



ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025 - 7:00 PM

Virtual Webex Meeting

To access information on how to use WebEx to join the meeting, please click on the following link: <https://www.southorange.org/800/WebEx-FAQs>

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Chair Breene called the meeting to order at approximately 7pm:

1. Roll Call

Devyani Guha
William MacIntosh
Anthony Mason - Absent
Alison Oxman
Mia Charlene White
Vacant, Alternate
Vacant, Alternate
Paul Breene, Chair
Jacob Levine, Vice Chair

Patrick Dwyer, Board Attorney
Greer Patras, Zoning Officer & Board Planner
Eric Keller, Board Consultant Engineer
David Battaglia, Village Engineer
Ojetti Davis, Board Secretary

2. Meeting Notice Statement

Chair Breene read the following statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting had been provided to the press in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A 10:4-6. In addition, notice of this meeting was posted in Village Hall and on the Village's website, and has been filed in the Office of the Village Clerk. Official action may be taken.

3. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular meeting held on May 6, 2025:
Mr. Levine moved to approve the minutes of the May 6th meeting, seconded by Mr. MacIntosh.

Roll Call Vote:



Guha Yes
MacIntosh Yes
Levine Yes
Breene Yes
Motion Carried.

4. Application(s) for Completeness

A. Case #1067 - Farid Ali

Block 509 Lot 2

368 Woodland Place

Minor Site Plan, Preliminary & Final Site Plan - The applicant proposes to construct a new deck/porch Structure.

As per Chair Breene, this completeness case was carried to the July 1st meeting.

5. Application(s) to be Heard

A. Case #1063 - First Presbyterian & Trinity Church (Carried to April 1st)

Block 2014 Lot 1

88 South Orange Avenue

D-Variance Relief - The applicant is seeking a variance in connection with the uses of the building as a school and after-school activities:

Brian Chewcaskie attorney of the firm Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri & Jacobs, LLC on behalf of the applicant briefly described the application, introduced 3 witnesses and entered the following exhibits: A1-Survey and survey affidavit; A2-Floor Plan; A3-Proof of annual inspections; A4-Current church uses; A5-YMCA uses and A6-Traffic outline.

Mr. Chewcaskie called the first witness, Brian Falconer sworn and recognized as an expert in structural engineer. Mr. Falconer discussed the usage and their location, floor plan and described the interior layout. He mentioned there will be no alterations to the structure and listed the following businesses that utilizes the church facility: Weekday School, 2 small churches on Sundays on the 3rd floor and 1 Wednesday, YMCA, Alcohol Anonymous, Alanon, Board of Election and random uses for parties or one-time events.



In response to board questions, Mr. Falconer discussed contracts with the companies that utilize the church, hours of the Weekday School and recent change in impervious surface.

There were no questions from the public.

The second witness called was Samantha Grab, Head of the School. Ms. Grab has been with the school for 4 years and the school is license by the New Jersey Children and Family Services. She discussed the following: operating as a private school, ages of students, grades, current number of students and staff members, hours of operation and the process for pickups and drop offs. Ms. Grab explained the types of inspections by local and state authorities. The kitchen is not utilized, students bring their own lunch and handicap accessible is located on the 1st floor.

In response to board questions, Ms. Grab discussed the State requirement for number of toilets per students, occupancy load for student teacher ratio, after school program with number of students, staff and hours. Also discussed the afterschool program for the YMCA and the uses of the gymnastics and theater program. There were discussions about the outdoor play area and the need for fencing, parking for pickup at dismissal, ages for new enrollment increase and percentage of students that are from South Orange and other towns.

There were no questions from the public.

The final witness was Louis Luglio sworn and recognized as an expert in traffic engineering. Mr. Luglio discussed existing conditions, operations of morning and afternoon drop offs. He entered exhibit A7 – Aerial of figure 1 of site and surrounding area and discussed his findings of the parking in the area.

In response to board questions, Mr. Luglio discussed the impact for the dance school at the corner of Irvington Avenue and managing of additional students. He discussed the time of day the traffic study was performed, time of student arrivals, street parking, handicap parking and parking permission on the Irvington Avenue side. Also, discussed the observance of cars in the public parking portion of the lot, number of available spaces in the morning & afternoon and the location of the YMCA entrance & exit.



There were no questions from the public.

The board members suggested requesting signage for loading zone or no parking from the Village Council, create a chart with uses from 2007, current and proposed, amended application to include the after school program, impermeable area with clarified calculations, fencing for the outdoor playground area and meet with the Parking Authority to discuss designated parking area.

Also, the board asked about the school not complying with the student maximum headcount that was set by the board in its 2007 resolution. The numbers the headmaster stated were inexplicably higher for at least the past five years. Ms. Grab stated the headcount was at that level before she arrived in 2020, which is almost to the same level they are now asking. In addition, the applicant contracted for a gravel area without a town permit in which they blamed the contractor.

Mr. Chewcaskie requested to carry the meeting to July 1st with the possibility to adjourn to a meeting future meeting.

Chair Breene mentioned the requested information needs to be submitted 2 weeks prior to the hearing.

6. Discussion

There were no additional items discussed.

7. Next Regular Meeting Date

A. Tuesday, July 1, 2025 at 7:00 PM

8. Adjournment

There being no further discussions, Chair Breene adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:15 pm.

Submitted by
Ojetti Davis, Secretary
Zoning Board of Adjustment

***These minutes are a summary and the actual statements can be found on the video located on the Village's website at the following link:**

<https://southorangenetwpnj.portal.civicclerk.com/event/3006/media>

