



T O W N O F  
**S T O N E H A M**  
M A S S A C H U S E T T S  
Town Hall  
35 Central Street  
Stoneham, Massachusetts 02180  
**BOARD OF APPEALS**  
**781-279-2695**

**Stoneham Board of Appeals Meeting**  
**Thursday, December 18, 2025**  
**Town Hall Hearing Room**  
**6:00 PM**

Members of the Board present: Chair Tobin Shulman, Vice Chair Robert Saltzman, Eric Rubin, R. Michael Dufour, Kevin McLaughlin and Associate Member Bill Sullivan.

Also present: Town Clerk Maria Sagarino acting as Clerk to the Board of Appeals and Attorney Charles Houghton

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Chair Tobin Shulman. He introduced the board members and explained the procedure the board follows for public hearings. Mr. McLaughlin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. McLaughlin made a motion to approve the minutes for October 30, 2025 and November 30, 2025. Mr. Rubin seconded the motion. All members voted in favor 5-0.

The Board confirmed the next meeting dates of January 22, 2026 and February 26, 2026.

Mr. Shulman moved on to the request for six-month extension of the decision for 147 Franklin Street dated January 24, 2025. Attorney Houghton mentioned that there was a new rule requiring that there needs to be 150 feet of roadway length to allow the fire truck turning radius. They have a narrow turnaround so they are speaking with the School Department about an alternative. They would like the fire truck to be able to pull out through the High School driveway next door to the property. Mr. McLaughlin made a motion to grant the 6-month extension. Mr. Saltzman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. All members voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Shulman moved to One Montvale Ave. Mr. Houghton was present to ask for a 6-month extension for the variance granted for 51 units. The Planning Board was also seeking clarification from the ZBA as to whether they felt that a new Special Permit application for 59-60 units would affect the ZBA's decision to grant the variance. Mr. Shulman reminded the Board that most of the variances sought were for the size of the parking spaces. They did not meet current standards. Mr. Saltzman added that all the parking was contained in the garages. Mr. Rubin added that they have more than enough parking, something the Board almost never sees. Mr. Saltzman believed that one parking space would be de minimis. He made a motion for the decision to stand regardless of the increased number of units. Mr. Dufour seconded the motion. All members voted in favor 5-0. A memo would be issued to the Planning Board.

Mr. Houghton next asked the Board for a 6-month extension of the variances granted for the 51 units. Even though they were before the Planning Board with a new application, should that not work out, he wanted to keep the original approvals alive. Mr. Rubin made a motion to grant the 6-month extension for 1 Montvale Avenue. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion. All members voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Shulman invited Mr. Houghton to speak on the request for a 6-month extension for 134 Elm Street. Mr. Houghton indicated that his client would close on the property shortly and move forward, but he felt that he should ask for the extension to be on the safe side. Mr. McLaughlin made a motion to grant the extension which was seconded by Mr. Saltzman. All members voted in favor 5-0.

### Public Hearings:

#### 11 Middle Street

Mr. Shulman moved to the only public hearing of the evening. He read the legal notice into the record as follows:

“You are hereby notified that the Stoneham Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing Thursday evening, December 18, 2025 in the Hearing Room, Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. to hear all persons interested in the appeal of Michael A. Granese and Lisa M. Granese of 11 Middle Street, Stoneham, MA for variances in the Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15, Zoning Bylaw, Section 5.2.1; to add a 5 foot porch on the front and left side of the existing dwelling and to demolish and replace the existing garage at 11 Middle Street, Stoneham, MA. A plan filed with the petition dated October 27, 2025 by Thomas P. Bernardi, PLS, shows the proposed new garage and 5-foot porch addition. The existing Lot Coverage is 26.7%, the proposed lot coverage is 27.5% in violation of the 20% maximum. With the new 5-foot porch the front setback for the dwelling will be 6.5’ in violation of the 15’ front setback requirement. Left side setback for the new garage is 1.2’ in violation of the 10’ side setback requirement. Proposed rear setback for the garage is 1.1’ in violation of the 15’ rear setback requirement. The new garage will be 6’9” from the existing dwelling in violation of 5.2.1 note (14) requiring 10’ minimum space between principal buildings on the same lot. The existing front stairs will be replaced and widened and will be 5.5 feet from the front lot line in violation of Section 5.3.5.3 which requires the front stairs to be set back a minimum of 7.5’. Plan may be daily except Friday afternoon in the office of the Town Clerk”.

Mr. Houghton was invited to speak on behalf of his client. He explained that the front steps are currently 5.5 feet, but they are seeking to make them wider. The front setback in Residence B is 15 feet. The new deck being proposed is 6.5 feet. His client has done a lot of work to the property since purchasing the two family. He took the kitchen out of one of the units to make room for an extra bedroom. He essentially turned the house into a single family with 5 bedrooms to fit his growing family. Mr. Houghton indicated that the proposed garage would be 16 inches wider. The existing garage was built in 1930. It would be torn down and the driveway would be widened. If they add a living space in the new garage, Cheryl Noble will consider it an accessory dwelling unit. There would be a spare bedroom, office and a small kitchen.

Mr. Shulman asked if the garage would get closer to the house. Mr. Houghton indicated it would not. Mr. Shulman stated there is a 1.5% coverage increase of 70 square feet. Mr. Houghton said in Residence B, a multi-family zone, it's hard to meet the coverage of 20%.

Mr. Houghton indicated that the existing garage is not useful. They are trying to replace it where it won't infringe.

Mr. McLaughlin asked if there would be heat in the garage and a bathroom. Mr. Shulman responded that it would be an accessory dwelling. Mr. Rubin asked if the wall of the existing garage would be staying where it is located now. It's just being rebuilt? Mr. Houghton agreed. Mr. Shulman mentioned that there would be no windows facing the neighbors.

Mr. Saltzman stated that to be fully compliant, they'd have to move the house back. It is encroaching less with what they are asking.

With no members of the public present for comment, Mr. Saltzman made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion. All members voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Saltzman maintained that there are less encumbrances in the setbacks than what is there now. The location of the house and size and shape of the lot create a hardship. Mr. Rubin made a motion to grant the relief for the reasons stated by Mr. Saltzman. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. All members voted in favor 5-0.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Rubin and seconded by Mr. Saltzman. All members voted in favor 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

Documents and other exhibits used by the Board of Appeals during this meeting to be made part of the official record but not attached to these minutes:

A plan of 11 Middle Street dated October 27, 2025 by Thomas P. Bernardi, PLS, showing the proposed new garage and 5 foot porch addition.