

TOWN OF ONONDAGA
5020 Ball Road - Syracuse, NY 13215
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

JOHN ELLEMAN, CHAIRMAN
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NADINE BELL, ATTORNEY
STACY MARRIS, ATTORNEY
VICTORIA ROGERS, SECRETARY

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Minutes of May 19, 2026

Present:

John Elleman

Mitch Carmody

Bénédicte Doran

Carol Schattner

Ronald Ryan

Stacy Marris, Town Attorney

Victoria Rogers, Secretary

Attending:

Michelle Boellmann - Applicant

Louis F. Brown Jr- Applicant

Brian Killmore – Applicant

Timothy Schad - Applicant

Chairman John Elleman called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

Michelle Boellmann – 4386 W. Seneca Tnpk. (026.-01-01.2)
Public Hearing:

Area Variance

The first matter before the Board was a public hearing for Michelle Boellman, owner and applicant of property located at 4386 West Seneca Turnpike in the R-1 Residential District. The applicant was requesting area variance relief from Section 285-93 of the Town of Onondaga Zoning Law to allow a private swimming pool to be located closer to the rear lot line than permitted by code. The Board noted that the application had been properly published in the Post-Standard and referred to the Town Planning Board for review. The Board also noted that a short-form environmental assessment would be addressed as part of the final determination.

During discussion of the pool application, the Board requested that the applicant obtain a signed letter from an adjacent neighbor confirming that they had been made aware of the proposed pool placement and had no objection. The Board explained that this had become a standard practice following a previous matter where a neighbor later claimed they had not been consulted. The applicant had also provided the required application fee.

The primary concern discussed was the presence of a historic National Grid transmission line easement on the property. The Board explained that the easement, which dates back to 1930, is broadly written and does not contain the type of precise boundaries that are typically included in modern easements. Because the easement relates to a transmission line, the Board contacted National Grid to determine the voltage of the line and the required separation distance between the transmission line and the proposed pool, fence, and related improvements. The Board stated that it could not make a final determination until National Grid provided written guidance. The Board further explained that utility easements carry significant legal authority and that any approval would need to comply with National Grid's requirements. The public hearing was left open pending receipt of the National Grid response, the Planning Board recommendation, and any additional survey information needed to verify the proposed pool location.

Louis Brown – 5148 Onondaga Rd. (008.-03-15.0)
Discussion:

Area Variance

The applicant Louis Brown is seeking relief to allow an existing shed to remain in its current location. The applicant explained that the shed had been installed in approximately August 2025 and that relocation would be difficult due to the property layout and cost. The applicant provided information that neighboring property owners had been contacted and had no objection. The Board explained that exact setback measurements were needed in order to proceed with publication and scheduling of a public hearing. The applicant was asked to provide measurements from the road right-of-way and property lines, as well as additional information explaining the unique characteristics of the property, including the steep terrain and limitations of placing the shed elsewhere. The Board indicated that these site-specific conditions could be considered when reviewing an area variance request.

Brian Killmore – 3419 Collins Rd. (053.-02-12.0)
Discussion:

Area Variance

Brian Killmore proposed a detached garage on a large rural parcel. The applicant explained that the property contained significant slopes and that the proposed location was selected due to topography, existing improvements, and long-term plans for the property. The Board discussed whether the building could be relocated or redesigned to avoid the need for a variance, including moving the structure farther back, rotating the building, or making grading adjustments. Members noted that the property's acreage and rural nature may provide greater flexibility than would be available on a smaller residential lot. However, if a variance was ultimately pursued, the Board requested additional information, including topographic information, photographs, and justification regarding why the proposed location was necessary. The applicant agreed to further evaluate possible alternatives before proceeding.

Timothy Schad – 5907 E. Seneca Tpk. (032.-01-01.3)
Discussion:

Area Variance

The applicant proposed a detached garage with an upper living space in the PCO zoning district. The Board noted that a detached second dwelling would be permitted as proposed because this property is zoned PCO and explained that the project would require a variance, a special permit, site plan review, and referral to the Planning Board. Board members expressed significant concern regarding the proposed location of the garage within the required 70-foot front setback, noting that the Planning Board would likely have difficulty recommending approval because the setback is intended to remain open and unobstructed. As an alternative, the Board suggested attaching the garage to the eastern side of the existing residence; however, the applicant explained that a timber-frame addition had recently been constructed in that location, making that option impractical. The Board also suggested relocating the garage within the driveway area while remaining behind the required 20-foot building line, but the applicant explained that the terrain in that area drops off steeply, making construction difficult. The Board encouraged the applicant to further evaluate alternative designs and locations before proceeding with a variance application.

The meeting concluded around 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria Rogers
Zoning Board Secretary