


To: Ridgewood Zoning Board of Adjustment
Angela Yang and Noah Christiano

From: John Barree, PP, AICP 

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

Date: November 5, 2024

Re: ZBA 24-27 Yang & Christiano
68 Fairmount Road
Block 1503, Lot 4
"D" Height Variance, "C" Bulk Variances; Completeness Review and Comments

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

- Village of Ridgewood Board of Adjustment Application Form with attachments dated August 30, 2024
- Property Survey prepared by Christopher J. Lantelme, PE, PLS dated June 12, 2024.
- Zoning Compliance Table
- Architectural Plans consisting of 3 sheets prepared by Roger D. Schlicht, RA dated August 29, 2024.

Completeness Review and Comments

1. The subject property is an undersized lot on the southeast side of Fairmount Road in the R-1 Zone. The property is irregular in shape with a curved frontage and angled rear yard that extends to the southeast. The lot is developed with a residential dwelling, driveway, detached garage, and other ancillary improvements.
2. The applicant is proposing an addition to the rear of the dwelling that includes a new two-car attached garage that is on the same level as the exiting basement, which will be accessed by a new driveway along the west side of the property. The first and second floors of the dwelling are proposed to be expanded with new common living areas, a new primary bedroom suite, and expanded bedroom and laundry space. The detached garage is proposed to be reduced in area.
3. The applicant requires the following relief:
 - a. D(6) Height Variance – The maximum permitted height in the R-1 Zone is 30 feet unless certain standards are met. The application does not meet the side yard depth requirements to be permitted to have a height up to 35 feet. The proposed height appears to be 34 feet,

- which exceeds the permitted height by more than 10 percent, so a variance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d(6) is required.
- b. Insufficient Side Yard Setback – A minimum side yard setback of 2/3rds of the building height is required, which in this case is 22.66 feet. Non-conforming side yard setbacks of 11.5 feet and 21.1 feet exist. The proposed addition will have setbacks of 18.2 feet to the east property line (where 11.5 feet exists) and 16.7 feet to the west property line (where 21.1 feet exists.)
 - c. Exceeding Lot Coverage by Above Grade Improvements within 140 feet of the front lot line – A maximum lot coverage by above grade improvements of 20 percent is permitted where 24.4 percent is proposed.
 - d. Exceeding Gross Building Area within 140 feet of the front lot line – A maximum gross building area of 34 percent is permitted where 35.5 percent is proposed.
4. The applicant should clarify the existing and proposed building height as measured from the surrounding grade. A topographic survey has not been provided and it is not clear how the 34-foot height was measured.
 5. Floor plans have not been provided for the attic, and the attic has not been included in the calculation of gross building area. A staircase is shown on the 2nd floor plan leading to the attic, so it seems that at least some of the area of that floor will count as gross building area. The plan shall be provided and calculations updated to include any floor area with 7-foot clear height.
 6. The Zoning Table indicates that the proposed coverage by above grade structures for the whole lot is 21.2 percent, while the calculations and table on sheet V-1 of the drawings indicate that the above grade coverage is 19.3 percent. The applicant shall address the discrepancy between the two and provide a corrected, consistent version.
 7. The survey shows a stepping stone walk and stone border in the rear yard area that do not seem to be included in the coverage by improvement calculation. These will not create a variance condition, but the applicant should address whether they will remain, and if so, include them in the total coverage by improvements.
 8. The existing detached garage is labeled as “reduced modified garage w/ new roof.” The garage is in a non-conforming location with insufficient setbacks to the side yard. The applicant shall provide details about the proposed modification to the garage and whether any increase in height or other substantial changes will take place within the non-conforming portion of the structure.

9. The survey and plans do not show any exterior mechanical equipment such as air conditioning compressors or a generator. The applicant should address whether any such equipment exists or is proposed. If so, it should be added to the drawings and calculations accordingly.
10. Upon receipt of revised plans addressing items 4, 5, and 6, the application can be deemed complete and scheduled for a hearing.