

**MAY 7, 2025  
LAKE GEORGE VILLAGE  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
MEETING MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kieran Murray – Chairman, Robert Lebar, Mike Ravalli, Jeff Blau, and John Ferrone – Alternate.

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dan Wolfeld.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Debonnay Meyers (Planning & Zoning Clerk), Stephanie Fregoe, and Ryan Fregoe.

Kieran Murray asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. After the pledge, Kieran Murray informed all that there would be no roll call done as there was a sign in sheet handled by the Planning and Zoning Clerk.

Kieran Murray opened the meeting at 5:00 pm.

Kieran Murray welcomed John Ferrone to the meeting and introduced John Ferrone as the Zoning Board's new alternate. Kieran Murray then asked John Ferrone to introduce himself to the Board members and provide them with some background information about him. John Ferrone said he had been a Lake George resident all his life, that he was currently a business owner of Flapjack Pete's, and he goes to Canada in the wintertime.

Kieran Murray switched the agenda order as applicant for AV#6-2025 wasn't present.

<b>TAX MAP:</b>	<b>251.18-3-16</b>
<b>OWNER/APPLICANT:</b>	<b>STEPHANIE AND RYAN FREGOE</b>
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	<b>33 JAMES STREET</b>
<b>ZONE:</b>	<b>RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE</b>
<b>VARIANCE APPLICATION:</b>	<b>AV#7-2025</b>

“Applicants are proposing a total of one (1) area variance for them to construct a detached garage with a second level apartment on their property. The applicant wants to replace an existing, dilapidated garage apartment with a new one. The new structure would be built 5 feet from the rear yard property line, within the 20-foot setback, so they are seeking 15’ of relief. Per the applicant, approving the variance would allow more space for parking on the property.

**1. Relief of §220 Attachment 2 – Dimensional Table”**

Kieran Murray asked who was here to represent AV#7-2025. Stephanie Fregoe introduced herself and her husband, Ryan Fregoe, as the owners. Kieran Murray then informed everyone that he would read the variance request out loud so all could understand the request. After reading, Kieran Murray asked the Board if there was a motion to open the public hearing.

Kieran Murray opened the public hearing at 5:02 pm.

**MOTION 2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mike Ravalli

Kieran Murray	Robert LeBar	Mike Ravalli	Jeff Blau	Dan Wolfeld	John Ferrone
Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Absent	Aye

Ayes = 5 Nays = 0 Absent = 1 Motion carried.

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Kieran Murray advised that the speaker must speak clearly and loudly as he had difficulties hearing. Kieran Murray also added that the speaker must state their name and address, so it was included in the record.

Ryan Fregoe reintroduced himself and his wife, Stephanie Fregoe, and conducted his opening statement. Ryan Fregoe explained that their plan was to remove the existing 35' by 19' structure and replace it with a 24' by 24' structure. He informed the Board that the existing structure was not compliant because of its' location on the property line. Ryan Fregoe continued by saying that their goal was to work towards conformity; however, the proposed structure would violate the side-yard setbacks because of location. Ryan Fregoe expressed that they need space between the new structure and the dwelling because of the lawn and the space needed for parking.

Kieran Murray started the deliberations by saying he thought it was self-explanatory. Mike Ravalli responded back saying he was ok with moving forward. Jeff Blau added that he always likes improvements. Kieran Murray asked if the Board had any questions. Ryan Fregoe said he had no questions and that he hoped for approval. Robert Lebar expressed his opinion by saying that the applicant had lots of room to maintain the 20-foot setback. Ryan Fregoe said there would be room, but it would eliminate his backyard. Mike Ravalli asked if two cars could fit in there to which Ryan Fregoe said yes.

The Board continued their deliberation as there was no solid decision. Jeff Blau told the Board that he had no qualms with the application and that the new structure was an improvement the Village needed. Mike Ravalli chimed in to state that he was fine with the request. He also pointed out the empty boardroom, by indicating that no neighbors were present to rebel against it.

Kieran Murray halted the deliberation for a second to go back to Robert Lebar's commentary. Kieran Murray indicated that he understood Robert Lebar's stance; however, it would make turning around and parking more difficult. Kieran Murray also indicated that the new structure would reduce the degree of non-compliance as the old structure violated rear and side setbacks. Ryan Fregoe showed the Board a rendering of the garage, so the Board knew what it looked like. Kieran Murray asked if a sunroof would be built and Ryan Fregoe replied with no. Stephanie Fregoe notified the Board of their existing rental use and indicated that the second story of the proposed structure would include an apartment.

Robert Lebar asked Ryan Fregoe how they came up with 5 feet. He further asked if they used a car model to measure the desired location. Ryan Fregoe said he wanted to keep the structure as far away as he could from the property line, and that the proposed position would accommodate his needs and the neighbor's. Kieran Murray asked if their plan was to have vehicular parking for the dwelling and the apartment in the back. Ryan Fregoe said yes. Kieran Murray turned to the Board and said they needed the room, otherwise there wouldn't be a place for everyone to park. Kieran Murray asked the Board if they had any other questions, and the Board said no. Kieran Murray then asked the applicants if they had anything else to add and Ryan Fregoe said no. Stephanie Fregoe said if they could've salvaged the existing structure, they would've. She still expressed her eagerness for the new structure as it would be a drastic improvement from the rundown existing structure.

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Kieran Murray closed the public hearing at 5:10 pm.

**MOTION 2<sup>ND</sup>: Jeff Blau**

Kieran Murray	Robert LeBar	Mike Ravalli	Jeff Blau	Dan Wolfield	John Ferrone
Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Absent	Aye

Ayes = 5 Nays = 0 Absent = 1 Motion carried.

Kieran Murray pulled the Board for a poll on what they would like to do. Jeff Blau stated he was ok with approving the application as presented. Mike Ravalli and John Ferrone were both in agreement as well. Robert Lebar indicated he didn't feel comfortable approving as their goal as a Board was to provide feasible alternatives to decrease non-compliance. Kieran Murray asked Debonnay Meyers if the applicants could respond to his question after closing the hearing. Debonnay Meyers said they could respond to the Board if the Board were the ones to ask them questions. She explained that the public hearing was an opportunity for the public to speak freely on the application, such as if a neighbor was ok with the request or not.

Kieran Murray asked Ryan Fregoe if he had plans to use any of the parts in the existing 35' by 19' structure. Ryan Fregoe said he was told by Dan Barusch that he could tear down the existing structure and use the foundation to rebuild, but that wouldn't meet either setback. Kieran Murray said the applicant can't leave a non-conforming structure in an unsafe condition; but are allowed, as long as it doesn't increase the volume or size of the non-conformity, to rebuild and use existing footings. Kieran Murray then turned back to the Board and said the applicant could choose to rebuild on the existing 35- by 19' footing, which would deter them from reducing the non-conformity.

The Board continued their deliberation as each Board member contributed their point as to why the application should be approved as is or with conditions. Jeff Blau asked Ryan Fregoe if the existing slab would stay. Ryan Fregoe said it would be a new slab. Kieran Murray asked if the existing 35' by 19' building had structural issues. Ryan Fregoe said the foundation was in good shape, but the architects informed them that they must follow protocol procedures, which would be expensive. Kieran Murray asked about the wall and roof condition. Ryan Fregoe said the roof and the interior were all rotted, and the exterior was solid but wasn't the prettiest. Kieran Murray then turned to the Board and said if the architects had to repair the foundation, they would be allowed to because it would be considered a structural repair. Robert Lebar didn't agree and voiced that taking it down to nothing was more than a "structural repair".

Kieran Murray informed the Board that they must decide based on the two choices presented to them tonight, which are: either allow them to build the new structure, approve the side-yard relief variance and completely get rid of the rear-yard non-compliance or allow them to rebuild on the existing slab which would continue the existing non-compliance on both rear and side yards. Robert Lebar said there was another option, which was to allow the construction of the new structure, but it must follow setback requirements. John Ferrone asked Ryan Fregoe if they could gut out the existing structure and use the footing and cement for the new structure. Ryan Fregoe said he could. Kieran Murray said that Robert Lebar's point was towards the degree of the foundation and definitions. John Ferrone asked if the existing structure had cross-wells and Ryan Fregoe said yes.

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Kieran Murray invited both applicants up to show them what Robert Lebar had in mind on the rendering. He indicated that if they followed the setbacks, they could have parking for all but separated in different areas. Ryan Fregoe asked which way the garage would face, and Kieran Murray said towards the house. Stephanie Fregoe indicated that she would feel that the garage was in the middle of her property and would be right on top of the house. Robert Lebar commented that it was a feasible alternative that was considered. Ryan Fregoe indicated it wouldn't work for them based on what he said earlier as well as what Stephanie Fregoe just said. Kieran Murray asked why and asked Ryan Fregoe to show him on the rendering. While Kieran Murray, Stephanie Fregoe, and Ryan Fregoe were reviewing the plans, the remaining members were trying to follow along with their renderings. Jeff Blau then re-asked if their plan was to remove the existing slab and Ryan Fregoe said yes.

Kieran Murray told everyone that he understood both sides, and that the Board must balance resident experience and the investment of the community. Kieran Murray then told the Board that denying the application or even approving it with conditions would run a lot of risks that couldn't be controlled by the Board. Kieran Murray tried to provide examples of what the applicants could do, such as: if they mandated the setbacks, the applicants could decide to use the existing slab. Choosing that route wouldn't damage their lawn and wouldn't require a variance because they were welcome to rebuild. That option would also continue the existing non-compliant setbacks, which the Board expressed their disinterest. Kieran Murray then explained that if they approved of the variance as proposed, the Board would have some sort of control because it would help decrease some of the non-conformity on the parcel. Jeff Blau agreed with Kieran Murray and said their goal was to make the Village better.

Kieran Murray reminded the Board that if the neighbors weren't pleased with the variance, they would've shown. He said they experienced comments with other applications. Mike Ravalli added that the parcel was in the residential zone, not commercial. John Ferrone asked Ryan Fregoe if the garage was built prior to the setback mandate. Ryan Fregoe said the garage was pre-existing and was there when they purchased the property. Stephanie Fregoe said price was a big factor in the decision as they got quotes from Curtis Lumber.

Kieran Murray advised all that it was time to vote, and that he would lead the motion for approval. The applicants sat back down, and all Board members knew that they had the right to vote "aye" or "nay".

Kieran Murray made a motion to approve the application to benefit the applicant as weighed against the detriment to health, safety, and welfare of the neighborhood or community is greater because:

1. An undesirable change will not be produced to the character in the neighborhood or will not be a detriment to nearby properties because the proposed structure would be smaller and it reduces the degree of non-compliance.
2. The benefit sought by the applicant cannot be achieved by some other method feasible for the applicant because of site logistics.

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3. The requested area variance is not substantial because it eliminates side-yard setback non-compliance and reduces rear-yard setback non-compliance.
4. The proposed variance will not have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district because it would be improving safety conditions in the neighborhood.
5. The alleged difficulty was not self-created.

**MOTION 2<sup>ND</sup>:** Jeff Blau

Kieran Murray	Robert LeBar	Mike Ravalli	Jeff Blau	Dan Wolfeld	John Ferrone
Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Absent	Aye

Ayes = 5 Nays = 0 Absent = 1 Motion carried.

Debonnay Meyers informed the applicants that they were all set with the Zoning Board, and that they will hear from Dan Barusch tomorrow.

<b>TAX MAP:</b>	<b>251.10-3-43</b>
<b>OWNER/APPLICANT:</b>	<b>DEBRA JORDAN</b>
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	<b>89 AND 91 CANADA STREET</b>
<b>ZONE:</b>	<b>COMMERCIAL MIXED USE</b>
<b>VARIANCE APPLICATION:</b>	<b>AV#6-2025</b>

“Applicant is proposing a total of one (1) area variance for them to move forward with subdividing the property. The applicant would like to subdivide their private residence from the existing business, DJ’s of Lake George; but an existing ramp and stairs currently cross the property line proposed. The variance is needed because they want to leave the ramp and stairs as is so they can continue following ADA requirements. This variance would relieve them of the 15-foot rear setback requirement for those existing structures.

**1. Relief of §220 Attachment 2 – Dimensional Table”**

The Board moved onto the next application and realized there was no one in the meeting room for the variance request. Debonnay Meyers informed the Board that she was going to call the applicant momentarily by using the Village phone to see where she is, but she wanted to ask how the Board felt about deciding tonight. She indicated that if the Board did not feel comfortable deciding without the applicant being present, they could table the application for the following meeting. Mike Ravalli asked what the variance was for. Debonnay Meyers explained that the applicant wants to subdivide their property to separate the private residence from the business. She indicated that the ramp and stairs were right on the property line, so the applicant would need a variance to grant relief of the setbacks.

Robert Lebar asked if there were tax implications. Debonnay Meyers indicated that he asked a good question and thought there was but wasn’t sure of the exact numbers. Mike Ravalli then asked if they were to approve it and Debra Jordan sold the property, would the application come back to Zoning? Debonnay Meyers said no because once they approve it, the variance providing relief would remain on the parcel.

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Kieran Murray started the Board deliberation by saying that he felt this was another situation where the definition of structure comes to play. He explained that he reviewed everything and saw four to five different structures on one parcel: starting with the two sets of wooden steps, then the ramp, then the concrete pad, and lastly, the garage. Kieran Murray said that he reviewed the statute for accessory structures; and based on that, he wasn't sure how to decipher which structures were which for each parcel. He stated that an accessory structure had very specific requirements and he recalled that the limit was two. He said that for him to make a decision, he would need measurements for all the structures.

The Board asked him to continue with his explanation, so they better understood his stance. Kieran Murray said if the stairs were to be eliminated for some reason, it would label the garage and the concrete pad as the two accessory structures on the parcel if their measurements followed the accessory structure statute. John Ferrone asked Debonnay Meyers if the applicant wanted to build the ramp onto the concrete pad. Debonnay Meyers said the ramp existed and that this request was for relief of the setback requirements due to the ramp being at 0'. She indicated that Debra Jordan did not want to move the ramp, so she came to the Zoning Board to see if they would allow her relief. Kieran Murray added that if someone in a wheelchair came to the restaurant, the van would be sent to the residential property to unload onto the concrete pad. Debonnay Meyers said if they approved the relief, the applicant must obtain an easement for them to continue unloading there.

Kieran Murray continued the conversation by saying that it wasn't feasible for the applicant to move the ramp. He stated that it would decrease the size of the lot and would not be cost-effective. Debonnay Meyers said if they moved the ramp, the ramp would be extremely diagonal, which wouldn't be ideal for wheelchairs. Robert Lebar asked if the applicant sold the home, and the new owner expressed that the concrete pad and ramp must go, how would that be resolved? Kieran Murray said to his understanding, the subdivision would obtain approval from the Board. If they get approval, they would go through the process of obtaining a new deed and creating an easement. Kieran Murray said if the purchaser of the house wants to purchase the property, they would be buying it with subject to the easement. Kieran Murray then explained that per the zone, they were allowed to use the property the way they wanted to do it. So, if there were issues down the road regarding the sale and the easement, he said that would be more of a her problem.

Kieran Murray asked the Board to share their thoughts on the application. He expressed that he was uncomfortable with moving forward until his questions were answered. He reminded the Board that he wanted to know the measurements of the garage, the concrete pad, the two sets of stairs, and the ramp. Debonnay Meyers told the Board that there was the option of calling the applicant tonight. Jeff Blau asked if the applicant said she couldn't make it. Debonnay Meyers said she sent a courtesy email that day reminding her of the meeting.

Before the Board could respond, Debonnay Meyers explained that if Dan Barusch was here, he'd call the applicant and see where they were. If the applicant was unable to make the meeting, Dan Barusch would then ask the Board if they were ok with conversating over the phone. If the Board was ok with it, then the meeting would continue. Kieran Murray asked the Board how they felt on the matter. Debonnay Meyers assured the Board that she had no problem putting the phone on speaker for them to chat. She simply said she needed to know the Board's decision was and what specific questions they had. Mike Ravalli said he wanted to know more details about the easement. Kieran Murray asked Debonnay Meyers if Debra Jordan planned to sell the property

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soon. Debonnay Meyers said Debra Jordan wanted to get the subdivision started, so that way it was ready for her when she was going to sell. The Board asked if she knew of the timeframe. Debonnay Meyers said it wasn't anytime this year and suggested maybe in a couple of years.

The Board still had questions about the involvement of the easement. Debonnay Meyers reminded them that the Planning Board had jurisdiction and would be reviewing the subdivision application afterwards. So, after the Zoning Board deems their final determination, the Planning Board would then come into play as they have the final say on the subdivision. The Board asked for clarification. Debonnay Meyers stated that the Planning Board reviewed the subdivision application in March; and due to the ramp's placement, the Board suggested she either move the ramp, move the proposed property line, or go before the Zoning Board for relief.

The Board was quiet for a few seconds as they were trying to figure out how they were going to proceed. Debonnay Meyers told the Board that there were no emails and/or phone calls from neighboring properties that were within the 250-foot window. Kieran Murray said he wasn't surprised as nothing was being added. He concluded his statement by saying this was just providing the applicant with some flexibility for a future sale.

Kieran Murray asked the Board for their final thoughts. Jeff Blau was the first member to voice his opinion, and he was for tabling the application. Jeff Blau stated that the Board had unanswered questions, and they couldn't be answered because the applicant wasn't at the meeting. Mike Ravalli said if the property wasn't for sale, there was no rush for a decision. Kieran Murray expressed that he hated making business owners wait, but he felt that there was no urgency.

Kieran Murray asked Debonnay Meyers if she could forward the unanswered questions to the applicant. Debonnay Meyers said she would and asked the Board to specify what they wanted for the record. The Board requested the following: exact dimensions of the steps, the concrete pad, and the ramp. This information must be ready for the following meeting on Wednesday, June 6, 2025. Kieran Murray indicated that he would open the public hearing tonight and would keep it open until the next meeting.

Kieran Murray opened the public hearing for AV#6-2025 at 5:40 pm.

**MOTION 2<sup>ND</sup>: Mike Ravalli**

Kieran Murray	Robert LeBar	Mike Ravalli	Jeff Blau	Dan Wolfeld	John Ferrone
Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Absent	Aye

Ayes = 5 Nays = 0 Absent = 1 Motion carried.

Kieran Murray made a motion to table the application to the next meeting, June 4, 2025.

**MOTION 2<sup>ND</sup>: Jeff Blau**

Kieran Murray	Robert LeBar	Mike Ravalli	Jeff Blau	Dan Wolfeld	John Ferrone
Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Absent	Aye

Ayes = 5 Nays = 0 Absent = 1 Motion carried.

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Kieran Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:42 pm.

**MOTION 2<sup>ND</sup>:** Jeff Blau

Kieran Murray	Robert LeBar	Mike Ravalli	Jeff Blau	Dan Wolfield	John Ferrone
Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Absent	Aye

Ayes = 5 Nays = 0 Absent = 1 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debonnay Meyers*

Debonnay Meyers