

**ZONING BOARD AGENDA**  
**Thursday November 14, 2024**

OPEN MEETING / PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL:

	Rodgers Williams	Present
	Randy Rhoads	Absent
	Earl Makatura	Present
	Lynn Overgaard	Present
	Steve Schmidt	Present
Alternates	Donald Wright	Present
	David Hostutler	Present

Others present included:

Daryl Jones, Town Board Liaison. Jim Bird, Town of Jerusalem Council member. Karen Kiehl, Joe O'Donell, Bill Grove, Jim and Suzanne Lansbury, Cathy and Mark Forester, Carolyn and Dick Clouser, David English. Lance Lowell. Sherrif Francis Ryan. Unidentified individuals.

Meeting called to order at 7 pm.

Approval of October minutes approval. Motion made by **S.Schmidt**, seconded by **E.Makatura**.

COMMUNICATIONS – Ten letters of opposition for **App #Z24-0028**. One letter of support for **App#Z24-0027**. See attached.

AREA VARIANCE/PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**App #Z24-0027-Karen Kiehl** Area Variance Application. 9175 E. Bluff Drive.  
(Tax Map: 110.33-1-1)

Requesting a 44.2' variance from centerline of the road where 64.75' is required for a 20.55' variance.

**Engineer Bill Grove** is present as applicant's representative. **B.Grove** explains they are requesting the setback from the centerline of the road for the garage.

He shows a model provided by the architect showing the home will be set on piers and a series of boxes.

The garage is going to sit at 44.2' at the corner of the walkway, the closest point of the structure to the centerline of the road. Minimum setback is 64.75' that would require more trees to come out and more of a slope, and longer driveway. A fair request to try to minimize both.

**Board member David Hostutler** states the lot is 900 feet deep, he points out that other garages on the block have complied with the code, being 64.5' from the centerline. Why would there be an expectation here.

**B.Grove** states they are trying to minimize the cutting of trees and also is a bit of preference of homeowners and it fits better there. Makes for a shorter walk, 20 feet shorter.

**D.Hostutler**, adds only if they park by the garage.

**S.Schmidt** said most of the trees are down anyway.

**Board member Lynn Overgaard** states that it is not too steep there, and they won't have to dig into Bluff. Moving it back doesn't make much of a difference.

**B.Grove** says no not a ton, about 3 feet of excavation in the back. The floor of the garage is 4 feet lower.

**Board member Don Wright**, asks what the hardship is for the homeowner.

**B.Grove** answers that it is tough on this site, he asks homeowner **Karen Kiehl** for a response as to why the garage should be kept there.

**K.Kiehl** states the designer didn't want to dig a ton of ground, making a minimal impact. He has been to site and he thought saving the trees in that area would be better. But if the board thinks they are all dead anyway.

**Board member Earl Makatura** states the elevation isn't much it would not be difficult to go back 20 feet.

**R.Williams** states there are sites where it would be very difficult, but this site seems to be easy to stick with the code.

**B.Grove** replies that they could revise plan, and build garage without a variance. **K.Kiehl** agrees.

**B.Grove** asks to withdraw the application. The applicant will revise the plan to meet all setbacks.

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**App #Z24-0028-Mary Staudenmayer** Area Variance Application. 5831 W. Bluff Drive.  
(Tax Map: 109.59-1-2.2)

Requesting a 5' side setback where 10' is required for a 5' variance to build a new home.

**Architect Joe O'Donnell** is present as applicant's representative. **J.O'Donnell** states the applicant is asking for request so they can create more space for the driveway, not pinching it too close on southern side and to add landscaping to that side of the home. The garage will be in the rear.

**J. O'Donnell** states he is aware there were many letters of opposition, and would like to hear the concerns of the neighbors. Give those folks an opportunity to talk and they can meet in the middle.

**L.Overgaard** states that the applicants were given a blank slate, why not build within the required setbacks.

**J.O'Donnell** responds with yes and no. The house will fit as designed but looking for relief for the driveway. **L.Overgaard** adds there was nothing there to begin with, they could of built with a different shape or size.

**S.Schmidt** says that the gully that will be disturbed and cause problems.

**J.O'Donnell** answers that no, by getting some relief on the North setback they will be able to get some trees on that end to stabilize that.

**E.Makatura** adds that it really needs to be put it in between lines, especially needed on West Bluff. He agrees with **L.Overgaard**, build within setbacks.

**S.Schmidt** states the property wasn't staked out and it was hard to envision where the home would be. And there is no picture of the driveway going up.

**J.O'Donnell** answers that he was asked to present tonight last minute and wasn't aware of the required staking of site. He apologizes.

**S.Schmidt** adds that the board can table the application due to site not being staked out.

**R.Williams** suggest the applicant designs a house that fits the code, the five foot puts it right up the Northern property.

**J.O'Donnell** states that it is his understanding that the neighbors to the North their southern property line is where the septic and leech field is and that is 60 feet between that and the house.

**D.Wright** confirms that square footage of the proposed house is 5,500 square feet.

**J.O'Donnell** answers yes if that includes living space in the basement, if built in the future.

**D.Wright** adds that gives them plenty of room to work with.

**E.Makatura** states again that he thinks the applicant should meet the setbacks.

**Neighbor Jim Lansbury** adds that there are stakes currently at his property for his septic system, which is 20 feet from the property line, which would put it 25 feet from a foundation where they want to dig 5 feet from the property line. It's about 85 feet long, how much water will that divert to his septic field, it just being completed now. They built it bigger than code. His engineer said that 85-foot-long straight-line foundation will send a river of extra stormwater into his new septic system that will fail.

There is no way to safely dig five feet from a property line without killing every tree, and over digging, and crossing over. His family is very affected by this.

His family is building a cottage now and had 16 acres of land, they thoughtfully plotted out what they would do, it included selling this lot to neighbors. They spent two years planning, went through seven or eight site plans. They got everything right.

Now this proposed house it will destroy tree buffer and septic system. Possibly add to the problems they've already seen on West Bluff.

They have every right to build a beautiful home, but not so close to their property.

**E. Makatura** agrees, it is building too close to neighbor especially with digging. Five feet is too close.

**J.O'Donnell** adds that is more a means then method, he does understand the concern with the equipment. It is illegal to drain water on other property. That is an engineering question.

**J.Lansbury** adds that there is no way it can be done safely, they just did their site plan.

His engineer **W.Meagher** thoughtfully designed their new build, and included a drainage plan. He asks if there is a drainage plan for the application, they should be able to see site plan, not just house plan.

**R.Williams** asks if there is any other comments. No other comments.

**J.O'Donnell** asks if the board would consider a variance with lesser feet.

**R.Williams** suggests they build it within the code, in his opinion.

**E.Makatura** asked if he would like to table it or try for it.

**J.O'Donnell** states he would like to table the application for now.

**R.Williams** adds that if they build within the code they will not have to come back.

**S.Schmidt** asked about site plan. **J.O'Donnell** said they wanted to go for variance first then they do plan to go to Planning Board as well.

Council member **J.Bird** adds that the application would still need to go to Planning Board for steep slopes either way.

**J.O'Donnell** added that the homeowner did try to get land from the neighbor's to the South.

**E.Makatura** makes a motion to table application, **R.Williams** seconds.

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**App #Z24-0029-NYS Sherriff's Camp** Use Variance Application. 9825 E. Bluff Drive.  
(Tax Map: 110.56-1-1)

**Architect Lance Lowell** is present to represent the application.

They are asking for a Use Variance as the current district is zoned as R1 for a new roughly 8600 sq ft facility to be utilized by the summer camp. The camp already has a facility that is outdated and unsafe for the kids that it serves. The new facility would be a more secure and resilient facility, much more modern and efficient for all functions of the camp. Better to serve the campers and the counselors.

The proposed facility will also include a director's office, a large assembly hall, a multipurpose room, nurse's office, a commercial kitchen, and bathrooms. There are various exterior amenities that the public can use as well, it will include an outside amphitheater for both the kids of the camp and the community.

They are asking going forward with a Use Variance due to the current zone R1, and replacing the existing building due to safety. There has been a loss of powers at times.

**R.Williams** asks if the use of camp is being changed at all. **L.Lowell** answers no, it will still be used for kids and not changing the use or purpose. Just upgrading.

**L.Overgaard** asks if the camp is still be used year-round.

**L.Lowell** answered yes, it could be year-round. The kids will be using it in summer only. It will be conditioned so nothing will freeze in winter. It will not need to be winterized.

**L.Overgaard** asked if they plan to use solar panels, use of electric will be from the solar panels.

**L.Lowell** answer yes in the future, that is the hope but not initially.

**Code Enforcer James McKinley** explains to Zoning Board that the Sheriff's Camp has existed for decades, he felt with the construction of a larger building it was important for the community to be notified so they could be heard, and understand the project fully.

It is odd because a Use Variance is tied to dollars and cents, however the board wants to approach that.

**E.Makatura** states that he thinks what they are doing is all good.

**L.Lowell** adds to keep the camp going they will be using the current space throughout construction so there is no shutdown of the camp. He adds there will likely be more traffic during the new construction. They are planning to submit the site plan for next month's Planning Board meeting. The build will be a wood frame to keep in trend with the neighborhood.

**D.Hostutler** asked if the building to the right will remain the stage.

**L. Lowell** answers yes, they will move the stage down, the amphitheater up the hill for safety reasons. Get the kids further away from the road.

**R.Williams** said there is nothing to vote on as they are not changing the use of the land, as long as you stay within the preexisting use.

**R.Williams** asks if anyone from the public would like to speak.

**Resident David English** reminds the board that a nonconforming use provision of the Zoning law indicate that a structure can be replaced but needs to be within same footprint. This may want to be addressed. It is not just a replacement.

**E.Makatura** states that the use goes with the property.

**D.English** said that the camp is a nonconforming use.

**R.Williams** yes it is, but it was preexisting and the use is not being changed.

**J.Bird** says that replacing the building with a new structure in same footprint goes with an Area Variance, not a Use Variance. When they are starting construction, they need to talk to James and see if there are any other variances needed.

**E.Makatura** thinks they should address it now.

J.Bird they are applying for a variance, not a Use variance. If they are going to be replacing a building with a new structure that does not meet same criteria as previous building.

**E.Makatura** asks **L.Lowell** if the camp meets all setbacks.

**L.Lowell** answers yes. **E.Makatura** adds a new entity couldn't be.

**J.Bird** states as a Use Variance as long as they remain as a camp for kids age 9-12 there is no need for a vote, if it used a such there is no need for approval of Zoning Board.

**D.English** states that the replacement or restoration of a nonconforming structure must be same footprint.

**J.Bird** said they are not replacing it, they are putting up a new one.

**L.Lowell** said the camp will not be shutdown, it will be detrimental to shut it down.

**D.English** adds that the application will be going to the planning board for a site plan. The application being presented to the Zoning Board is stating it is the same use, new structure.

**L.Lowell** answers yes that is correct. He added it felt appropriate to bring the application to be viewed in front of the public.

Resident **Richard Clouser** asked how the money is being raised for the camp, will funding be an issue. Does that come into plan tonight before this board.

**R.Williams** answers that is not a function of the board. They did not ask the previous two applicants about their financial situation for their proposals.

**R.Clouser** said he understands, a single house would be different then a project of this size. He asks if they have the money.

**Unidentified person** said he is more than happy to walk him through the finances.

**R.Williams** adds that the Zoning Board is a judicial board. There is no action to be taken on the application, if they do what is proposed they are fine. The application is going to the Planning Board next month.

Council member **J.Bird** thanks the two officers for what they do at the Camp.

**Unidentified person** thanks the Town of Jerusalem for the 38 years of a working relationship. He adds the officers have received positive feedback upon residents and the Keuka Lake Association.

**F.Ryan** adds they wanted to keep with the building vibes of the community. They have been getting out in the public and let folks know.

**R.Williams** states there is no other business.  
Next meeting is December 12, 2024.

**R.Williams** makes motion to adjourn meeting at 7:49 pm. **E.Makatura** seconds.



Town of Jerusalem Zoning Board,

As my family is an owner of the adjacent property at [5815 West Bluff Drive](#), I am writing to oppose Area Variance Application Z24-0028 in the strongest possible terms.

This property has been in my family for my entire 30 years of life and well beyond and it is special and sacred to us. My grandfather came to this country with nothing and worked his whole life to give himself and his family a life his parents could not. This property was part of that dream. As part of the generations that keep his dream and memory alive, I oppose the application for the following reasons.

- There is no hardship on the applicant. They purchased a fully compliant lot, with no gullies or unusable area. Now they want a variance for no reason. The setbacks are there for a reason. This would set a dangerous precedent, forcing the zoning board to grant future variances for every property owner without the need to show any hardship whatsoever.
- Despite what their application claims, the request is significant and so are the risks to the neighborhood and our neighboring property, including tree damage, loss of property value, and storm water runoff that could damage our septic system. There is simply no safe way to build an 85' long foundation just 5' from the property line.
- The applicant has not made any effort to comply before asking for the variance, which should be a last resort, not the first. Their problem is entirely self-inflicted, and they should resolve it themselves without asking you or their neighbors to make unnecessary sacrifices.

Thank you for your consideration. My Uncle will be there on the 14th to present our case in full.

Best,  
Jackson Lansbury

**From:** Leah Rose <[leahmulvehill@gmail.com](mailto:leahmulvehill@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 7:40 PM  
**To:** ceo <[Code@Jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@Jerusalem-ny.org)>  
**Subject:** Opposition to Variance Application Z24-0028

Dear Members of the Jerusalem Zoning Board,

My name is Leah and I am the granddaughter of Peter Lansbury, who purchased 5815 West Bluff Drive when my mother was a young child. My siblings, cousins and I have been visiting Keuka Lake every summer our entire lives. In 1970, they built the cottage on the property that would end up being one of the most special places we all get to enjoy as a family. My Grandparents always enjoyed the privacy the cottage offered us. It is an escape from the chaos of everyday life. Since then, our family has grown and we have recently rebuilt our cottage in hopes that we can accommodate our growing family in the years to come.

I am writing to you today to oppose the Area Variance Application *Z24-0028 with as much urgency as possible*. I believe there is no legitimate hardship to justify this variance. The applicant purchased a fully compliant lot that poses no inherent difficulties, such as gullies or unusable land. The setbacks required by zoning regulations are in place for a reason — to protect property owners, maintain neighborhood aesthetics, and preserve public safety. Granting this variance without any demonstrated hardship would set a dangerous precedent, effectively undermining the zoning regulations and encouraging future applicants to bypass necessary standards without valid justification.

I also strongly object to the significant risks this variance would introduce. The applicant's request to build an 85-foot-long foundation just 5 feet from the property line presents several serious concerns, including:

- **Tree Damage:** The proposed construction could potentially harm mature trees on our property.
- **Loss of Property Value:** The proposed building location and scale could adversely affect the value of our property and the surrounding homes.
- **Stormwater Runoff:** With the proposed foundation so close to the property line, there are legitimate concerns regarding increased runoff that could negatively impact our septic system and cause other drainage issues.

The applicant has made no effort to comply with the established zoning requirements before seeking this variance. Variances should be a last resort, not a first step, and it is clear that the applicant's issue is self-inflicted. Rather than ask the zoning board and their neighbors to bear the burden of this change, the applicant should resolve the situation themselves within the parameters of the existing zoning code.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the board to deny this variance application. My Uncle, Jim Lansbury, will be present tomorrow to discuss our concerns in more detail.

Thank you so much for your attention to this matter. Have a wonderful day!

Best,  
Leah Mulvehill

Town of Jerusalem  
(315)595-2284

**From:** Molly Shores <[mollyshores03@gmail.com](mailto:mollyshores03@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 7:02 PM  
**To:** ceo <[Code@Jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@Jerusalem-ny.org)>  
**Subject:** Opposition to Variance Application Z24-0028

To the Town of Jerusalem Zoning Board,

I've recently been informed of a proposed variance on the lot adjacent to my family's property. We own the property at 5815 West Bluff Drive and have for decades. Today I am reaching out to strongly oppose Area Variance Application Z24-0028.

Firstly, there is no real reason for this variance. The lot they purchased was fully compliant and they have ample space to place their new residence within an appropriate area. Moving forward with this variance would create a precedent where any owner can get any change they want without real cause. This would cause unnecessary stress in the future for both the zoning board and property owners. Along with this stress, this significant request would create more trouble than what the application is suggesting. The effects are being downplayed by the applicant, and their request of a variance will result in high-risk outcomes for us and the rest of the neighborhood, such as storm water runoff that affects our septic system, tree damage, and the loss of property value. Again, these risks are not worth it when they have viable land to work with. It is not ours or any other neighbor's job to suffer the consequences of their poor planning.

I spent every summer of my childhood visiting this property, and it is a top priority of mine and the members of my family that its safety and value are held in high regard by the members of this board.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider the above points and all additional information that my uncle will be presenting on Thursday, November 14.

Sincerely,  
Molly Shores

**From:** SUSAN LANSBURY <[sl.lansbury@gmail.com](mailto:sl.lansbury@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 11:18 PM

**To:** ceo <[Code@Jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@Jerusalem-ny.org)>

**Subject:** Area Variance Application Z24-0028

Good Morning,

I am an owner of the property at 5815 West Bluff Drive, and am writing to strongly object to the Area Variance Request notated above. I do so as a contract was previously signed by the requestors, that laid out property limitations on a piece of land that was 100% usable. Requesting a variance was the easiest resolution to a problem created by the new owners, which can be solved in different ways. As we recently rebuilt our cottage, on the property we have owned for over 50 years, it was necessary to change our own home design many times from the original plan, for various reasons.

My father and mother first visited Keuka Lake in approximately 1967; we rented a cottage on East Lake Road. They loved it so much, that my father purchased a small, new build cottage for our 5-person family at 632 West Bluff Drive. When my parents desired more privacy and a larger beach, we then built the modest home at 585 (5815) West Bluff Drive. We have been enjoying it every summer since. However only one family of our now three family unit, could visit at the same time. We wanted a home we could all visit together. We all love the cottage for it's beauty and privacy and quiet. We wish to preserve that, in memory of our parents. 50 + years. 50+ years. We have been law-abiding, respectful members of the Yates County community, as well as reliable taxpayers.

If this variance is granted, the following is at risk for our property and our family (3 siblings and their spouses, 7 grandchildren, and 2 greatgrandchildren, and two happy pups): Tree damage and less ability to rebuild the tree population lost due to building, a decrease in our property value, as well as our neighbors, and potential stormwater damage to our septic system and physical property.

Please do not allow this variance to occur, when there are certainly other options.

My brother, James Lansbury, will be present on 11/14/2024, to represent our viewpoint.

Respectfully,

Susan Leslie Lansbury, age 62, Owner

**From:** Toni Lansbury <[tonilansbury@gmail.com](mailto:tonilansbury@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** November 13, 2024 at 10:02:02 AM EST  
**To:** ceo <[Code@jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@jerusalem-ny.org)>  
**Subject:** **OPPOSITION TO VARIANCE APPLICATION Z24-0028**

To Whom it may concern,

This letter pertains to my opposition to variance application Z24–0028. Attending the meeting on November 14, my brother-in-law, Jim Lansbury, will present our family’s objections in person.

As the wife of Peter Lansbury, Jr., whose family has vacationed at Keuka Lake for 60 years, I can tell you that this house at 5815 West Bluff Drive (recently rebuilt) has not only allowed the family to create unforgettable and sacred memories together but also acted as a catalyst during the kid’s early years to become people who love and respect nature. And we hope this property will do the same for future Lansbury generations.

Aside from the fact that this variance would significantly impact our adjacent home’s privacy, it’s essential to consider the whole of the Lake and what kind of precedence this may set. Wall-to-wall homes would mar the serenity and beauty of what makes Keuka Lake extraordinary.

This variance also brings up practical issues for our property, such as tree damage and problems with our septic system. Being a good neighbor would mean changing plans before construction starts and beginning a positive and respectful relationship with our family.

Please do not allow this variance and help keep Keuka Lake the unique and beautiful place it has always been.

Thank you,

## Toni Lansbury

toni lansbury

[tonilansbury@gmail.com](mailto:tonilansbury@gmail.com)

617-899-3019

[uturndesign.com](http://uturndesign.com)

[gratitudeathon.wordpress.com](http://gratitudeathon.wordpress.com)

**From:** Troy Mulvehill <[tmulvy7@gmail.com](mailto:tmulvy7@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 14, 2024 1:12 AM  
**To:** ceo <[Code@Jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@Jerusalem-ny.org)>  
**Subject:** Opposition to Variance Application Z24-0028

To the town of Jerusalem Zoning Board:

My name is Troy Mulvehill. I am the son of Susan Lansbury and a lifelong resident of 5815 W Bluff Drive. I am writing to express my opposition to the approval of Variance Application Z24-0028. As a direct neighbor of the applying party, I have a major interest in the outcome of this decision. I strongly believe that the approval of this application will result in an extremely undesirable change in the character of the neighborhood as well as being a detriment to nearby properties, including ours.

Keuka Lake is a special and truly beautiful place. Residents who respect this should make an effort to leave as little of a footprint as possible as it relates to both the natural environment as well as fellow residents. This is the character of the neighborhood. Granting a variance solely due to the applicants desire to build a bigger house would be directly contrary to that. At the end of the day, that is what this is. The applicant was aware of the size of the property when they purchased it. None of the land is unusable. If they wanted to build a bigger house, they should have bought more land. Or perhaps, as a builder, they prematurely factored in the granting of a variance when envisioning their future property. Of course, that is pure speculation and I am aware that variances exist for good reason. However, the applicant does not have a good reason.

This is only one dimension of our argument and is meant to be presented alongside additional testimonials provided by members of my family as well as other residents of W Bluff Drive.

My uncle, Jim Lansbury, will be present at the hearing and will be representing our family.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

**From:** Zach Lansbury <[zach.lansbury@gmail.com](mailto:zach.lansbury@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:54 PM  
**To:** ceo <[Code@Jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@Jerusalem-ny.org)>  
**Subject:** Opposition to Variance Application Z24-0028

My name is Zach Lansbury, and I have been going to our cottage at 5815 West Bluff Drive my entire life. I am now 21, and about to graduate from Virginia Tech. I find it hard to believe that immediately after the land is sold they are asking for a variance. I am writing to oppose Area Variance Application Z24-0028 in the strongest possible terms.

1. There is no hardship on the applicant. They purchased a fully compliant lot, with no gullies or unusable area. Now they want a variance for no reason. The setbacks are there for a reason. This would set a dangerous precedent, forcing the zoning board to grant future variances for every property owner without the need to show any hardship whatsoever.
2. Despite what their application claims, the request is significant and so are the risks to the neighborhood and our neighboring property, including tree damage, loss of property value, and storm water runoff that could damage our septic system. There is simply no safe way to build an 85' long foundation just 5' from the property line.
3. The applicant has not made any effort to comply before asking for the variance, which should be a last resort, not the first. Their problem is entirely self-inflicted, and they should resolve it themselves without asking you or their neighbors to make unnecessary sacrifices.



-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Lansbury <[lansburyp@gmail.com](mailto:lansburyp@gmail.com)>

Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 1:37 PM

To: ceo <[Code@Jerusalem-ny.org](mailto:Code@Jerusalem-ny.org)>

Subject: Re: variance request Z24-0028

To whom it may concern;

I am writing to oppose the variance application Z24-0028 in the strongest possible terms. My brother, Jim, will be at the meeting on November 14 to present our objections in person.

I have been vacationing on Bluff Point for 60 years. Our original cottage at 5815 West Bluff Drive was my father's dearest possession. He valued the fact that Keuka Lake had avoided the overpopulation and overbuilding that has affected the neighboring finger lakes. In order to build a year-round (5815 West Bluff Drive), that could accommodate my father's grandkids and their kids in the future, we sold a fully compliant lot to our south. The buyer is a developer who has no stake in the long-term outcome of their construction, but only in its sale. Their request for a variance was the first time we were aware of their desire to reduce the mandated setbacks and to build dangerously close to our property line. As I understand it, they need to show that the existing setback creates a "hardship" for them and no hardship for us. Neither is true.

If they had approached us privately, instead of seeking a legal variance that asks the board to set a dangerous precedent, we could have discussed the tree damage that will result (my dad loved the trees) and the closeness to our existing septic system. The existing setbacks do not create a hardship for them; they can easily change their building plans to work within existing setback rules. The fact that they did not contact us shows that they have no interest in the risks to our property posed by their plan. Instead, they are relying on you to make a dangerous exception. They have no interest in their immediate neighbors or the future of Keuka Lake. They just want to build the largest, most expensive house possible.

A variance is not only a specific hardship for my family, but poses a threat to the natural beauty of Keuka Lake and the property values of the surrounding homes. Once Pandora's box has been opened, every builder will seek to build larger and larger homes, taking advantage of 5 extra feet on either side of every lot. I can picture a time in the near future, when 10 feet spacing between massive homes becomes the norm. I have seen what that looks like in parts of Cape Cod and southern California, and it scares me.

Keuka Lake is a gem, an unusually beautiful and peaceful place that is important to many families like ours. I hope that you will exercise your best judgement and continue to protect it.

Peter Lansbury

November 13, 2024

Town of Jerusalem  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
3816 Italy Hill Road  
Branchport, NY 14418

To the Town of Jerusalem Zoning Board of Appeals,

We are writing to express our opposition to the requested variance for a setback of five feet for 5831 West Bluff Drive.

Our concerns include the following:

- Storm water/drainage issues: there is a large pre-existing gully near the north edge of our property (near the border with 5831 West Bluff Drive) which has seen significant erosion due to heavy rains in the last decade. A section of our beachfront is compromised due to fallen and damaged trees from erosion. We are concerned development near this gully will divert natural water flow and cause unnatural erosion on both sides of the road.
- Septic system and leach field: we are concerned about placement of septic systems and related drainage around a structure so close to the property line if the variance is granted.
- Damage to trees near the property line: we are concerned about damage to root systems of large trees near the property line. The trees are vital to soil retention near the gully.
- Damage to / encroachment upon our property during construction: we are concerned property lines won't be respected during the construction process with only five feet of clearance.
- Natural setting: we believe the requested variance will have a detrimental impact on our property as well as the natural beauty of West Bluff Drive. Our family purchased the adjacent property at 5863 West Bluff Drive in 1973 and has maintained the property in a manner consistent with the natural beauty of Keuka Lake. The variance request is simply not in keeping with the character of West Bluff Drive.

Sincerely,  
Terry and Skye Bird  
5863 West Bluff Drive

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