TOWNSHIP OF VERONA
COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY

MINUTES OF THE VERONA BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
OF THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2026

Meeting held in the Ballroom of the Verona Community Center @ 880 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, NJ 07044 @ 7:30PM

PRESENT:

Vice Chair Weston	
Mrs. DiBartolo	
Mr. Ryan	
Dr. Ries	Mr. Gregory Mascera, Board Attorney
Mr. Konrad-Parisi	Mrs. Dolores Carpinelli, Board Secretary
Absent: Mr. Tully, Dr. Cuartas, Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs, Mr. Mathewson, Chair McGinley, Ms. Miesch	

CALL TO ORDER: Chair McGinley calls the meeting to order at 7:34 pm;
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE;
OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT read by Mrs. Carpinelli, Board Secretary.
ROLL CALL is taken by Mrs. Carpinelli, Board Secretary;

Chairman McGinley reads a statement of general information of the Zoning Board of Adjustment's role and responsibilities.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Vice Chair Weston asks for a motion to approve minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 9, 2026; **Mrs. Di Bartolo** makes the motion, **Vice Chair Weston** seconds; Dr. Ries, Mr. Ryan, and Mr. Konrad-Parisi abstain. All remaining commissioners voted in favor. **Motion Passes.**

RESOLUTIONS-
1. Memorialization of Resolution 2026-16– Application 2026-10– 257 Pompton Avenue, Block 104, Lot 1.
Granting approval to Use a Mixed-Use residential building on the C-2 as a Multi-Family dwelling containing three units.
Mrs. DiBartolo makes Motion to approve; **Mr. Ryan** seconds.

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mr. Tully					**X**
Dr. Ries			**X**		
Dr. Cuartas					**X**
Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs					**X**
Mr. Mathewson					**X**
Mr, Ryan	**Y**				
Mrs. DiBartolo	**Y**				
Vice-Chair Weston	**Y**				
Chair McGinley					**X**

Motion passes.

2. Memorialization of Resolution 2026-17. Application # 2026-15- 17 Douglas Place, Block 201, Lot 46 R-50 (High Density Single-Family) Zone District. Granting approval to install a new HVAC unit
Mr. Ryan makes Motion to approve; **Mrs. DiBartolo** seconds.

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mr. Tully					X
Dr. Ries			X		
Dr. Cuartas					X
Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs					X
Mr. Mathewson					X
Mr, Ryan	Y				
Mrs. DiBartolo	Y				
Vice-Chair Weston	Y				
Chair McGinley					X

Motion passes.

3. Memorialization of Resolution 2026-18. Application # 2026-12- 555 Bloomfield Avenue, Block 1806, Lot 19 TC Zone. Bella Princess, LLC. Appeal and Interpretations Request. Upholding the Zoning Officer's decision dated May 6, 2026 rescinding Zoning permit 2022-275, approving use as an event space.
Mr. Ryan makes Motion to approve; **Mrs. DiBartolo** seconds.

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mr. Tully					X
Dr. Ries			X		
Dr. Cuartas					X
Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs					X
Mr. Mathewson					X
Mr, Ryan	Y				
Mrs. DiBartolo	Y				
Vice-Chair Weston	Y				
Chair McGinley					X

Motion passes.

4. Memorialization of Resolution 2026-19. Application # 2026-16- 111 Hillside Avenue, Block 2006, Lot 14 R-50 (High Density Single-Family) Zone District. Granting approval to construct a new second floor addition over existing first floor kitchen.
Mr. Ryan makes Motion to approve; **Vice Chair Weston** seconds.

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mr. Tully					X
Dr. Ries			X		
Dr. Cuartas					X
Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs					X
Mr. Mathewson					X
Mr, Ryan	Y				
Mrs. DiBartolo			X		

Vice-Chair Weston	**Y**				
Chair McGinley					**X**

Motion passes.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Application 2026-19- 3 Claridge Road, Block 103, Lot 3, A-3 Zone. Flor Da Vida Women's Wellness.** ***Applicant requests to be carried to next meeting September 10, 2026 with no new notice required.***

2. Application 2026-14, 1 Glen Road, Block 2006, Lot 14, R-70 (Low Density) Zone. Applicant is seeking approval to install a 6- foot fence. Property is on a corner lot.

The application had been deemed complete and proper notice had been provided

WITNESS: Frederick Sprance, applicant/owner 1 Glen Road
EXHIBIT 1-A scaled drawing of yard and fence drawn by applicant

Mr. Sprance is sworn in by Board Attorney Mascera

The applicant stated that he was seeking privacy for a small outdoor seating area where he could sit, relax, and use an easel for watercolor painting. He emphasized that he was not proposing a patio or extensive construction and intended to retain grass within the area.

The applicant testified that the proposed fence would be cedar and would generally match the existing fence on the neighboring property. He described the fence as a standard board-on-board/solid cedar fence with a curved top.

The applicant initially described the area as approximately **16 feet from the house**, extending approximately 24 feet toward the property line and leaving approximately 34 feet between the proposed fence and the curb/street.

The applicant initially sought permission for a **six-foot-high fence** where a three-foot fence would otherwise be permitted. He clarified that the proposed fenced area was substantially smaller than might have been suggested by the original application materials.

The Board discussed the visual prominence of a solid fence at the intersection and the importance of ensuring that any fence would blend with the character of the neighborhood. The Board discussed the possibility of using shrubbery to screen the fence and asked whether the applicant would agree to plantings sufficiently high to obscure the fence. The applicant agreed that the shrubbery could grow to approximately five feet or higher.

Reduction of Fence Height and Dimensions

The Board discussed whether a five-foot fence would provide an appropriate compromise between the applicant's privacy concerns and the visual impact of the proposed fence.

The applicant indicated that he would be willing to consider a lower fence height.

The Board further discussed reducing the proposed fenced area from 16 feet to **14 feet from the house**. The applicant agreed that the area could be reduced to 14 feet.

Portion of Property Not Proposed to Be Fenced

The applicant clarified that he was no longer proposing to fence the other side of the property. He explained that a sewer line runs through that area and that the utility location would create difficulties if the fence had to be removed for future utility work.

He also explained that the area contained a stairway and limited passageway and that fencing the area would interfere with access around the house. The applicant stated that he intended to use landscaping rather than fencing in that portion of the property.

The Board discussed whether the alternative side yard might provide a more appropriate location for the applicant's desired privacy area, but the applicant explained the practical limitations associated with access, the sewer line, stairs, and the neighboring property.

Neighborhood Character and Sight Lines

The Board questioned the applicant concerning the effect of the proposed fence on the surrounding neighborhood, including sight lines along Glen Road and the nearby intersection.

The applicant testified that he had considered visibility from the street and had deliberately kept the proposed fenced area relatively small. He stated that landscaping would be used to soften the appearance of the fence.

The applicant testified that he had personally delivered approximately 24 notices to neighboring residents and had not encountered objections. He stated that the neighbor most directly affected by the proposal was aware of it and had indicated that the finished project would be attractive.

The Board also discussed a large tree located near the proposed fence. The applicant testified that a fencing contractor had evaluated the location and that the fence would not be extended in a manner that would adversely affect the tree.

Exhibit A-1

A supplemental sketch prepared by the applicant was introduced into the record as **Exhibit A-1**. The exhibit was described as an enlarged sketch showing the relevant portion of the property, including the proposed fence area and existing trees.

Alternative Fence Design

During the hearing, the Board discussed the possibility of using a black metal/iron fence rather than a solid fence along the portions of the property most visible from Glen Road and Sunset.

The Board also discussed the location of a gate needed to permit lawn-maintenance personnel to access the property. The applicant explained that the gate could not reasonably be placed at the rear because the passageway was too narrow for lawn equipment. The Board discussed the possibility of making the gate as visually unobtrusive as possible and screening it with landscaping.

The applicant suggested the possibility of an architectural trellis or garden-style gate. The Board noted that such a feature would remain subject to applicable height regulations.

Vice Chair Weston opened the matter to the public for questions to the witness- Seeing none.

Vice Chair Weston then invited members of the public to make statements concerning the application- Seeing none.

Board Deliberation

One Board member expressed significant sympathy for the applicant's circumstances but concluded that the original proposal did not satisfy the applicable statutory criteria, particularly with respect to whether the benefits outweighed the detriments and whether the proposal advanced the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law. That member expressed concern regarding the visual impact of a substantial fence at the intersection and stated that he could not support the application as originally proposed.

Other Board members found the modified proposal more acceptable, particularly because the reduced fence area, lower metal fence, and landscaping would minimize the impact on neighborhood character and sight lines while addressing the applicant's privacy concerns.

The Board discussed the fact that the property is subject to two front-yard conditions because it is a corner lot and recognized the resulting limitations on the applicant's ability to create a private outdoor area.

Vice Chair Weston makes motion to approve Application No. 2026-14, 1 Glen Road, subject to the following conditions discussed during the hearing: **Mr. Ryan** seconds.

1. A **six-foot-high fence along the rear/southerly portion of the property**, where such height was permitted without the requested variance;
2. A **four-foot-high metal/iron fence** along the more visible Glen Road/westerly portion;
3. Reduction of the fenced area from 16 feet to **14 feet**;
4. Landscaping/shrubbery sufficient to screen the fencing to the greatest extent practicable and integrate it into the surrounding landscape; and
5. Compliance with applicable municipal ordinances governing permitted plantings and landscaping.

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mr. Konrad-Parisi	**Y**				
Mr. Tully					**X**
Dr. Ries	**Y**				
Dr. Cuartas					**X**
Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs					**X**
Mr. Mathewson					**X**
Mr, Ryan	**Y**				
Mrs. DiBartolo		**N**			
Vice-Chair Weston	**Y**				
Chair McGinley					**X**

Motion passes.

3. Application 2026-17- 39 Otsego Road, Block 803, Lot 4, R-50 (High Density Single-Family) Zone District. Applicant is seeking approval to construct a new second floor addition over existing garage.

The application had been deemed complete and proper notice had been provided

WITNESSES: Maureen Hedden, applicant/owner 39 Otsego Road
John Matuno, applicant/owner 39 Otsego Road
Evan Scott, Escott Architecture, 29 Arlington Road, Caldwell, NJ

The witnesses are sworn in by Board Attorney Mascera and Mr. Scott is accepted as an expert in architecture.

The applicants testified that they were planning to expand their household and desired to construct an addition over the existing garage. The proposed addition would provide a multipurpose room, primarily for use as an office, but also potentially as a guest room and additional storage. The applicants explained that they wished to remain in the neighborhood and had explored several alternatives for accommodating the additional space. They considered constructing the addition at the rear of the house, but that doing so would require significant interior reconfiguration, reduction of an existing bedroom, and/or reconfiguration of the bathroom. That alternative would also require additional variance relief. After evaluating the alternatives, the applicants proposed a modest second-floor addition over the existing attached garage.

Design and Neighborhood Impact

The applicants and their architect testified that the proposed addition was intentionally designed to minimize impacts on surrounding properties.
The addition would generally follow the existing second-floor front façade and the existing garage configuration. The proposed roof would maintain the existing roof slope and would be relatively low in profile.
The applicants testified that the addition would not materially increase impervious coverage or affect existing drainage facilities. They intended to maintain the existing drainage configuration.

Windows and Privacy

The Board questioned the applicants concerning proposed windows and their potential impact on neighboring properties.
The applicants explained that one side window would be added for architectural/aesthetic purposes and would be located generally in the area of an existing hallway window. A front-facing window would be added to maintain the architectural proportions of the existing house.

The applicants stated that the side window would primarily look toward the side of the neighboring property and that the neighboring property already contained windows in a similar location.

Drainage

The Board reviewed the engineer's report dated **July 8** and discussed the engineer's recommendation that drainage be directed, to the maximum extent practicable, toward absorbent surfaces on the property.

The applicants confirmed that the existing roof and gutter configuration would generally be maintained and that the proposed addition would not create a material change in the property's drainage pattern. They agreed to comply with the applicable drainage recommendation

Existing Neighborhood Conditions

The applicants testified concerning the setback conditions of neighboring properties. They explained that the homes across the street generally had front façades located at similar or somewhat lesser setbacks.
The applicants noted that the house immediately south of the property had a front porch/portico extending farther toward the street, while the property to the north was situated considerably farther back.

The applicants stated that the proposed addition would help normalize the appearance of the house while maintaining the general character of the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Weston opened the matter to the public for questions to the witness- Seeing none.

Vice Chair Weston then invited members of the public to make statements concerning the application- Seeing none.

Board Deliberation

Several Board members found that the existing configuration of the property and dwelling created practical limitations on expansion and that constructing upward over the existing garage was a reasonable approach.

One Board member expressed concern regarding the effect of the addition on the overall streetscape and neighborhood spacing. That member considered the Municipal Land Use Law criteria, including whether the claimed hardship was related to the property itself and whether the benefits of the variance would substantially outweigh any detriment.

The Board also discussed the fact that the lot was not necessarily undersized and did not contain topographic features preventing compliance with the applicable setback requirements. The member expressing concern concluded that the detriment to the neighborhood may outweigh the benefit of the proposed deviation.

Other Board members concluded that the proposed addition was appropriately designed, that the existing nonconforming conditions contributed to the requested relief, and that the proposal represented a reasonable use of the property.

Vice Chair Weston makes motion to approve Application No. 2026-17, 39 Otsego Road Road, subject to the following conditions discussed during the hearing: **Dr. Ries** seconds.

1. The applicant will comply with the recommendation in **Item/Condition No. 3 of the engineer's report**, all roof leaders and footing drains shall be directed onto an absorbent surface as grass, mulch, rock or soil so the discharge will be dissipated and not immediately drained to the Township Right-of-Way or adjacent properties

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mr. Konrad-Parisi	**Y**				
Mr. Tully					**X**
Dr. Ries	**Y**				
Dr. Cuartas					**X**
Mrs. Murphy-Bradacs					**X**
Mr. Mathewson					**X**
Mr, Ryan	**Y**				
Mrs. DiBartolo		**N**			
Vice-Chair Weston	**Y**				
Chair McGinley					**X**

Motion passes.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Following consideration of the applications, a Board member asked counsel about the use of personal electronic devices to access photographs, Google Earth, and other information during hearings.

Counsel explained that Board members may consult publicly available information, such as Google Earth. However, if a Board member intends to rely upon or share a photograph or other material that is not otherwise part of the public record, the material should be disclosed and made available to the applicant and, where appropriate, introduced into the record as an exhibit.

Counsel explained that the Board may consider local knowledge, but information relied upon as part of the Board's decision should be properly placed in the record. Counsel noted that this practice is particularly important because an appeal of a Board decision is generally reviewed based upon the record created before the Board.

The Board discussed the distinction between reviewing information for personal orientation or understanding and formally relying upon that information in making a decision. Counsel confirmed that photographs taken by Board members may be used for personal edification, but if shared with the Board or relied upon in deliberations, they should be disclosed and appropriately made part of the record.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (not necessary)

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Ryan
Meeting Adjourned at 8:56 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dolores Carpinelli

Dolores Carpinelli
Board of Adjustment Secretary

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting minutes are a summation of the hearing. If you are interested in a verbatim transcript from this or any proceeding, please contact the Board of Adjustment Secretary at 973-857-4773.