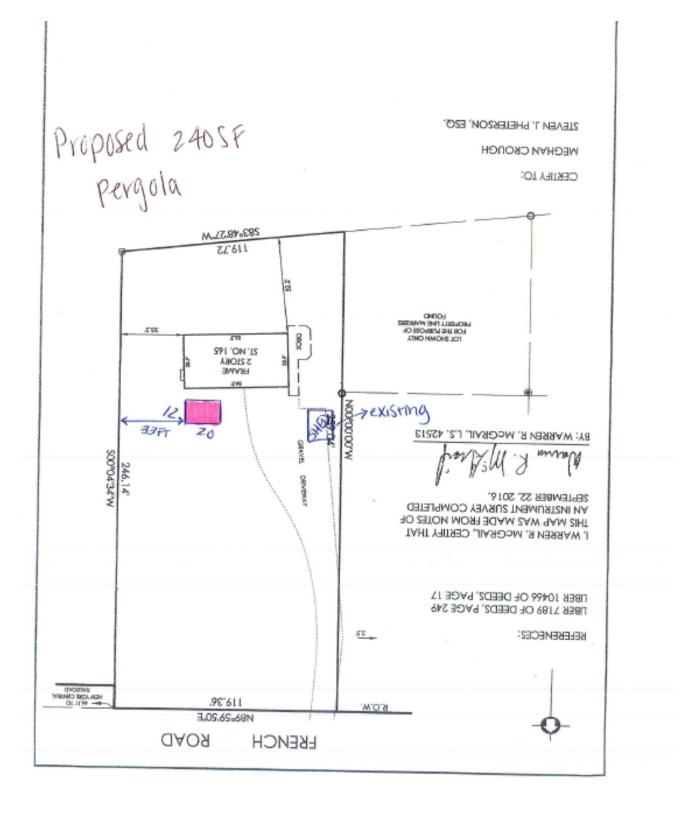
The Board, in granting the within application, hereby imposes the following specific conditions:

- 1. This variance is granted only for the plans submitted and prepared by the applicant dated July 12, 2024, and attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- 2. All construction of the pergola must be completed by December 31, 2025.

The within Resolution was moved by Zoning Board of Appeals Vice Chairperson Barb Servé, seconded by Board Member Phil Castleberry, and voted upon by the Board, as follows:

Phil Castleberry voted	Aye
James Pergolizzi voted	Absent
Barbara Servé voted	Aye
Thomas Kidera voted	Aye
Mary Ellen Spennacchio-Wagner voted	Absent
Jennifer lacobucci voted	Absent
George Dounce voted	Aye

The Zoning Board of Appeals adopted the above resolution on August 19, 2024.



### **RE: 55 Mitchell Road**

### Tax Parcel: 164.11-2-12.11 Applicant: Mackenzie Sands Zoned: Residential Neighborhood (RN) & Local Waterfront Overlay District (LWOD)

I move that the Town of Pittsford Zoning Board of Appeals grant the above applicant relief from Town Code Section 185-121 A. for the installation of a 4-foot-tall fence in front of the front setback, with decorative fence posts extending taller than 6 inches, at the above location and bearing the above tax parcel number. This resolution follows a public hearing held on August 19, 2024, and review by the Board of all written and oral submissions, together with due deliberation and consideration.

This application is a Type II Action under 6-NYCRR §617.5(c)(17) and, therefore, is not subject to Environmental Review under SEQRA. This application is exempt from review by the Monroe County Planning Department based on an agreement with Monroe County dated October 7, 2008.

The within resolution is based upon the following specific Findings of Fact and subject to the following specific Conditions of Approval:

# **FINDINGS OF FACT**

# As to the issue of whether an undesirable change will be produced in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties created by the granting of the application, the Board finds, as follows:

There will be no undesirable change in the neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties if this application is granted. The variance is requested to maintain consistency with the historic fencing style and height currently present on the property and it is consistent with the desires of the Pittsford Design Review & Historic Preservation Board (DRHPB).

## As to whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by other feasible means:

The benefit sought by the applicant cannot be achieved by other feasible means and it has been submitted at the request of the DRHPB.

# As to whether the application represents a substantial variance from Code, the Board finds, as follows:

The application to allow for a 4-foot-tall fence with 7-foot-tall decorative fence posts in front of the front setback, where only a 3-foot-tall fence is allowed, does represent a substantial variance from Code. Though this is a substantial variance request, it is requested by the DRHPB.

As to whether the requested variance will have an adverse impact on physical and/or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or District, the Board finds, as follows:

The requested variance will not have an adverse impact on the physical and/or environmental conditions in the neighborhood. The proposed project, including the repair and extension of the current fence, aims to re-establish a landscape character that is historically sensitive and appropriate to the home, as well as surrounding homes.

# As to whether the difficulty alleged by the applicant is self-created, the Board finds, as follows:

- 1. The Board understands that, under New York State Town Law Section 267-b (3)(b), the issue of self-created hardship is relevant to the Board's decision but shall not necessarily preclude the granting of a requested variance.
- 2. The need for this variance is self-created but is mitigated by the need to repair the current fence while satisfying the historical design requirements of the DRHPB.

# **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

The Board, in granting the within application, hereby imposes the following specific conditions:

- 1. This variance is granted only for the plans submitted and prepared by the applicant dated July 12, 2024 and attached hereto as Exhibit A.
- 2. All construction of the fence must be completed by December 31, 2025.

The within Resolution was moved by Zoning Board of Appeals Member Thomas Kidera, seconded by Board Chairman George Dounce, and voted upon by the Board, as follows:

Phil Castleberry voted	Aye
James Pergolizzi voted	Absent
Barbara Servé voted	Aye
Thomas Kidera voted	Aye
Mary Ellen Spennacchio-Wagner voted	Absent
Jennifer lacobucci voted	Absent
George Dounce voted	Aye

The Zoning Board of Appeals adopted the above resolution on August 19, 2024.

