



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES**



Page 1

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Giannotti called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Planning Board/Board of Adjustment meeting room located on the second floor of the Municipal Building at 116 Paris Avenue, Northvale, New Jersey 07647.

STATEMENT

Chairman Giannotti read the "Sunshine Statement" into the record as follows:

"This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Combined Planning Board/Board of Adjustment of the Borough of Northvale. The date, time and location of this meeting has been advertised in the official newspapers of the Borough, filed with the Municipal Clerk, and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building. All notice requirements of the Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been fulfilled. Please note the fire exits as required by law at the public meetings."

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Chairman Giannotti, Vice Chair Gullestad, Mr. Puppelo, Councilman Bakalian, Mr. Pothos, (ALT 1) Mr. Degen, (ALT 2) Mr. Brennan,

ALSO PRESENT: Gregg Paster-Attorney
Scott Loverich-Neglia Group
Julia Martino-Board Secretary

ABSENT: Mayor McGuire, Mr. DeGennaro, Chief Ostrow, Mr. Briscoe, (ALT 3) Mr. Argiro.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED COMBINED WORK AND FORMAL MEETING



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES**



Page 2

**APPLICATION FOR REDON CABEJ SEEKS TO RESTORE AND MODERNIZE THE
EXISTING DWELLING AT 213 WALNUT STREET NORTHVALE NJ. 07647
BLOCK #607 | LOT#5**

Chairman Giannotti introduced the first application Redon Cabej seeks to restore and modernize the existing dwelling. 213 Walnut Street Northvale NJ 07647, Block #607 Lots #5.

Attorney Matthew Capizzi introduced himself and his client. He shared the details of the application, using the plan displayed on tv screen, the property is in a R7.5 zone, corner lot with frontage on Frankfort and Walnut.

He describes the property's current and proposed use. Sharing the property was in front of the board in 1977 for a subdivision application that was denied. This application is not to subdivide the lot. He noted the 1977 resolution noticed a (3) three family dwelling on the property, denoted as a legal non-conforming structure that has been in existence since about 1959.

In 2024 the property sub-stained significant fire damage from Christmas lights. They are looking to restructure the structure and modernize it. Mr. Capizzi continued to describe the changes to be made to the present property including enclosing an open porch and slightly enlarging the footprint of the building. Mr. Capizzi mentions the property is in a flood hazard area, they are required under the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection regulations to elevate the first floor to a certain elevation so it's out of the flood plain. With this said, they are seeking a height variance. He also mentioned the shed location and parking areas. Looking to include onsite parking field with 6 spaces. Because of the non-conforming nature of the (3) three family structure increase, they need a D2 variance and also need a D6 height variance. They will also need a variance in the open porch area enclosure.

Chairman Giannotti ask; how much percentage of the house was damaged in the fire. Mr. Capizzi answered, a sufficient amount of more than 50%. Chairman Giannotti shared the ordinance in place. If there is more than 50% damage, you cannot renovate. Mr. Capizzi is asking for variance relief before the board. Chairman Giannotti reading the ordinance shared if its more than 50% you cannot add on. Mr. Capizzi acknowledge the Chairman was correct. Chairman Giannotti ask if they are asking for a variance for that as well. Mr. Capizzi shared a section of the ordinance that speaks about the continuation of a non-conforming use without the needs to appear before this board. Mr. Capizzi recognized that they are expanding upon the building, that's why they are seeking a D2 variance.

Chairman Giannotti and Mr. Capizzi had a discussion with regards to the borough ordinance. Mr. Puppelo questioned Mr. Capizzi on the 1977 resolution, stating the resolution does not state the home was zoned as a three family. Mr. Capizzi says it was recognition by the borough; it existed at that time as a legal non-conforming structure since 1949. Chairman Giannotti from his recollection went through the history of the property, being a single family with a beauty salon, then turned



BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES



Page 3

into a two family, then a three family. Asking Mr. Capizzi to introduce information when it turned into a (3) three family. Mr. Capizzi-shared, this was a finding fact provided to him via an O.P.R.A. request through the 1977 boroughs resolution, which states it legal non-conforming. Mr. Puppelo asks, why is factual finding in the resolution somehow legally binding? Mr. Capizzi shared, these are facts from your board, that's why it's binding.

Attorney Paster added his comments, explaining why it is or is not binding. He recommends the board hears out the presentation, the way the evidence is presented, and decide, based on all the evidence before the board. Mr. Capizzi has an issue with this; he does not want to start the conversation about the status of the structure, and the use of the site as it is today. He states the tax records support its being tax as a three family. He's provided the board with the resolution. Attorney Paster responded, if you wanted to restore what was there, you do not have to come before the board. You now want to expand on it and need 2 use variances. Mr. Capizzi agreed. Mr. Puppelo and Attorney Paster had a discussion whether this is indeed a (3) three family, going over the resolution findings and what would happen if this application was to go to court. Asking about what's on the property deed, if there is other evidence that the applicant can come up with to prove its a (3) three family. Mr. Capizzi shared the applicants took the property as it stands today with the exception that it was in good condition. They are here to take this existing structure that suffered some fire damage and clean it up.

Mr. McClellan was sworn in by **Attorney Gregg Paster**.

Mr. Capizzi Introduce his Civil Engineer, **Mr. Sean McClellan**. Mr. McClellan has been a license engineer in the state of New Jersey for approximately 21 years. He has testified in front of many boards in Bergen, Passaic, Essex and Hudson Countys. He has been in front of this board, but it's been several years. Attorney Gregg Paster had no objections, Chairman Giannotti accepted his credentials.

Using the tv display, Mr. Capizzi showing the plan set of the property, ask Mr. McClellan is this his most recent revised. Mr. McClellan responded that the plan was dated November 20, 2024, and the last revised March 24, 2025.

Using the tv display, Mr. McClellan using plan (A1), went over the properties' current condition. He pointed out the home is non-conforming in the front yard on Walnut Street, it's 9.4' feet where 25'feet is required. On the Frankfort side it's 8.7 feet where 25'feet is required. The covered porch is 4.5' feet from the right of way line, also noted the existing steps encroach 2.4' feet into a right of way. The garage in the upper left corner area with a roofed over area, is 5.7' feet off the right of way. The only parking area is the garage area. Mr. McClellan went over the flood hazard area of the property. The flood elevation on this property is 33.8' feet. The proposed home is set at 35 feet. The existing home has one parking space on property. They are offering an area on the property for (6) six parking spaces, proposed home is to have 6 bedrooms. Mr. McClellan continued with his presentation on the existing home design and proposed changes.



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES**



Page 4

Chairman Giannotti-ask board members if they have any questions for the engineer.

Mr. Puppelo- the proposed home, is to be (5) five feet above the maximum height, asks about the raising of the home's elevation, is this for the first floor not to be flooded? Mr. McClellan, yes. first floor is about (6) six feet below flood hazard line.

Mr. Degen-ask, are you saying the first floor is in the basement? Mr. McClellan, yes.

Mr. Scott Loverich-shared, should the board look favorably on this application, they will still need a soil movement permit, and soil conservation district. The drainage system they are to provide, soil lot preparation testing results prior to installation. He also recommends putting curb along the common property line with lot 26, on the northeastern side, to make sure that the water gets to the trench drain.

Chairman Giannotti opened the meeting to the public.

Resident: Salvatore Corrado of 212 Franklin Street, located behind the applicants' house, approached the podium. Ask; looking at the site map provided, is the garage going to remain the same as it is or knock down or rebuilt? Are there any plans or changes to the actual structure of garage? Mr. McClellan responded, they are showing the garage is to remain, the carport roofed over area with a deck will be removed. Mr. Corrado ask again if the garage was going to be knocked down or replaced? He also asks what they are going to do with the gravel driveway. Mr. McClellan responded, the garage and driveway is to remain as is. Mr. Pothos asked if they were going to remove the carport, Mr. McClellan responded, yes.

Mr. Corrado shared his main concern is the waterline. He described the area where his water lines are, and main valve to his house. He wants to make sure during construction, on the left side of Walnut Street, it does not interfere with or damage his water line with his home. This is not covered by his water insurance. Mr. McClellan responded, they are not doing any work in the streets, everything is onsite. Mr. Corrado also asked about the draining going from Walnut Street back into the drainage pits rather than the public system. Mr. McClellan responded that this design could change, based on what they find in the field after the test. Their goal is for the water to percolate into the ground on their site. Using the displayed plan, he shows Mr. Corrado the drainage plan.

Councilman Bakalian speaking as a member of the public, ask if Mr. McClellan can confirm, the down spout being connecting to the seepage pit, will it be just roof water, parking lot. Mr. McClellan answered, that's the standard details, just the parking lot, the trench drain at the parking lot will connect the seepage pit.

Mr. Paster asks, do they not need a rear yard setback variance to continue the garage, Mr. McClellan responded, it's 1.24 feet, he does not know how far it's to be outside that fence. Mr. Paster said 30 is required, your showing 50.8, does that not trigger a rear yard setback variance. Mr. McClellan, it's nonconforming, it's there now and they are not touching it. Mr. Paster wanting to be clear, ask is he right. Mr. McClellan responded, when we raise the occasion, if any



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES**



Page 5

non-conforming conditions exist, they will seek a new variance relating to that, certainly recognition that it does not comply with the setback accessory structure.

Resident: Maureen Falici of 217 Walnut Street approached the podium; she lives right next door to the property. Her concern is about the water that area gets water all the time. Also, parking. The Parking on Walnut Street is terrible. As is, she can not get out of her driveway. Mr. McClellan shared the drainage plan with Mrs. Felici; they have no problem adding additional seepage pit to pick up in the parking area and the house. Mr. Pothos ask, they will be adding a third pit to cover the roof, Mr. McClellan, answered yes.

Councilman Bakalian- he lives in Northvale ask; the open porch area that they are going to close up and make part of the structure, how many square feet is it? will that be the same square footage for all levels? Mr. Capizzi shared the Architect has that information, each level will have the exact square footage.

Mr. Pothos ask, due to the variances and construction and in a flood zone, are you required by D.E.P. for applications, permits? Mr. McClellan answered yes. They have a company, BK Environmental, out of Chatham, that specializes in this, they will be handling all the paperwork for them. Mr. Pothos ask, before any work is done, would they have to present to building department? Mr. McClellan answered yes.

Mr. Degan asked if the porch that they are going to extend out, will there be a full foundation under it. Mr. McClellan, the architect, will be able to address that.

Chairman Giannotti closed the meeting to the public.

At this time Mr. Capizzi requested a 2-minute recess. - Chairman Giannotti approved a 2-minute recess started at 8:24pm to 8:31pm.

Mr. Capizzi called his next witness, Mr. Tomasz Bona R.A.

Mr. Tomasz Bona was sworn in by Attorney Gregg Paster.

Mr. Capizzi Introduce his Architect, Mr. Tomasz Bona R.A. of BONARCH Architecture & Design LLC. Mr. Bona has been a licensed architect in the state of New Jersey for approximately 15 years. He specializes in residential and commercial architecture for 20 years, schooling in Poland. He has testified in front of many boards in central and northern New Jersey. Attorney Gregg Paster had no objections; Chairman Giannotti accepted his credentials.

Using the tv display, Mr. Capizzi showing the plan set of the property, ask Mr. Bona is this his plan that consist of (4) four sheets, Mr. Bona responded, correct. that the plan was dated August 20, 2024, and the last revised February 5, 2025. Mr. Bona responded, "That is correct!"



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES**



Page 6

Attorney Gregg Paster noted for the record, this plan is marked A-2.

Using the tv display, Mr. Bona using plan (A2), went over the existing building. He pointed out the home is a 2 ½ story structure, with a ground level entrance off Walnut Street. He continued with his presentation going over details of each existing unit and bedrooms. He pointed out the

house was built before the building codes. This building does not conform to today's building codes. Mentioned because of this, it would be very difficult to renovate this building. He reached out to the zoning official to see what they could do with the building. He was told, because the house was more than 50% damaged due to the fire. The zoning official mentioned, no matter what they decide to do with the property, they would have to appear in front of the board, because of the extents of the damage. At that time the owners decided, not just to bring the home up to the current standards, they could significantly improve this property.

Mr. Bona proceeded to go through the details of the proposed (3) three-story, 3-family home with the first floor being over (5) five feet up.

Chairman Giannotti-ask board members if they have any questions for the engineer.

Mr. Gullestad mentioned; your saying ground level, is that the first floor? Will all floors be the same, as in size and design? Mr. Capizzi, yes. Mr. Bona, ground level, is now on the first floor. Due to flood water. All floors will be independent units, with the same size and layout. He describes in detail the materials and colors they will be using for the facade.

Mr. Pothos- will the building have to be Sprinklered, Mr. Bona, every floor.

Mr. Gullestad-are there alternate forms of egress, due to various units? Mr. Bona, because the building will be fully sprinkled, one staircase is sufficient to follow the code.

Mr. Puppelo- how tall are the homes in the area. Mr. Bona, homes are about 2 ½ stories.

Mr. Loverich, ask where the HVAC location will be. Mr. Bona showed the recycling bins area and condensers locations.

Chairman Giannotti opened the meeting to the public for the architect.

No one approached

Chairman Giannotti closed the meeting to the public.

End of presentation.

This application has been postponed until November 5, 2025- no further notice.

Application of Applicant Redon Cabej seeks to restore and modernize the existing dwelling.
213 Walnut Street Northvale NJ 07647,
Block #607 Lots #5



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING
September 17, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.
MINUTES**



Page 7

Chairman Giannotti entertained a motion for approval of the planning zoning board meeting **Minutes from the August 20, 2025,**

ROLL CALL- All members present in favor -Yes.

Absent: Mayor McGuire, Mr. DeGennaro, Chief Ostrow, Mr. Briscoe, (ALT 3) Mr. Argiro.

Chairman Giannotti entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:07pm, motion was made by Councilman Bakalian and second by Vice Chairman Gullestad.

All members present in favor-Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Martino

Julia Martino
Board Secretary

APPROVED: *10/1/2025*

ADJOURNMENT