

Town of Wilton Zoning Board of Adjustment MINUTES

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Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Wilton Town Hall Courtroom 42 Main Street

7 PM

ATTENDANCE

Neil Faiman (Chairperson); Joanna Eckstrom (Vice-Chairperson; remote); Andy **Board Members Present:**

Hoar; Jeff Stone (remote); Judith Klinghoffer; Peg Duggan (alternate); Linda

Jennings (alternate)

Board Members Absent: n/a

Board Secretary: Caryn Case (Land Use Administrator)

Recording Secretary: Caryn Case

Attendees: Tom Ryan; Eric Bacon; Allen John; Carol John; Bill Raney; Katie Raney;

Laurence Withers (Applicant); Dana LaFleur; Michaelann Murphy (Applicant);

Alison Meltzer; Andy Simpson; Jason C. Bolduc (Meridian Land Services);

Marcia Potter; David Potter; Rob Spittel; Cale Brandley (Applicant); Elizabeth

Brandley (Applicant); Denise Jacobs; Chris Guida (Fieldstone Land Consultants)

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 - b. 04.13.2024
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MINUTES 38

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1. Call to Order

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Chairman Faiman called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

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a. Review of Meeting Protocols

Chairman Faiman took measures to assure all individuals in attendance could hear and could be heard and requested that all individuals sign into the meeting.

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b. Mask Wearing

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Chairman Faiman read the following statement regarding mask wearing: "Zoning Board of Adjustment members are volunteers who put in time and energy without compensation to perform a needed service in the town. We appreciate their time and energy. We do not ask them to risk their health or the health of their loved ones. Some of our members are or have family members who are at particular risk if they become ill to accommodate our members' reasonable health concerns and to make it possible for them to attend zoning board meetings in person. The zoning board policy is that all attendees should wear masks and zoning board meetings. Compliance with this policy is optional. Legally, we cannot compel any participant to wear a mask or discriminate against them for choosing not to do so as a matter of courtesy, and to allow all ZBA members to participate fully in board meetings. We request that you wear a mask at our meetings, but the choice is yours. Thank you." Chairman Faiman pointed out to the availability of masks and asked if anyone was unwilling to wear one. It was noted that at least one (1) attendee chose not to wear a

c. Meeting Time

Chairman Faiman stated the Board does not start review of a new case after 9:30 pm and will terminate the meeting at 10 pm unless the Board has unanimously agreed to continue the meeting.

mask, thus, J Stone left the meeting to participate remotely.

d. Introductions

Chairman Faiman asked that attendees who wish to speak during the meeting to introduce themselves and state your relation to the case you are speaking to. He said that if you are a resident of Wilton your address would be helpful. He describes the Zoning Board as a Court which makes decisions on facts of law. He said facts are the details of a proposed use and where it is being proposed and how it relates to and affects the neighborhood and the town. The law is the zoning ordinance. Chairman Faiman described the ZBA hearing process on applications as having two (2) purposes: (1) to allow the applicant and any other interested parties to provide information that the zoning board may take into account when making a decision on an application, and (2) to allow the public to know what is being proposed and what information the ZBA has heard that will go into the decision. He said comments, questions and other testimony are welcome. He noted that a ZBA decision about a proposed use and property is what is about a proposed use on property not about the applicant. If the property is sold, the decision still applies to the property under its new owner. Therefore, comments about the applicant, their character, their habits, their family, or their pets, are at best a distraction. He said the ZBA cannot consider those types of comments when deciding.

81 He emphasized that the Board members do listen to the testimony, and repetition does not make a 82 position stronger. 83 84 Chairman Faiman introduced the Zoning Board: Caryn Case, Board Secretary; 85 Judith Klinghoffer; 86 87 Neil Faiman, Chairperson; 88 Peg Duggan, Alternate; 89 Jeff Stone, Board member participating remotely due to concerns of some attendees opting 90 to not wear masks; 91 Joanna Eckstrom, Co-Chairperson and participating remotely due to illness making it not 92 practical to do so in person; 93 Andy Hoar; and 94 Linda Jennings, Alternate.

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2. Minutes

a. March 12, 2024

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P Duggan noted a duplication on line 82.

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P Duggan MOVED to accept the meeting minutes of March 12, 2024, with the change to line 82. JK Eckstrom SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

A Hoar abstain

N Faiman aye
P Duggan aye

JK Eckstrom aye

J Klinghoffer abstain

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Motion was carried.

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3. Michaelann Murphy, 291 Captain Clark Highway

Public Hearing; *NEW*Case #01/09/2024-01

114 115 a. Michaelann Murphy has requested special exceptions under sections 5.3.1 and 6.6.1 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance to operate a licensed family group care as a home occupation at Tax Map H Lot H-132, 292 Captain Clark Highway.

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Chairman Faiman opened the hearing by reading the Applicant's request. He identified the Voting Board as JK Eckstrom, J Klinghoffer, P Duggan, N Faiman, and L Jennings. He said the hearing had been continued from March 12, 2024, and that the site visit scheduled for April 6, 2024, had to be cancelled due to snow.

- 122 M Murphy introduced herself as an experienced child caretaker and explained that she was seeking to open
- a licensed family group childcare program for school aged children through the New Hampshire
- Department of Health and Human Services. She explained that the license permits up to an additional five
- 125 (5) children on days where school might have been postponed accommodating the siblings of registered
- 126 childcare participants only. She referenced an email sent to the Land Use Administrator that cited the State
- 127 definition for this program.

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JK Eckstrom asked how many children the Applicant would expect to have on a regular day to day basis.

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M Murphy said the State will issue a license based on the square footage required per child in the space designated for the home occupation. She said this number has not yet been determined, however, she is applying for the maximum capacity for this type of license which is 12.

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J Klinghoffer asked if the capacity is 12 how would siblings be accommodated on an inclement weather day when schools are closed.

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138 M Murphy cited it as part of the State's definition for the license type.

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J Klinghoffer stated that it could be possible as many as 17 children would be in the childcare program on a snow day.

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M Murphy confirmed that would be true, however, stating, that only with the required assistance for such capacity. She emphasized the State has very strict guidelines on this.

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N Faiman mentioned that concerns had been expressed about the driveway and parking area.

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M Murphy said a layout for the proposed driveway and parking was visible on her lawn and would be constructed to be compliant with the driveway and other regulations. She said the Fire Chief had given the new presentation a "thumbs up" as the loop adequately provides access for emergency vehicles.

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T Ryan, reiterated concerns he presented at the last meeting regarding traffic flow and speed on Captain Clark Highway, and the intersection at Potter Road. He says the increased traffic will become a safety hazard. He said the application does not explain what the Applicant is exactly seeking, that the zoning ordinance states the home occupation must be located within the residence and not in a barn/garage, and that only two (2) parking spaces are permitted. He argued that the program being discussed was not State licensable.

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Chairman Faiman referenced the areas of the zoning ordinance T Ryan seemed confused by and attempted to explain them more clearly. T Ryan was not open to any clarification.

162 M Murphy said the State of New Hampshire has vigorous guidelines for the development of a childcare 163 program. She said the building is inspected by the Fire Chief, the Building Inspector and all other health and 164 safety personnel. She said it is a long process that would not receive approval if it could not be fully compliant. She emphasized her purpose here was permission to go forward to start the licensing process. 165 166 M Murphy spoke regarding the pickup and drop-off of childcare participants stating there would be 167 168 contracted times for each childcare participant to reduce the amount of traffic at any time. She said enough 169 (temporary) parking spaces would be provided for this 'staggered' activity. 170 171 N Faiman was unsure of the number of parking spaces necessary. 172 173 M Murphy said she based her proposed driveway layout to meet the driveway requirements which resulted 174 in about 15, 9 feet by 18 feet parking spaces. She noted that two (2) additional parking spaces could be 175 cited on the pad in front of the barn. She remarked that the Fire Chief had been supportive of the layout. 176 177 JK Eckstrom asked if the barn had water and septic system access. 178 179 M Murphy said she has not made any financial investment toward the improvements necessary to 180 accommodate her vision. She said that once approved for the home occupation she would be compliant with all regulations and requirements. 181 182 183 T Ryan disagreed with the Applicant regarding the barn being a suitable location for the childcare program 184 and the parking spaces on the pad as he interpreted from the zoning ordinance. 185 186 The Board discussed the necessity of a site visit. 187 The Board discussed scheduling a Special hearing date. 188 189 190 P Dugan MOVED to schedule a site visit for Saturday, April 13, 2024, at 9 am. L Jennings SECONDED. 191 192 **Discussion:** None 193 **Roll Call Vote:** J Klinghoffer aye 194 N Faiman aye 195 JK Eckstrom aye 196 P Duggan aye 197 L Jennings aye 198 Motion was carried. 199 200 JK Eckstrom MOVED to schedule a Special Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting for Tuesday, 201 April 30, 2024, at 7 pm to continue the hearing.

202 J Klinghoffer SECONDED. 203 **Discussion:** None 204 **Roll Call Vote:** J Klinghoffer aye 205 N Faiman aye 206 JK Eckstrom aye 207 P Duggan aye 208 L Jennings aye Motion was carried. 209 210 J Klinghoffer MOVED to continue the hearing to Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 7pm in the Fire 211 212 **Station Conference Room.** P Dugan SECONDED. 213 214 **Discussion:** None **Roll Call Vote:** 215 J Klinghoffer aye 216 N Faiman aye 217 JK Eckstrom aye 218 P Duggan aye 219 L Jennings aye 220 Motion was carried. 221 222 4. Cale & Elizabeth Brandley, 19 Potter Road 223 Public Hearing, NEW Case #04/09/2024-04 224 225 a. Cale and Elizabeth Brandley have requested variances to sections 6.2.4 and 6.2.5 of the Wilton 226 Zoning Ordinance to allow the partial demolition and replacement of an existing house, and the replacement of an existing septic system, on Lot H-13, 19 Potter Road, where the new house and 227 228 septic system would be closer to the lot lines than allowed by the Ordinance. 229 230 A Hoar MOVED to continue the hearing on April 30, 2024. 231 P Duggan SECONDED. 232 **Discussion:** None 233 **Roll Call Vote:** J Klinghoffer aye

aye

aye

aye

aye

5. The Clinton & Heidi Wilder Revocable Trust of 2022, Wilson Road

A Hoar

J Stone

Motion was carried.

N Faiman

JK Eckstrom

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241 Public Hearing, **NEW**

Case #04/09/2024-01

a. The Clinton & Wilder Revocable Trust of 2022 has requested a special exception under section 11.4(a) of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance to allow a driveway to cross a wetland area to access a buildable area at the rear of the property on Lot D-133-2, Wilson Road.

247 Chairman Faiman read the request by the Applicant. He explained that the request requires two (2) public 248 hearings and a site visit.

J Bolduc, Meridian Land Services, explained that his client would like to construct a single-family residence in the buildable area at the rear of the lot. He said the subdivision plan cites the access way to the west in a non-wetland area. He said they evaluated the driveway regulations and opted to re-locate the access way and seek relief for a wetland crossing after meeting with the Road Agent to minimize safety hazards, even though the impact to the wetlands in this area would be slightly greater. J Bolduc cited that the impact to the wetlands for the construction of the crossing would be approximately 20 feet by 30 feet or 525 square feet of total disturbance (220 square feet of temporary disturbance; 375 square feet of permanent disturbance).

J Bolduc said the proposed development would not affect the character of the neighborhood to which it is proposed as it is zoned General Residence & Agricultural District and among already developed single family residences. He does not see that the health and safety of anyone would be in jeopardy by the proposed development, nor would surrounding property value be diminished. He said the proposed two (2) bedroom dwelling unit would place no obvious strain on traffic in the area.

Chairman Faiman interrupts realizing he had not identified the Voting Board and acknowledges late receipt of a letter from the Wilton Conservation Commission (WCC). The Voting Board is JK Eckstrom, J Stone, A Hoar, J Klinghoffer, N Faiman.

Chairman Faiman reads a letter into the record: "The Wilton Conservation Commission recommends a site walk in association with this case. Review of available wetland mapping shows the NWI overlay having a mismatch between plan mapping and NWI. Although the NWI can have variances this should be reviewed in the field. The Wilton Conservation Commission's position would be to minimize impact to the wetland resource on site as much as possible. This was originally reviewed due to the wet portion of the lot having a non-wetland section according to the plan. Although it may be within a lot line setback it could minimize wetland impact as an alternative. Septic field setbacks should also be reviewed. Wilton has a stricter standard in some circumstances depending on drainage. Review of the site from the road shows that this location has a stone wall that will need to be broken for access. With Wilson Road being a scenic road, the applicant should review town regulations as this may be required to have site plan review by the planning board."

J Bolduc stated that as a Wetlands Scientist regional planning tools were utilized to evaluate the best location for the driveway and minimal impact to the wetlands, citing that even in the non-wetland area mentioned by the WCC, there would still be an impact to the wetlands from construction. He clarified that NWI was the National Wetlands Inventory.

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A Hoar MOVED to schedule a site visit for Saturday, May 4, 2024, at 9 am. JK Eckstrom SECONDED.

287 **Discussion**: None

Roll Call Vote: A Hoar aye

N Faiman aye J Stone aye

JK Eckstrom aye
J Klinghoffer aye

Motion was carried.

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JK Eckstrom MOVED to continue the hearing to Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

A Hoard SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: A Hoar aye

N Faiman aye
J Stone aye
JK Eckstrom aye
J Klinghoffer aye

Motion was carried.

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6. Lawrence Withers, 19 Davisville Road

Public Hearing, **NEW**

Case #04/09/2024-02

a. Lawrence Withers has requested a variance to section 14.3.1 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance to allow subdivision of Lot A-55, 19 Davisville Road, into two lots, neither of which would have the required area.

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Chairman Faiman read the request submitted by the Applicant and noted receipt of a late comment/letter from the Wilton Conservation Commission regarding the case. He identified the Voting Board as J Klinghoffer, A Hoar, N Faiman, J Stone, and JK Eckstrom.

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The Applicant distributed an exhibit for the Board to reference in his presentation.

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L Withers explained his request to subdivide his lot into two (2) equal parcels to provide for a family member, one with frontage on Duggan, the other with frontage on Davisville. He stated the reason for his request is knowing he will not meet the minimum lot size for the Watershed District, however, noting he would meet the requirement for minimum lot size for the General Residence & Agricultural District to

which his property is also located. He stated the first known reference to his property dates to the 1830's, pre-dating the establishment of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance and the delineation of the Watershed District. He said his request for a Variance would not be contrary to the public interest citing most lots, immediately surrounding his own, do not meet the minimum lot size for the Watershed District. He referenced the exhibit distributed earlier, adding that no disservice would be imposed upon his neighbors as the character of the neighborhood would not be changed. Additionally, L Withers noted that since his lot predates both the Wilton Zoning Ordinance and the delineation of the Watershed District, literal enforcement of the ordinance would result in an unfair hardship and defy the spirit of the ordinance.

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Chairman Faiman read the letter received from the Wilton Conservation Commission who recommended denying the Variance request. The letter went on to read, "The purpose of the Watershed District is to preserve the quality of the water and to protect the health and welfare of residents of the Town of Wilton by minimizing sources of pollution through regulations and restriction of population density and activity, and by keeping organic and inorganic wastes to a minimum. By creating a district which has lower density the town has been successful in preserving the water quality of this district. Water quality tests in 2023 for this area of town continue to show some of the lowest levels of E. coli compared to our other water resources. Allowing a higher density of lot concentration the town could potentially negatively impact this resource. Beyond just the housing density additional lot creation does increase the likelihood of containments which could include inorganics and or animal waste. Within the district multiple NH threatened species exist that have a dependency on water quality. One publicly available threatened species data point is location data for Eastern Brook Trout. The flagged location for this species is just upstream of this lot location which a map has been included below. Other threatened species do exist within the district, some of which also have a dependency on water quality which also could be negatively impacted. The roadside view of this particular property off Duggin Road shows a stream flowing form the property. Based on the lot configuration and location of the stream it may be difficult for this lot to meet a continuous dry requirement. The stream location and flow would also increase the likelihood of potential impact to additional water resources in the event a containment is introduced."

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L Withers discussed the stream off Duggan Road referenced in the letter. He said there is a trench which flows under Duggan Road but not on his property. He said the flow stems from a residence built by San-Ken Homes. He identified himself as a sustainable building advisor noting that organic filters along Davisville have protected against containments going into neighboring marshland.

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E Bacon, abutter, expressed concern about an access point onto Duggan Road which he described as a one (1) lane road. He expressed moving here because of the rules and regulations that protected their privacy and their land.

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JK Eckstrom asked if the Applicant had property values assessed to confirm there would be no diminution to them.

L Withers acknowledged that he had not, but cited the number of lots nearby with acreage less than he was proposing in his two (2) lot subdivisions.

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A Hoar MOVED to close the public hearing.

J Stone SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: A Hoar aye

N Faiman aye J Stone aye

JK Eckstrom aye

J Klinghoffer aye

Motion was carried.

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A Hoar commented that the Watershed District was designed to keep pollution levels down by minimizing the number of residents and buildings. He states that he is hesitant to grant the Variance.

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N Faiman conveyed he was having difficulty seeing the hardship presented by the Applicant. He described the request as rather extraordinary based on the minimum lot size for the Watershed District being 6 acres and the request by the Applicant for approximately 2 acres per lot. JK Eckstrom responded similarly.

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N Faiman further noted that the Watershed District was created with the knowledge that there were lots that did not meet the standard and was designed to avoid creating new lots. He further noted that the purpose of the Watershed District is to preserve the quality of the water and protect the health and welfare of the residents of the town of Wilton by minimizing sources of pollution through regulation and restriction to population density. He stated the proposed subdivision directly contradicts that purpose.

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N Faiman notes that this case is a rare occasion in that he could not actually see something which reached the standard of failure to be exempt from the ordinance. He added that regarding substantial justice, the property is already smaller than would be allowed for a subdivision in the Watershed District and the restriction to the owner is outweighed by the damage that would be done to the Watershed District by allowing the subdivision.

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JK Eckstrom stated that if it impacts the watershed, it impacts property values within the watershed. J Klinghoffer responded similarly.

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JK Eckstrom MOVED to deny the request for a Variance to section 14.3.1 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance arguing that the diminution of property values would result from impact to the Watershed District inconsistent with the zoning requirements for that district.

A Hoar SECONDED.

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A Hoar MOVED to re-open the public hearing. J Stone SECONDED.

404 **Discussion**: None **Roll Call Vote:** 405 A Hoar aye 406 N Faiman aye 407 J Stone aye 408 JK Eckstrom aye 409 J Klinghoffer aye 410 Motion was carried.

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VOTE ON THE MOTION: JK Eckstrom MOVED to deny the request for a Variance to section 14.3.1 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance.

A Hoar SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote:

A Hoar aye
N Faiman aye
J Stone aye
JK Eckstrom aye

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J Klinghoffer

Motion was carried.

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N Faiman informed the Applicant that a Notice of Decision would be forthcoming. He said the Select Board, any party to the action or proceedings, or any person directly affected thereby may apply for a rehearing of this decision. A request for a rehearing must be filed in writing with the Zoning Board of Adjustment on or before Thursday, May 9, 2024, and must clearly state the reasons why it is claimed the Board made the wrong decision. (N.H. RSA 677:2)

aye

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7. Robert & Sara Spittel, 748 Isaac Frye Highway

Public Hearing, **NEW**

Case #04/09/2024-03

a. Robert and Sara Spittel have requested a variance to section 6.2.4 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance and/or a special exception under section 17.3 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance to remove and replace an existing nonconforming garage with a new one which would still be closer to the front lot line than allowed by the Ordinance on Lot C-47, 748 Isaac Frye Highway.

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The Board agreed to continue the public meeting to hear the Spittel case despite the hour being past 9:30 pm. J Klinghoffer left the meeting.

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As a result of J Klinghoffer's departure, Chairman Faiman identified the Voting Board as A Hoar, N Faiman, J Stone, JK Eckstrom, and L Jennings.

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Chairman Faiman read the Applicant's request for a variance to section 6.2.4 and special exception request pursuant to section 17.3 of the Town of Wilton Zoning Ordinance to remove and replace an existing non-conforming garage with a new garage which would be closer to the front lot line than allowed. He added

that the requests were essentially the same as those heard in case number 06/13/2003-02, however, the boundary setback information turned out to be incorrect.

R Spittel, Applicant, described that in the process of architecting the site to prepare for the new garage, a site survey revealed that the front lot line was only three (3) feet from the existing structure instead of 15 feet as was presented in June 2023. He said the existing garage is over 100 years old and failing. The new garage will be set, as far back as possible, decreasing the encroachment into the front lot line setback. The new garage will be adequate for parking two (2) vehicles inside and provide storage on the second floor.

Chairman Faiman, referencing the plat provided by the Applicant's Architect, noted that once the existing, non-conforming garage is raised the propose new structure would not meet setback requirements even though the new footprint would be smaller. With no practical place to put the new structure to meet setback requirements, the Board would be able to grant a special exception for reduced setbacks. He additionally noted that the result would remain consistent with the neighborhood character.

The Board reflected on the June 2023 decision.

A Hoar MOVED to	o close	the public	hearing.
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L Jennings SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: A Hoar

N Faiman aye
J Stone aye
JK Eckstrom aye
L Jennings aye

aye

Motion was carried.

Chairman Faiman noted that (a) the lot shape and topography, location of the existing house, and buried utility lines make it impractical to place the garage any further than 12.2 feet from the lot line; (b) the setback in question is a lot line setback; (c) the house and proposed garage locations are consistent with an area of town in which many historic houses have nonconforming front setbacks; and (d) the proposed garage is to be constructed in the location indicated by the rectangle labeled "Proposed Garage" on the Architect's drawing submitted with the application.

JK Eckstrom MOVED to grant the request for a special exception to section 17.3 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance to allow the removal and replacement of an existing non-conforming garage with a new one which will still be closer to the road than allowed by the Zoning Ordinance. J Stone SECONDED.

A Hoar MOVED to re-open the public hearing.

L Jennings SECONDED.

Discussion: None

488 **Roll Call Vote:** A Hoar aye 489 N Faiman aye 490 J Stone aye 491 JK Eckstrom aye 492 L Jennings aye

Motion was carried.

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VOTE ON THE MOTION: JK Eckstrom MOVED to grant the request for a special exception to section 17.3 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance.

J Stone SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: A Hoar aye

N Faiman aye
J Stone aye
JK Eckstrom aye
L Jennings aye

Motion was carried.

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JK Eckstrom MOVED to deny, without prejudice, the request for a variance from section 6.2.4 of the Wilton Zoning Ordinance because the requested use is permitted by the Special Exception granted under section 17.3.

L Jennings SECONDED.

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: A Hoar aye

N Faiman aye
J Stone aye
JK Eckstrom aye
L Jennings aye

Motion was carried.

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N Faiman informed the Applicant that a Notice of Decision would be forthcoming, and that the decision will expire if the construction or use permitted by the Special Exception has not begun by April 9, 2026. (Wilton Zoning Ordinance section 17.4) He said the selectmen, any party to the action or proceedings, or any person directly affected thereby may apply for a rehearing of this decision. A request for a rehearing must be filed in writing with the Zoning Board of Adjustment on or before Thursday, May 9, 2024, and must fully specify all grounds on which the rehearing is requested. (N.H. RSA 677:2) He stated that any activity/progress by the applicant during that period on the request could be at risk if the decision is overturned at a rehearing.

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8. Other Business

None.

530	9.	Adjournment					
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532		JK Eckstrom MOVED to adjourn at 10:02 p.m.					
533		J Stone SECONDED.					
534		Discussion: None	9				
535		Roll Call Vote:	J Klinghoffer	aye			
536			A Hoar	aye			
537			N Faiman	aye			
538			J Stone	aye			
539			JK Eckstrom	aye			
540	Motion was carried.						
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543	APF	PROVED 04.30.2024					

¹ Subsequent to the Zoning Board discussion, the area impacted for the construction of the wetlands crossing was clarified as an irregular shape equal to approximately 595 square feet; 220 square feet of temporary disturbance, and 375 square feet of permanent disturbance.