

**Approved  
MINUTES  
Zoning Board of Adjustment  
June 21, 2023**

Present: Steve Lagasse, Chair, Tom Franklin, Alice Maleski, Stephanie Gile, and Jo-Ann Ells,  
Zoning Administrator

Absent: Chris Lowe, Vice Chair and Lannie Collins, Selectboard Liaison

Steve Lagasse opened the Public Hearing, read the Hybrid Meeting Script, explained the Hearing process, reviewed the Interested Party Rule, reviewed the quorum rule, and administered the oath.

Steve Lagasse noted that an event at Town Hall that was occurring was making parking difficult and changed the order of the agenda in order to allow Stephanie Gile time to park/arrive before the first application was reviewed.

**Administrative Matters**

1. Public Comment

None

2. Minutes

Steve Lagasse moved to approve the minutes of May 17, 2023. Alice Maleski seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Administrative Permits

None

Stephanie Gile arrived.

4. Availability for the next Public Hearing

All anticipated being available for the July 26, 2023 Hearing.

**Public Hearing**

1. Application #04-23 by Emily Merwin and Colin Dutton (owners/applicants) for approval of a setback waiver under section 260-52 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a garage, lot 12-0171-000, 229 Sugar House Road, Quechee, in RL-3 and RL-10 zoning districts.

06-21-23

Emily Merwin and Colin Dutton were present.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the application.

Colin Dutton noted that lumber from the property would be used to construct the garage and the property had been surveyed.

Stephanie Gile questioned why the garage could not be moved closer to the house. Colin Dutton noted that it was due to the grade and location of the well and septic.

Stephanie Gile thanked the applicants for staking the garage and providing photographs.

Steve Lagasse asked about the use of the existing woods trail. Emily Merwin noted that it is less than a class 4 road and rarely used.

Steve Lagasse asked about the height of the garage. Colin Dutton explained that it would be approximately 20'-22' to the peak and 10'-12' to the eve.

There was no public comment.

Steve Lagasse moved to close the Public Hearing. Alice Maleski seconded, and the Hearing was closed.

Tom Franklin moved to approve the application. Alice Maleski seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Application #05-23 by John Morlock (owner/applicant) for approval of a setback waiver under section 260-52 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a garage, lot 11-0003-004, 1489 Hillside Road, Quechee, in an RL-5 zoning district.

Kevin Mock was present.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the application.

Kevin Mock explained that the goal is to avoid an existing water line, preserve open land including a field that is hayed, and keep development near the road. He asked if the application was approved if the garage could be rotated as long as it was not closer to the road. Jo-Ann Ells noted the Board could allow this if they wanted. Stephanie Gile stated that at this point she was not sure if she was comfortable allowing this flexibility.

Tom Franklin that the garage was similar to existing development in the area, and he was supportive of the application.

It was noted that the stakes shown in the photographs were no longer in place at the property.

06-21-23

Stephanie Gile asked why the garage could not be located on the other side of the dwelling. Kevin Mock explained that it was proposed near the entrance to the dwelling.

Stephanie Gile stated she was having a hard time understanding why the front setback could not be met.

Steve Lagasse suggested a site visit and asked that the proposed footprint's stakes be put back in place for the site visit.

Steve Lagasse asked if any trees would be removed. Kevin Mock stated that no trees would be removed.

The location of the property and proposed garage was discussed with abutter Ellen Kardon. She noted that she did not have any objections to the application.

Steve Lagasse moved to close the Public Hearing. Tom Franklin seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

The Board agreed that they wanted to continue the Hearing in order to conduct a site visit.

Steve Lagasse moved to re-open the Public Hearing. Stephanie Gile seconded, and the Public Hearing was re-opened.

Alice Maleski moved to continue the Hearing to 11AM, Friday, June 23, 2023 commencing with a site visit. Tom Franklin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Application #06-23 by The Town of Hartford School District (owner/applicant) for Conditional Use Approval under section 260-16 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a school/educational building, lot 09-0028-001, Christian Street, Hartford, in an agricultural overlay district and R-3 zoning district.

Jonathan Garthwaite was present.

Jonathan Garthwaite gave an overview of the project. He noted that the site would be accessed via an existing undeveloped right-of-way which would limit the number of curb cuts in the future if the lot benefitting from the right-of-way was developed.

Steve Lagasse asked for a description of the proposed activities.

Jonathan Garthwaite explained that the high school's Natural Resource program students would be practicing surveying and operating equipment (i.e. small tractor, mini-bulldozer, chainsaws), and that District students would participate in nature-based learning. He added that the building would include an area for equipment to be stored, that activities would occur for a few hours at a time, and that the property would not be permanently staffed.

Jonathan Garthwaite noted that locating the building and parking in the southeast corner of the lot keeps development out of the woods and wetlands.

There was a discussion regarding the possibility of relocating the access and development to the north to be more compatible with the character of the residential area.

Jonathan Garthwaite noted that the location of wetlands, the powerline easement, and ability to treat stormwater limit development of the lot to the north.

There was a discussion regarding the parking calculation and turning radius for vehicles using the lot.

Alice Maleski stated that she preferred the proposed location in the southeast corner of the lot.

Tom Franklin stated that he was supportive of the proposed use. He asked why 15 parking spaces were needed. Jonathan Garthwaite explained that they want to provide adequate parking spaces to keep vehicles from parking along the road.

It was noted that occupancy of the building would not be more than 30 people, but may be less if restricted by the Fire Marshal.

There was a lengthy discussion about parking including the calculation, the possibility of reducing the number of parking spaces, the need for turning radius of a ladder truck, and the possibility of locating the parking behind the building.

Stephanie Gile suggested that the applicant contact the State Wetlands Ecologist about allowed uses near/in a wetland. She added that the applicant should consider posting the wetlands with signage to avoid an inadvertent intrusion.

Steve Lagasse commented that he supported allowing 15 parking spaces because that should preclude anyone parking on the street.

Steve Lagasse asked for comment from Interested Parties.

Liz Storn noted she supports the proposed use and reviewed several concerns:

- Size of the parking area
- Location of the access
- Location of the parking in front of the building
- Lack of a gate to restrict off hour access
- Lack of a sidewalk on Christian Street
- Lack of screening on the south side of the lot (near her dwelling)

Ann Johnson noted she supports the project and voiced the following concerns:

- Speed of existing traffic on the road

06-21-23

- Lack of a shoulder or turning lane to get vehicles off the road before entering the property
- Drainage/stormwater management – making sure it is adequate given the lot is very wet

Lily Roberts noted she shared many of the concerns raised.

Selina French stated she is concerned with the existing speed on the road and limited sight distance from the property.

Liz Storn added that she is not in favor of motion-activated security lights.

Steve Lagasse moved to close the Public Hearing. Tom Franklin seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Steve Lagasse moved to enter a Deliberative Session. Tom Franklin seconded, and the motion passed 3-1 with Alice Maleski opposed.

Steve Lagasse moved to re-open the Public Hearing. Tom Franklin seconded, and the motion passed 3-1 with Alice Maleski opposed.

Steve Lagasse noted that the Board wanted to continue the Hearing so the applicant could address the following:

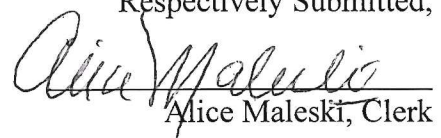
- Generate an alternate configuration with the building moved to the east, with the parking area behind the structure
- Provide additional information regarding the need for 15 parking spaces
- Provide information regarding the minimum turning radius for the vehicles that will use the property (i.e. will a ladder truck need access)
- Include a gate on the original and alternative plans (coordinate with the Fire Department)

Tom Franklin moved to continue the Hearing to July 26, 2023 and added that the applicant must submit the information outlined by Steve Lagasse to Jo-Ann Ells by noon, July 5, 2023. Steve Lagasse seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

At 9:20 p.m., Alice Maleski moved to adjourn. Stephanie Gile seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectively Submitted,

  
Alice Maleski, Clerk



06-21-23

Zoning Board of Adjustment Members/Terms:

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Stephanie Gile | 11-15-24 |
| Alice Maleski  | 03-07-25 |
| Steve Lagasse  | 03-07-25 |
| Chris Lowe     | 03-21-25 |
| Tom Franklin   | 04-04-25 |