

Time 6:00PM

September 15, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
VARIANCE BOARD
TOWN OF SANTA CLARA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nancy LaBombard, Chairperson
Todd Hall
John Briaddy
Judy Meagher
Robin Sullivan, Secretary

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OTHERS PRESENT:

Todd David, Code Enforcement Officer, town of Santa Clara
James and Laura Carpenter, applicants
Molly Hann, attorney
Tim Smith, attorney

The Variance Board of the Town of Santa Clara, County of Franklin, State of New York held a Public Hearing on September 15, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Santa Clara Town Hall, Route 30, Saranac Inn, New York, to hear comments on the following application:

The application of James and Laura Carpenter (owners) and Christopher and Susan Koegel (contract vendees) would require a lot size variance for the construction of a single-family dwelling.

This variance would be on the applicants' property on Gilpin Bay Road, Town of Santa Clara, Franklin County, New York, Tax Map 463.-2-7.2.

The proposed variance is:

The property is in a R-1.3.2 district under the Town Land Use Code, with a minimum size of 3.2 acres. Section 8.3 of the town code, along with a 1997 non-jurisdictional letter from the APA, makes the property eligible for a reduction of the minimum lot size to two-thirds of 3.2 acres, which is 2.133 acres. The applicants' property contains 1.956 acres which is 91.7 % of the 2.133 acres requirement.

Nancy LaBombard, Chairperson, began the meeting by making introductions. Nancy read the details of the variance application.

Nancy stated that board members usually visit a property but did not this time. Judy Meagher stated she lives near the property and is familiar with it.

Nancy stated that 3 letters had been received, all in favor of approving the variance. The letters were from Robert Koegel, Forestcraft, and Tim Smith.

Nancy stated that this application was simpler than some others, though there had been some 'back and forth' on previous APA permits.

Nancy asked if anyone had comments on the application. James Carpenter read a statement he had prepared. He stated that the lot was approved as a building lot in 1998, though this changed due to the town code written in 2000. James said

they were not aware that the property was not eligible for building a home on until recently, and that he has paid substantial taxes over the years. He also stated that some smaller lots nearby have homes on them, and he felt the Koegels would be good stewards of the property. He concluded by saying he was in favor of the variance.

Tim Smith also spoke. He expressed appreciation for the work that zoning boards do. He spoke about each of the 5 factors that are considered by the variance board when deciding on an application. He stated that the benefit to the applicants would be much greater than any detriment to the neighborhood.

Nancy stated that she found the plot map included in the application to be very helpful. She also stated that the Planning Board was in favor of approving the application. She read a comment from the Planning Board saying that the town code that requires a variance to build a residence on any lot, if it meets all setback requirements, needs to be re-examined.

Nancy asked the board members if they had any comments on the five factors to be considered. There were no comments. Nancy proceeded to take a vote on the below.

1. Undesirable Change - all members voted No
2. Some Other Method - all members voted No
3. Substantial - all members voted No
4. Adverse Impact - all members voted No
5. Self-Created - all members voted No

Nancy asked the board members to vote on the application. All approved to grant the variance.

The Variance Committee Members having taken into consideration the benefit to the applicant, as weighed against the detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood or community and having considered the five factors has decided to GRANT the variance. The decision does not preclude on our part any APA or other authoritative approval. It is the responsibility of the applicants or owners to contact other state, county and/or local agencies to secure any necessary permits.

Robin Sullivan
Secretary