


To: Ridgewood Zoning Board of Adjustment
Michael Beadon Jackson

From: John Barree, PP, AICP 

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

Date: February 7, 2025

Re: ZBA 24-39 Jackson
396 Godwin Avenue
Block 2501, Lot 4
"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 December 14, 2024.
- Property Survey prepared by Stephen D. Rigg, PLS dated July 11, 2024.
- 3 Sheet set of Architectural Plans prepared by Scott C. Bella, RA, revised through December 10, 2024.
- Zoning Compliance Table

Completeness Review and Comments

1. The subject property is an undersized, irregular nearly triangular shaped lot in the R-1 Zone at the intersection of Godwin and Lake Avenues. The property is developed with a 2 ½ Story residential dwelling with a wooden deck and pergola to the rear of the structure. A driveway with two curb cuts along Godwin Avenue exists and provides access to a one-car garage.
2. The applicant is proposing a second floor addition to create a new primary bedroom and bathroom suite. The addition measures approximately 32'-8" x 15'. A 5' x 5'-10" dormer expansion is also proposed in the attic.
3. The application includes records of prior Board approvals from 2019, 1997, and 1993. The current applicant was not involved in the prior applications. The Board found hardships associated with the size and shape of the property and the location of the lawfully existing structures on the property in 2019 to permit the expansion of the garage and creation of a mudroom.
4. The applicant requires the following relief according to Sheet V-1 of the architectural plans:

- a. Insufficient Front Yard Setback to Lake Avenue – The proposed 2nd floor addition will be setback 27 feet and the proposed attic dormer addition setback 26.1 feet where a 40 foot front setback is required. The existing structure is setback 10.6 feet from the wood deck at the southern corner of the house to Lake Avenue.
 - b. Insufficient Side Yard Setback – The existing structure has a 3 foot side yard setback where 15 feet is required. The proposed second floor addition will match the existing 3 foot setback.
5. There are other existing non-conforming dimensional conditions that will remain and not be modified by the application including:
 - a. Insufficient Lot Area – 11,405 SF where 16,800 SF is required.
 - b. Insufficient Lot Width – 96' at setback where 100' is required.
6. The plans do not include existing conditions. The proposed setbacks to Lake Avenue are dimensioned on the plan, but the existing condition is not shown at the closest point of the house. This item is not critical to the application but should be noted in testimony and provided on future plan revisions as a condition of any board action.
7. The attic plan indicates 250 square feet of habitable area. The applicant shall confirm the amount of space in the attic that has 7' and revise the plan to show the area as a condition of any board action. The proposed gross building area is 27.4% within 140 feet, which includes 250 square feet of space in the attic. If it is necessary to denote an increase in attic GBA, the application should still be well below the Ordinance requirements.
8. The survey shows the fence along Lake Avenue encroaching between 5.4 and 7.7 feet into the public right-of-way. The 1993 resolution of approval permitted the fence at 6 feet in height but does not discuss its placement. The location of the fence is not material to the relief sought by this application, but its original installation was permitted by the Board, so issues related to the prior approval may be relevant.
9. The application is technically complete and can be scheduled for a hearing. The applicant should be prepared to address the comments raised herein during testimony at the board hearing.