

City of Portsmouth
Zoning Board of Adjustment
1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Property Address: **71 Brackett Rd.** (Map 0206 Lot 0014; SRB)

Owners: Brett & Stefanie Berger

Online Application Submitted Dec 2, 2020 at 4:00pm

To the Chairman of the Board of Adjustment:

Please find this letter of intent in support of request for variance at 71 Brackett Road (Map 0206 Lot 0014; SRB).

Proposed Improvements:

We would like to construct a 15'x15' one-story addition off back of our home at 71 Brackett Road. That room would have double doors leading to a new 15'x45' deck, which would run the remaining length of the house (total length of house is 60'). We will remove the 9x8 deck and ramp that currently exists.

The new addition will serve as a playroom off the main floor living room for our growing family (soon to be family of four)! The deck will be a great entertaining space for friends and family. Our front yard slopes towards the road, so the back yard is the safest place to gather.

Our abutting neighbors are in full support our proposed project (letters included in appendix). We love our neighborhood, particularly being across the street from our future elementary school, and foresee our family setting roots down for many years to come.

Variance Relief:

We are applying for variance relief from Section 10.521 of the Zoning Ordinance:

- To allow a 10'0" setback where 30'0" is the minimum required by the Ordinance.

Our current home is non-conforming (built in 1966), as our current minimum setbacks are 18'0" (deck), 16'0" (deck ramp) and 25'9" (main house) to our angled rear lot line (Appendix page 5). With the proposed improvements, the new minimum setback would be 10'0" (Appendix page 9). Proposed building coverage would change to 18%, adhering to the 20% threshold.

Variance Criteria:

10.233.21 The variance will not be contrary to the public interest: The new addition is intended to stay within the beautiful character of the neighborhood. Most houses on Brackett and Haven are either colonials or capes, a number with additions off the rear of the house. The proposed improvements will have limited sightlines from the street and will be restricted to one story high. There is no threat to public health, safety or welfare.

10.233.22 The spirit of the Ordinance will be observed: The SRB district "*provides areas for single-family dwellings at low to medium densities (approximately 1 to 3 dwellings per acre), and appropriate accessory uses*". Our property will still be within the range set forth by the Ordinance. New building coverage would only be 18%.

10.233.23 Substantial justice will be done: The requested relief is reasonable given our current structure and lot lines. If the application were denied, the comfort of our home would be diminished given our growing family. There would be no gain to the public by denying the requested zoning relief.

10.233.24 The values of surrounding properties will not be diminished: We have made major improvements to our home over the past three years, adding significant value to the neighborhood. Our current back yard is mostly unusable and an eyesore. The proposed improvements will be visually appealing, similar to the improvements we have already made, further increasing property values. Our neighbors will all benefit from these improvements.

10.233.25 Literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would result in an unnecessary hardship: While we are fortunate to have the space we currently have, our walls are quickly closing in on our growing family. Having a space for the kids to play on the main level of the house is very important to us. Furthermore, our rear yard has a slight slope and can be dangerous for children around the rock wall and tree line. Our front yard has a heavy slope towards the road, so the rear yard is the safest place to spend our time outdoors. The proposed improvements will add much needed usable indoor space, a safe barrier from exterior hazards, and room to enjoy the outdoors that is away from the street.

Economically, improvements to the rear of the house are the most cost-effective. We have space to expand interior square footage above our garage, but the costs are not feasible. We have available setbacks to one side of the house, but all of our utilities run on that side (gas, water/sewer, electrical, A/C). That would also require demolition of recent interior improvements, a disruption to our living space, and significant expenses out of scope for this project. The cost of the proposed improvements are far more economical than our other options.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Brett & Stefanie Berger

71 Brackett Rd.

APPENDIX

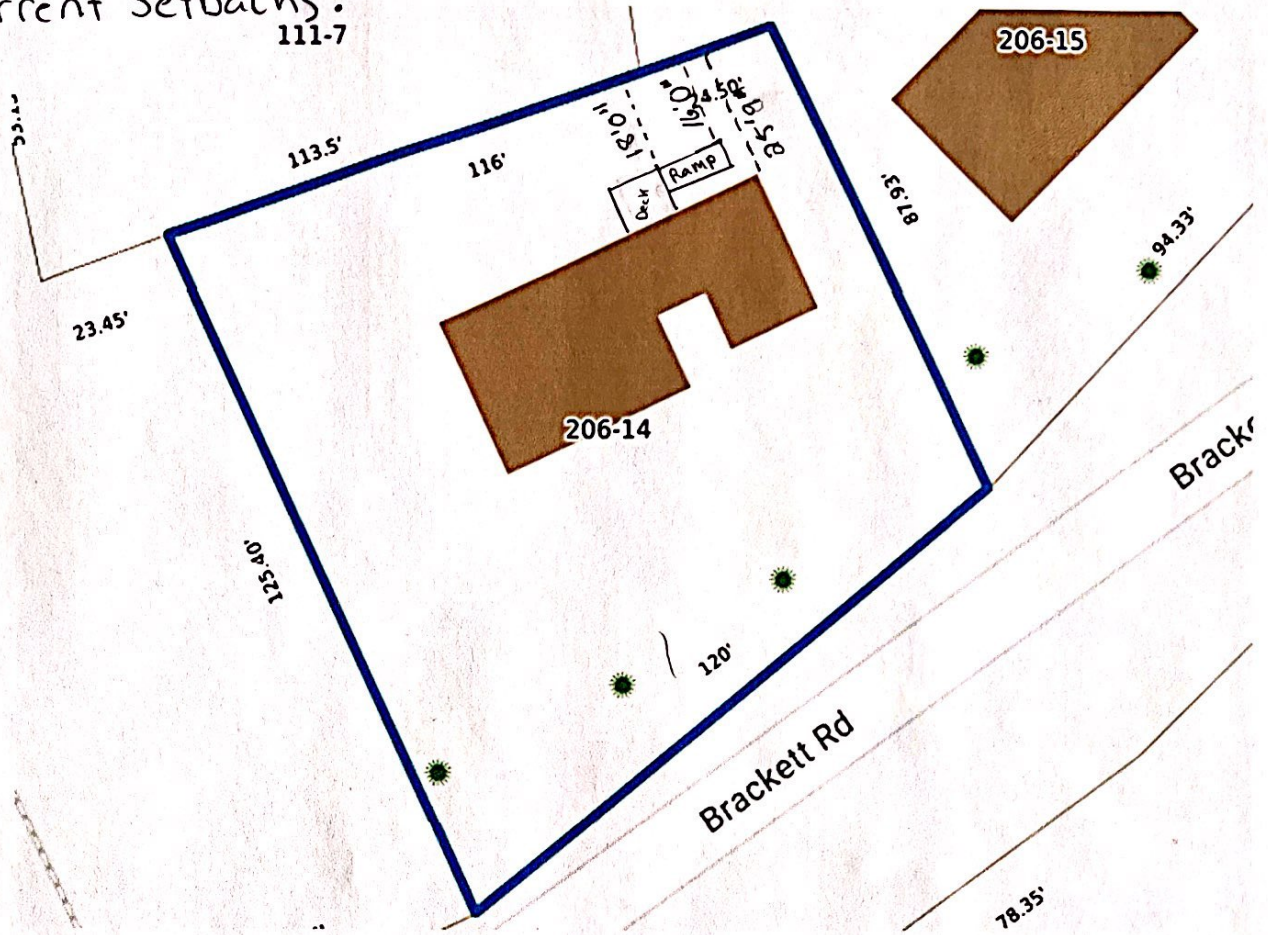
Please find the supporting pictures and renderings. If we are granted relief from the Ordinance as requested, we will be working with an architect on final plans.

A. **Current** pictures and setbacks of subject property:

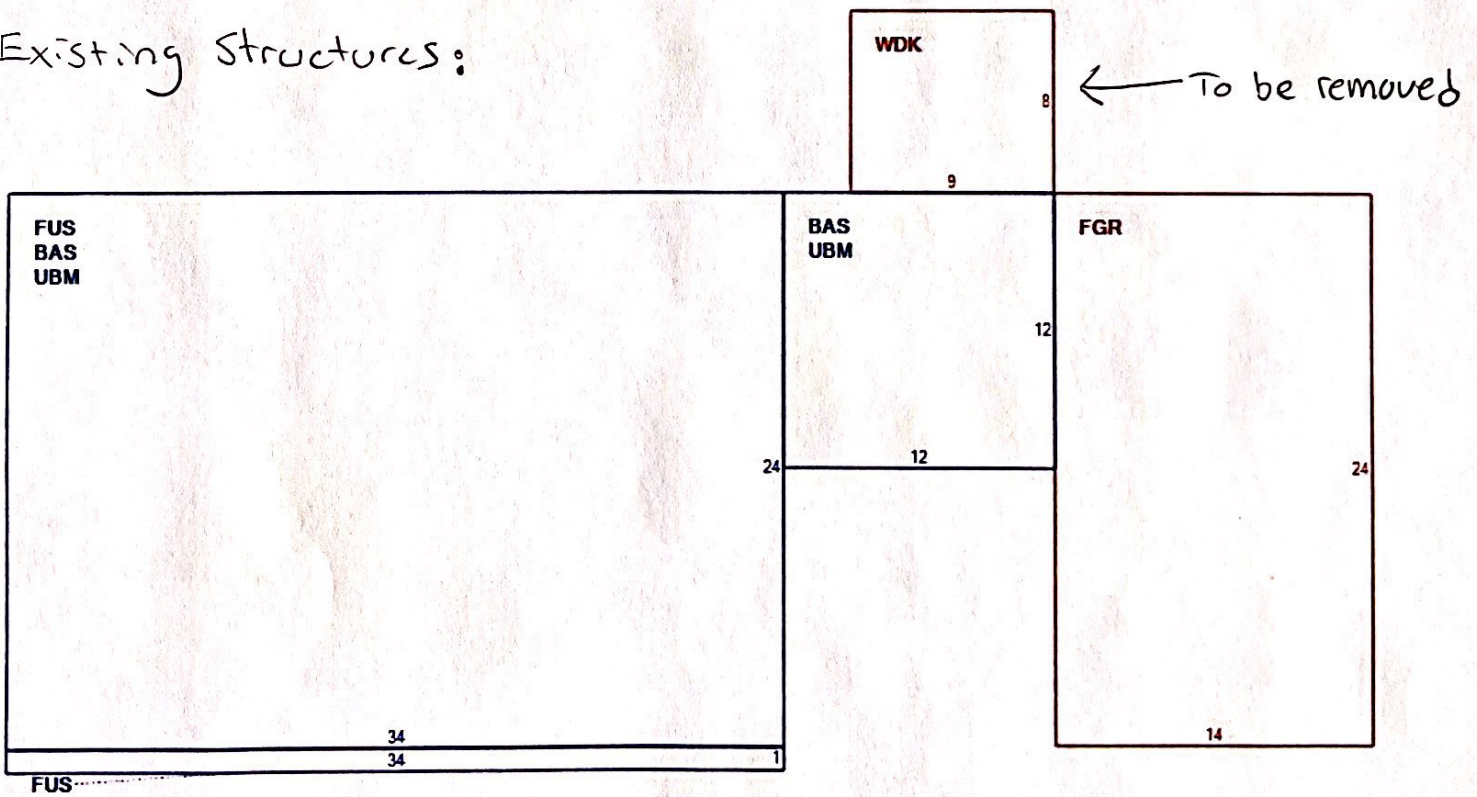




Current Setbacks:
111.7



Existing Structures:

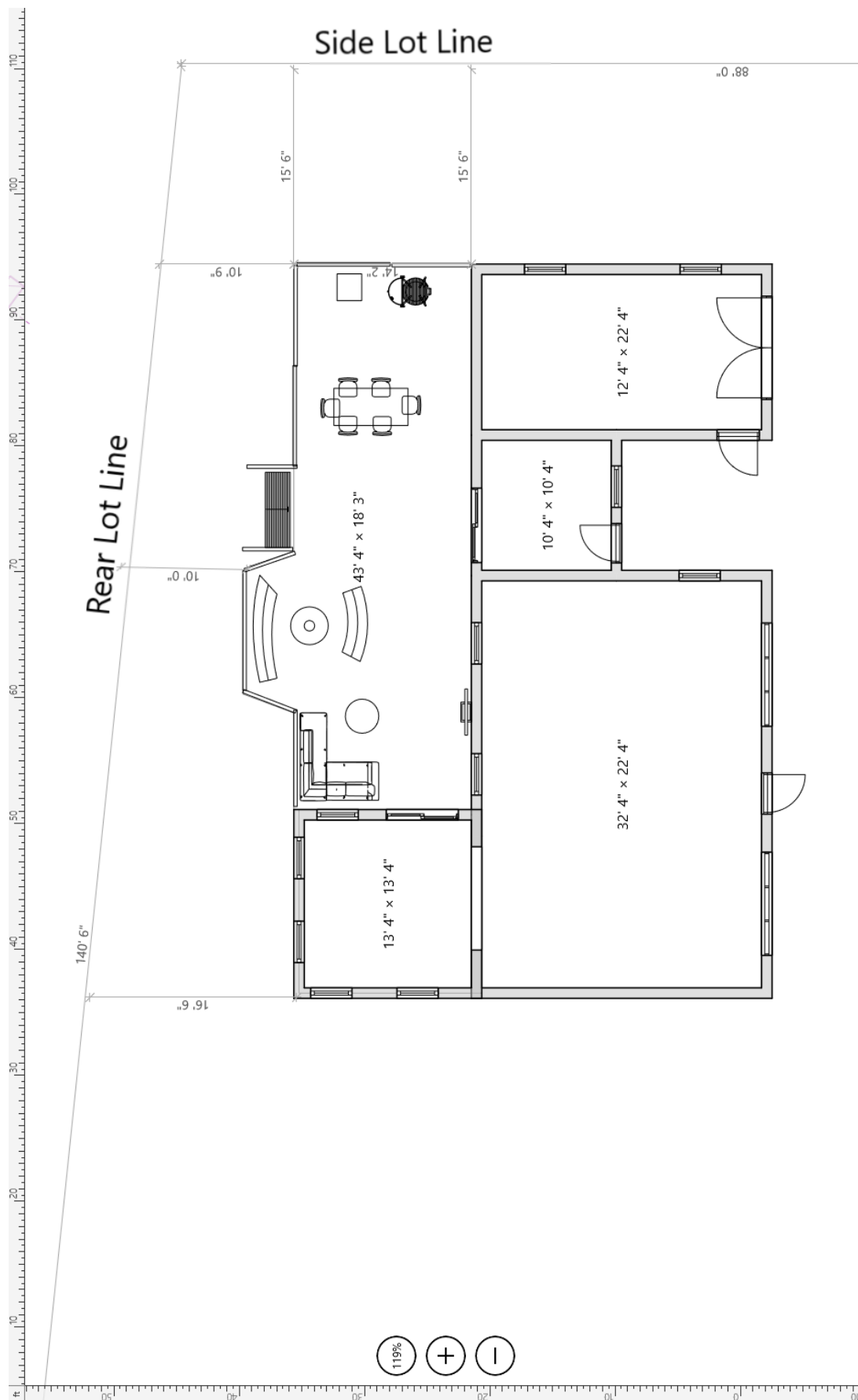




B. **Proposed** addition and deck renderings with new setbacks:







C. Abutter support:

Tom and Karen Carpenter: 139 Brackett Rd.



Brett B <unhberger@gmail.com>

Exciting news and proposed addition

Tom Carpenter <tkarp@comcast.net>

Thu, Dec 17, 2020 at 3:03 PM

To: Brett B <unhberger@gmail.com>, Karen Carpenter <karen.g.carpenter@gmail.com>

Cc: Stef <stefberger26@gmail.com>

Hi Brett-

Congratulations! Reese should be thrilled. A wonderful dog and a younger brother. What could be better?

Karen and I have no problem with the addition. Looks fine to us.

Tom

On 12/17/2020 11:38 AM Brett B <unhberger@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Tom and Karen -

We are excited to finally announce that we are expecting a baby boy in June!!! Reese can't wait to be a big sister! Things are about to get busy around here!!

To that note, we are hoping to build a playroom off the back of the house, along with a new deck (see attached rough renderings). We are hoping to add some much needed square footage on the main floor for kiddos to play. We are applying for a variance for rear setback relief. Our home is non-conforming as it stands, where the current rear setback for SRB is 30 feet, and we are currently at 23. We are proposing a 10 foot rear setback with the improvements shown.

We hope you are in support of this project, and if not, we would like that feedback too! The corner of your lot is closest to the proposed improvements, so your feedback is truly important to us. If you are in support, it would be great to include your response in the application.

Thanks for being such great neighbors. We miss seeing you around!

Brett & Stef



Brett B <unhberger@gmail.com>

Exciting news and proposed addition

Donna Saunders <dpsaunders44@gmail.com>
To: Brett B <unhberger@gmail.com>

Thu, Dec 17, 2020 at 5:33 PM

Hi Brett & Stef,

What great news! We are thrilled for you, and will do everything we can to support your playroom and deck project. Keep us posted.

All the best,

Mike & Donna

> On ThuDec 17, 20, at 11:32 AM, Brett B <unhberger@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Hi Mike and Donna -

>

> We are excited to finally announce that we are expecting a baby boy in June!!! Reese can't wait to be a big sister! Things are about to get busy around here!!

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> To that note, we are hoping to build a playroom off the back of the house, along with a new deck (see attached rough renderings). We are hoping to add some much needed square footage on the main floor for kiddos to play. We are applying for a variance for rear setback relief. Our home is non-conforming as it stands, where the current rear setback for SRB is 30 feet, and we are currently at 23. We are proposing a 10 foot rear setback with the improvements shown.

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> We hope you are in support of this project, and if not, we would like that feedback too! If you are, it would be great to include your response in the application.

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> Thanks again for being such great neighbors!

>

> Brett & Stef

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