



Town of Hamden
Planning and Zoning Department

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September 10, 2026

Zoning Board of Appeals
Meeting Minutes

The Hamden Zoning Board of Appeals held a hybrid **Public Hearing and Special Meeting on Thursday, September 3, 2026 at 7:00pm**. The meeting was held **in-person at Hamden Government Center** (2750 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT 06518), but was moved from the 3rd Floor Conference Room to the **Parks and Recreation Department Conference Room**, and **remotely via Town Zoom** teleconferencing software at <https://hamden.zoom.us/j/82445626188>.

Commissioners in Attendance: **In-Person:** Paul Fioretti (*Chair*), Nancy Saravis-Foote, John Brantley, Francesca Provenzano, Steve Walsh

Staff in Attendance: **In-Person:** Eugene Livshits (*Town Planner*), Maisie Albis (*Commission Clerk*)

Via Zoom: Genevieve Bertolini (*Stenographer*)

Chairman Fioretti called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m. Members and staff introduced themselves. There was a quorum, with alternate Commissioner Walsh filling a vacancy on the Board.

A. Public Comment Session

There were no comments as there were no public attendees.

B. Public Hearing

1. Variance #26-6737

42 Giles Street

Applicant: Leslie Casanova

Variance requested from:

(1) Section 220 Table 2.3

- i. requesting 10.875-foot side yard setback where a minimum of 12 feet is required
- ii. requesting 24.5-foot front yard setback where a minimum of 25 feet is required

Leslie Casanova presented the application. She explained that she and her daughter are looking to construct a small addition to the daughter's home. The addition would provide space

for Ms. Casanova to live with her daughter in the home, as well as general living space and a one-car garage. She said that the garage would offer security and protection from the elements. Its footprint would extend into the side and front yard setbacks by roughly 13 inches and 6 inches, respectively, thus necessitating the requested variance.

Chairman Fioretti called for questions from members. Commissioner Provenzano noted that the location of an existing carport appeared to have already created a nonconformity on the lot. The Chairman confirmed, but explained that this proposal required a separate variance request since the garage would not be constructed within the area of the preexisting nonconformity. The original nonconformity will be reduced with the removal of the carport.

There were no further questions from the Board. Chairman Fioretti called for public comments regarding the application; there were none. The Chairman closed the public hearing on the item.

2. Variance #26-6738

1135 Paradise Avenue

Applicant: McNamara Builders & General Contractors

Variance requested from:

(1) Section 530.2.2(c)—requesting a subdivision comprised of 75% rear lots where a maximum of 15% is allowed

Civil engineer Marcus Puttock presented the application. He was joined by property owner Steve McNamara. Mr. Puttock first described the lot, explaining that the nearly 11-acre parcel was irregularly shaped with very narrow street frontage. He said that even a simple split would result in nonconformity as one of the two (50%) would be a rear lot.

Mr. Puttock reported that the applicant had explored other possibilities, such as the possibility of splitting the parcel into as many as eleven new lots and constructing a new road for access. It was determined through the design process that the current proposal would be significantly less disruptive in its construction and more fitting for the neighborhood overall.

The subdivision as submitted would include a large open space at the rear of the property, one lot with frontage on Paradise Avenue, and three interior lots requiring access ways from the street. Mr. Puttock noted the similarities of the proposed access ways to those of several adjacent parcels. The hardship, he said, stems from the irregular shape of the parcel. It does not allow for a typical subdivision without a major reconfiguration of the area; Mr. Puttock assessed that the current proposal is a better use of the land and more appropriate with consideration to the health and safety of the neighborhood.

Mr. Livshits prompted Mr. Puttock to clarify the changes made to the plan since its original submission. Mr. Puttock highlighted the access way to Lot #4, which had been shortened. He explained that the original dimension exceeded the maximum 400-foot length allowed by the subdivision and zoning regulations.

In response to a question from Commissioner Provenzano, Mr. Puttock said that length of the access way was reduced by making Lot #3 a bit smaller and bringing Lot #4 slightly closer to the road. Commissioner Walsh asked about the access way to Lot #2. Mr. Puttock confirmed that Lot #2 had its own access way adjacent and parallel to that of Lot #4. Chairman Fioretti inquired whether there were other subdivisions in Hamden with similar access roads. Mr. Puttock pointed to the adjacent parcels he had noted previously. The Chairman then asked if the open space depicted on the plan was part of the applicant's property. Mr. Puttock confirmed, adding that it is undevelopable without road access from the east of the property.

There were no further questions from members. Chairman Fioretti called for public comments, and there were none. He then closed the public hearing for the item.

3. Variance #26-6739

20 Woodbine Street

Applicant: Stephanie Dunson & Amy Cheng

Variance requested from:

(1) Section 220 Table 2.1—requesting lot coverage of 25.2% where a maximum of 25% is allowed

(2) Section 220 Table 2.3—requesting 11.8-foot side yard setback where a minimum of 12 feet is required

Attorney Joseph Porto presented the application, accompanied by project designer Annie Jaroszewicz. He stated that the applicants are seeking to construct an addition to their home. The addition would be designed to ADA standards to accommodate a family member with disabilities, he said. The existing home is on an undersized 0.14-acre lot in the R4 zone, which Mr. Porto cited as the cause of the hardship. Mr. Porto then reviewed a site plan to show the existing and proposed conditions.

Commissioner Brantley noted that the application form indicated use of both septic and public sewer systems and asked for clarification. Mr. Porto believed that to be a mistake and said that the site had public water and sewer services.

Commissioner Saravis-Foote asked whether the applicant had heard from neighbors regarding their thoughts on the proposal. Mr. Porto referenced a letter in support that had been submitted with the application and said he had not heard of any objections. Ms. Jaroszewicz added that the applicants had circulated the plans to neighbors who had expressed their support. Chairman Fioretti raised mild concerns about the removal of the existing driveway given that parking bans are frequent in the winters; he advised that the applicants keep that in mind.

There were no further questions from members. The Chairman called for comments from the public, and there were none. He closed the public hearing for the item.

C. Regular Meeting

1. Variance #26-6737

42 Giles Street

Applicant: Leslie Casanova

Variance requested from:

(1) Section 220 Table 2.3

iii. requesting 10.875-foot side yard setback where a minimum of 12 feet is required

iv. requesting 24.5-foot front yard setback where a minimum of 25 feet is required

Commissioner Brantley moved to approve the variance request as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Provenzano. Chairman Fioretti remarked that the applicant had done their best to design in accordance with the regulations and was requesting only modest relief. With no further discussion, he called for a vote. **All members voted in favor and the requested variance was granted.**

2. Variance #26-6738

1135 Paradise Avenue

Applicant: McNamara Builders & General Contractors

Variance requested from:

(1) Section 530.2.2(c)—requesting a subdivision comprised of 75% rear lots where a maximum of 15% is allowed

Commissioner Saravis-Foote moved to approve the variance request as submitted. Commissioner Brantley seconded and all were in favor. The requested variance was granted unanimously.

3. Variance #26-6739

20 Woodbine Street

Applicant: Stephanie Dunson & Amy Cheng

Variance requested from:

(1) Section 220 Table 2.1—requesting lot coverage of 25.2% where a maximum of 25% is allowed

(2) Section 220 Table 2.3—requesting 11.8-foot side yard setback where a minimum of 12 feet is required

Commissioner Provenzano moved to approve the variance request as submitted. Commissioner Walsh seconded the motion. He noted that the request was minimal and that the ADA-compliant addition would allow the residents to accommodate a family member's

disabilities in their home. **All members voted in favor and the requested variance was granted.**

D. Old Business

1. Review May 21, 2026, Public Hearing and Regular Meeting minutes

Chairman Fioretti reviewed which members had been present in May. He called for any necessary corrections to the minutes. **Commissioner Brantley moved to approve the May 21, 2026, meeting minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner Provenzano. Chairman Fioretti and Commissioners Brantley, Provenzano, and Saravis-Foote voted in favor. Commissioner Walsh had not been present and thus abstained. The minutes were approved as written.**

E. New Business

No new business was introduced.

F. Adjournment

Commissioner Provenzano moved to adjourn. Commissioner Brantley seconded, and all were in favor. Chairman Fioretti adjourned the meeting at 7:41p.m.

Submitted By: _____

Maisie Albis, Commission Clerk