


To: Ridgewood Zoning Board of Adjustment
Serge & Ina Ilin-Schneider

From: John Barree, PP, AICP 

CC: Jane Wondergem
Chris Rutishauser, PE
Bruce Whitaker, Esq

Date: July 18, 2024

Re: ZBA 24-17 Ilin-Schneider
22 Pomander Walk
Block 2205, Lot 20
"C" Bulk Variance; Completeness Review and Comments

I have reviewed the following materials in preparation of this report:

- Village of Ridgewood Board of Adjustment Application Form dated June 3, 2024.
- Proposed Grading and SESC Plan prepared by Thomas W. Skrable, PE, dated September 18, 2023.
- Property Survey, with partial topography prepared by Andrzej Manyslak, PLS, dated July 24, 2023.

Completeness Review and Comments

1. The subject property is an undersized lot in the R-3 zone located on the south side of Pomander Walk. The property is developed with an attached single-family dwelling with a driveway and detached garage in the rear yard. The applicant is proposing a new retaining wall along the rear property line, where the property slopes steeply toward the neighboring properties.
2. The following variance relief is required:
 - a. Insufficient Wall Setback – Per Section 190-124.F(2)(b) the exposed face of retaining walls shall be setback one foot for each foot of wall height from a side or rear property line. The proposed retaining wall extends along the entire rear property line and a portion of the side lot line shared with Lot 21. The wall ranges from approximately 3 to 6 feet tall, so a 3 to 6 foot setback is required where a 0.25 foot setback is proposed.
 - b. Excessive Wall Height – Per Section 190-124.F(3)(c) retaining walls shall not exceed 4 feet in height. A portion of the proposed retaining wall is up to 6 feet tall.

3. The plans do not include a zoning compliance table. Based on the ordinance definition of coverage by improvements in Section 190-3, the area of the top of the retaining walls is considered improved coverage. The applicant shall provide a calculation of existing and proposed improved coverage. It is not clear whether the site complies with the coverage requirements today, and whether the addition of the walls would create a new variance.
4. The survey shows a wood tie wall, irregular block wall, and paver steps in the rear yard near the proposed new retaining wall. Will any of these improvements be removed? This item does not require plan revisions, but can be addressed in testimony at the Board hearing.
5. After the applicant provides a zoning table addressing item #3, the application can be scheduled for a hearing.