

1 **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**
2 **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS COMMISSION**
3 **OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**
4

5
6 **MEETING DATE:** Thursday, October 16, 2025
7

8 **MEETING LOCATION:** Council Chambers, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL
9

10 **CALL TO ORDER**

11 At 7:30 p.m., Chairperson Bay called the meeting to order. This Commission meeting takes place on-site.
12 Staff was asked to call the roll.
13

14 **ROLL CALL**

15 Commissioners Present: Chairperson Bay; Commissioners Aronoff, Chase, Treshansky, Weisberg, Yablon, &
16 Zaransky
17

18 Councilmember Present: Center
19

20 Student Council Absent: Duenow
21

22 Staff declared that a quorum was present.
23

24 Guests Present: Cal Bernstein, Attorney/Samuels & Bernstein
25 Michael Hershenson, Principal Architect/Michael Hershenson Architects
26 Andrew Venamore, CEO/H.G.B.
27 Deborah Goldberg, Petitioner (via telephone)
28

29 Staff Present: Hoffmann
30

31 Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder
32

33 Chairperson Bay introduced Jeffrey Aronoff, new ZBA Commissioner, who shared he has lived in Highland
34 Park for 25 years.
35

36 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

37 *Regular Meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals – August 21, 2025*
38

39 Commissioner Yablon moved to approve the August 21, 2025, regular meeting minutes as drafted.
40 Commissioner Zaransky seconded the motion.
41

42 On a roll call vote

43 Voting Yea Chairperson Bay; Commissioners Aronoff, Chase, Treshansky, Weisberg, Yablon, &
44 Zaransky

45 Voting Nay: None
46

47 Chairperson Bay declared that the motion passed unanimously.
48

1 Councilperson Center arrived at 7:32 p.m.

2
3 **BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC**

4 There was no Business from the Public.

5
6 **OLD BUSINESS**

7 1. #VAR-2025-00047

8 Property: 175 Prospect Avenue

9 Zoning District: R4/LFOZ

10 Appellant: 175 Prospect, LLC

11 Address: 1319 Stratford, Deerfield, IL 60015

12
13 The petitioner and owner, 175 Prospect, LLC of 1319 Stratford, Deerfield, IL 60015 for the property 175
14 Prospect Avenue, Highland Park, IL 60035, requests by authority of Section 150.1204(A)(1) of the Highland
15 Park Zoning Code, a variation of provision Section 150.711 to construct a new primary structure that will
16 encroach into the Established Building Setback/EBS.

17
18 Planner Hoffmann reviewed the proposal (continued from the June, 2025, ZBA meeting):

- 19 ● Project Background
 - 20 ○ R4 zoning district
 - 21 ○ meeting was re-noticed
- 22 ● Site Location
- 23 ● Aerial View
 - 24 ○ Steep Slope Zone/SSZ
- 25 ● Plat of Survey
 - 26 ○ demolishing existing building and building a new home
- 27 ● Property Photos
- 28 ● Proposed Work
 - 29 ○ proposed and required setbacks were identified
- 30 ● Established Building Setback/ESB – 68.5’
- 31 ● Typography was illustrated
- 32 ● Elevations were displayed
- 33 ● Historic Preservation Commission/HPC
 - 34 ○ demolition delay expires on February 14, 2026
- 35 ● Other Comments
 - 36 ○ tree preservation will be addressed during permitting
 - 37 ○ two letters of support in packet
 - 38 ○ one letter from neighbor who is present this evening
- 39 ● Review

40
41 Some ZBA questions for Staff are.....

- 42 ● Chairperson Bay asked, and Planner Hoffmann said more details have now been provided.
- 43 ● Commissioner Weisberg said this house will be demolished. Planner Hoffmann said yes, on February
44 14, 2026.
- 45 ● Commissioner Yablon asked, regarding the letters of support, how far away those houses are from
46 the Petitioner’s. Planner Hoffmann will review same.

1 Mr. Cal Bernstein, Attorney with Samuels & Bernstein, who was previously sworn, said the neighbors who
2 wrote support letters live approximately one block away from Petitioner. He explained the owners recently
3 purchased the house and will demolish it after the expiration of the delay. Mr. Bernstein advised the sale
4 occurred. Members of this LLC were born and raised in Highland Park and are returning home. He noted this
5 is a corner lot and explained the established front-yard setback history. Both of the lots at 175 Prospect and
6 203 Prospect are much shorter. This is affected by the ravine, in part, and is driving this request. The lot
7 slants and is pie-shaped. Currently, there is heavy vegetation in the parkway. The house doesn't have a
8 functioning backyard. The new home will be closer to the street and offer a true backyard. The owner of 203
9 Prospect would not be affected. Currently an \$11,000 square-foot house could be built. The new home will
10 be 6,800 square feet.

11
12 Some ZBA comments are.....

- 13 • Chairperson Bay recalled this request was suggested to be less of an ask.
- 14 • Commissioner Treshansky asked if adjacent neighbors were spoken to. Mr. Bernstein said yes. That
15 is the neighbor who stated he wouldn't be affected.

16
17 Mr. Michael Hershenson, Principal Architect with Michael Hershenson Architects and who was previously
18 sworn, advised if the house is pushed back, one couldn't back out of the garage and would be in the setback
19 of the ravine. With the new house, the bulk of the house would be 5' further back. They tried to move the
20 house back. This is a traditional home with some transitional elements; fits in with the neighborhood; won't
21 affect anyone.

22
23 Chairperson Bay asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on this matter. There was no one.

24
25 More ZBA comments are.....

- 26 • Chairperson Bay asked what percentage would be set back. Mr. Hershenson replied 60%.
- 27 • Commissioner Yablon said on the west side, room is needed not to be in the SSZ. She asked why not
28 flip the house. Mr. Hershenson commented the garages would be facing Lake Avenue. Planner
29 Hoffmann noted there is a restriction on garage doors; however, they could face a street. Mr.
30 Hershenson believes they would receive pushback from neighbors.

31
32 Mr. Bernstein said the trend is not to have garage doors face the street. He shared the new home is
33 two stories and would comply with the height. The existing home is three stories. This would
34 mitigate bulk in the front yard.

35
36 Regarding standards, the owner will not sell the home and cannot get a reasonable return without
37 obtaining a variance. An 11,000 square-foot house could be built which wouldn't be in keeping with
38 the neighborhood. This will also have a functioning backyard. If the house was made smaller, there
39 wouldn't be a material difference, as a functioning backyard is needed. The house lines up with the
40 homes to the west. This is a two-lot block. The site context is creating the hardship. There are large
41 lots on this block. The variance will preserve the block, existing streetscape. Houses to the east are
42 10,000 square feet. The lots are vastly different.

- 43
44 • Commissioner Weisberg said some public members were against this. Mr. Bernstein concurred, and
45 said one neighbor is present tonight.
- 46 • Commissioner Chase asked, based on the site plan, if there is a swimming pool in the back with a
47 deck. Mr. Hershenson said there is a standard 20x40 pool with a patio. He noted, when exiting the

1 house on the first floor, it is 4' above grade. Mr. Hershenson reiterated the setback prohibits pulling
2 out of the garage; doesn't have anything to do with the patio.

3
4 Mr. Bernstein concluded this is a difficult lot. They only need one variance regarding the EBS.

5
6 Chairperson Bay asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on this matter. The following was sworn in:

- 7
- 8 • Lauren Wood said she lives across the street, and expressed the ZBA should support the Strategic
9 Plan. Variances undermine the character of the neighborhood. She, too, lives in a Howard Van
10 Doren Shaw home and had to revise her plan several times before being granted a variance. A 25'
11 variance is large. Neighbors weren't in favor before or now. Ms. Wood explained setbacks on the
12 block. She stated they are very interested in preserving the block. The current garage faces Lake
13 Avenue, and there is no issue now. A four-car garage is excessive. Ms. Wood believes things could
14 be shifted.

15 Chairperson Bay asked, and Ms. Wood replied other neighbors could not attend this evening. He
16 asked what her major objection is. Ms. Wood stated the setback, as there is no privacy now. The
17 current house is an eyesore. New neighbors should be respectful and fit in with the community; too
18 encroaching on their yard.

19
20 Final ZBA comments are.....

- 21 • Commissioner Yablon asked about the four-car garage and space needed to back out. Mr.
22 Hershenson said the owner wants a four-car garage. The back-up space is 24' which is typical. The
23 current garage faces the ravine rather than Lake Avenue. A three-car garage could tweak things (to
24 the west and back).
- 25 • Chairperson Bay asked how many feet that would be. Mr. Hershenson said approximately 4' back.
26 Planner Hoffmann said the house at 203 Prospect is 55' from the front property line.
- 27 • Commissioner Treshansky believes all of the standards have been met. Is the ask too big? He is
28 inclined to support it and understands the neighbor's concern.
- 29 • Commissioner Weisberg said he would support this, as the standards have been met.
- 30 • Commissioner Chase is not certain that standard #1 has been met. It's a big ask and setback. It's a
31 large building with a large garage.
- 32 • Commissioner Zaransky supports this. The ESB is a silly arbitrary number, as houses are 30' setback
33 from the street. It won't impact the neighborhood.
- 34 • Commissioner Aronoff believes the standards have been met; will not cause a negative impact.
- 35 • Commissioner Yablon appreciates the detail, plans, and return to the ZBA. She has a hard time with
36 standard #1 being met.
- 37 • Chairperson Bay noted, since opposing neighbors aren't in attendance, he is more in favor and
38 supports this.

39
40 Commissioner Zaransky moved to approve the variation as presented. Commissioner Treshansky seconded
41 the motion.

42
43 On a roll call vote

44 Voting Yea Chairperson Bay; Commissioners Aronoff, Treshansky, Weisberg, & Zaransky

45 Voting Nay: Commissioners Chase & Yablon

46
47 Chairperson Bay declared that the motion passed 5-2.

1
2 **NEW BUSINESS**

3 1. #VAR-2025-00055

4 Property: 71 Indian Tree Drive

5 Zoning District: R5

6 Appellant: Deborah Goldberg

7 Address: 71 Indian Tree Drive, Highland Park, IL 60035

8

9 The petitioner, Andrew Venamore of H.G.B. at 602 Academy Drive, Northbrook, IL, on behalf of the owner,
10 Deborah Goldberg of 71 Indian Tree Drive, Highland Park, IL 60035, request by authority of Section
11 150.1204(A)(1) of the Highland Park Zoning Code, a variation of provision Section 150.703 to construct a
12 new garage that will encroach into the required side-yard setback.

13

14 Planner Hoffmann reviewed the proposal:

- 15 • Project Background
 - 16 ○ R4 zoning district
 - 17 ○ built in 1949
 - 18 • Site Location
 - 19 ○ corner lot
 - 20 • Aerial View
 - 21 • Plat of Survey
 - 22 • Property Photos
 - 23 • Proposed Work
 - 24 ○ relief is for 1' into the setback for the garage
 - 25 • Other Comments
 - 26 ○ tree preservation will be addressed during permitting
 - 27 • Review
- 28

29 Planner Hoffmann advised the homeowner is in attendance via telephone.

30

31 Chairperson Bay swore in Mr. Andrew Venamore, CEO with H.G.B., who advised they are building a
32 detached garage on the rear of the property. The current attached one-car garage is tight. If the garage was
33 relocated, two trees would be lost, etc. This allows the least impact on neighbors.

34

35 Chairperson Bay asked:

- 36 • if there is a little bit of space between the house and garage. Mr. Venamore said yes, there is 3'. He
37 stated a fence might be placed. Planner Hoffmann said if this was reduced to 2', a different variation
38 would be needed.
 - 39 • if the neighbors had comments. Mr. Venamore said the owner hasn't received any. Ms. Goldberg,
40 the homeowner via phone, was sworn in, and advised the neighbors are pleased.
- 41

42 Chairperson Bay asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on this matter. There was no one.

43

44 Some ZBA comments are.....

- 45 • Commissioner Aronoff is in favor.
- 46 • Commissioner Chase said the standards have been met. She is in favor.
- 47 • Commissioner Zaransky thanked the Petitioner for a great presentation. He is in favor.

- 1 • Commissioner Weisberg is in favor.
- 2 • Commissioner Treshansky is in favor.
- 3 • Commissioner Yablon believes the standards have been met. She is in favor.
- 4 • Chairperson Bay concurred.

5
6 Commissioner Chase moved to accept the draft order as presented. Commissioner Weisberg seconded the
7 motion.

8
9 On a roll call vote
10 Voting Yea Chairperson Bay; Commissioners Aronoff, Chase, Treshansky, Weisberg, Yablon, &
11 Zaransky
12 Voting Nay: None

13
14 Chairperson Bay declared that the motion passed unanimously.

15
16 **STAFF REPORT**

17 1. 2026 Meeting Resolution

18 Planner Hoffmann asked for comments. Commissioner Chase said April 2 is the second night of Passover.
19 Chairperson Bay concurred. Planner Hoffmann will review an alternate meeting date for April.

20
21 2. 2026 ZBA Work Plan

22 Planner Hoffmann said this is informational for the budget and ZBA operations.

23
24 **MISCELLANEOUS**

25 There are no Miscellaneous items.

26
27 **ADJOURNMENT**

28 Commissioner Zaransky moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. Commissioner Yablon seconded the
29 motion.

30
31 On a voice vote
32 Voting Yea Chairperson Bay; Commissioners Aronoff, Chase, Treshansky, Weisberg, Yablon, &
33 Zaransky
34 Voting Nay: None

35
36 Chairperson Bay declared that the motion passed unanimously.

37
38 Respectfully Submitted,

39
40
41 Gale Cerabona
42 Recorder

43
44 **MINUTES OF AUGUST 21, 2025, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.**