

Wallingford Zoning Board of Appeals

June 15, 2026

7:00 p.m.

Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers
Town Hall – 45 South Main Street

Minutes

Present: Thomas Wolfer, Chairman; Bruce Conroy, Vice Chair; Robert Gross, Secretary; Board Members: Karen Raddatz; Raymond Rys; Chris Larocque; Robert Prentice; and Amy Torre, Zoning Enforcement Officer.

Chairman Wolfer called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Voting members tonight are *Conroy, Gross, Raddatz, Rys, and Chairman Wolfer*.

Chairman Wolfer noted that tonight's decisions will be published in the Record-Journal on Friday, June 19, 2026. The effective date of your variance will be Friday, June 19, 2026, the date a certified copy is recorded on the land records. The statutory 15-day appeal period will expire on Sunday, July 5, 2026. If you commence operations and/or construction during the appeal period, you do so at your own risk.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 1. #26-008/Special Exception Request/Soltis/992 North Farms Road**
- 2. #26-009/Variance Request/Soltis/992 North Farms Road**

Mr. Gross read the staff notes into the record. The applicant seeks Special Exception Approval for a garage area of 2,864 sq. ft. where 864 sq. ft. exists, and a maximum of 1,644 sq. ft. is permitted to construct a 2,000 sq. ft. (40 ft. x 50 ft.) detached garage at 992 North Farms Road in an RU-40 District. The Variance Request is for a garage height of 19.3 ft., where a maximum of 15 ft. is permitted to construct the 2,000 sq. ft. detached garage as per proposal specs. The total garage area of 2,864 sq. ft. would negate garages as an accessory use since the structure is not subordinate to the primary residential dwelling. The total garage area is 85% of the primary residential living area, and the garage area is 40% larger than the dwelling building area. The intended purpose and use of such a structure should be thoroughly vetted. The 12+ acre parcel abuts the North Farms Reservoir, with most of the acreage being identified as Wetlands. The location of the proposed garage is ~10 ft. from the Regulated Wetland Upland Review boundary. The Board should consider that any Approval be contingent on any appropriate condition(s). The proposed height Variance Request could be eliminated with an alternate roof pitch and design, and/or by reducing the proposed 12 ft. overhead doors. The Board should discern any hardship relative to height when option(s) for compliance readily exist. As these are two distinct applications, they each require independent decisions, which may or may not be the same. Any Conditions of approval should be reflected on both. Correspondence included an email from Kevin Pagini, Town Planner to the Zoning Board of Appeals, dated June 8, 2026, and an email from Mike Hughes, Chief Environmental Health Specialist, to Amy Torre, Zoning Enforcement Officer, dated June 1, 2026.

Nicholas Solits, 992 North Farms Road, presented. He explained that he needs the big garage for 5 dirt bikes, a tractor, ATVs, a classic car, and a camper. He is looking into making the property an established

farm. He noted that he'd like to get more classic cars. This would allow him to put his cars in the attached garage.

Chairman Wolfer asked if he would be doing any repairs on the vehicles in the barn. Mr. Soltis replied, just oil changes on the dirt bikes.

Mr. Gross asked why he needed a 19 ft. high garage. Mr. Soltis replied that due to the grade of the property, the garage will only be 4 or 5 ft. above the road. The camper is 11.5 ft high, so he needs at least a 12 ft garage door. He explained that he does not have the camper yet. He added that he also wants to get a big tractor with a cab. Mr. Gross asked about utilities. Mr. Soltis replied that it would only be electricity. He noted that the well is in front of the house and the septic system is in the back, so he was not able to connect the barn to the house. Mr. Gross asked about his hardship. He replied that without the barn, he would have to store the camper outside. Ms. Torre clarified that the hardship question would only apply to the height and has to go with the land, i.e., something is preventing you from complying with the regulations. The Board determines if there is a need for the variance. She noted that RVs are not allowed to be stored on residential property unless they are inside.

Mr. Soltis stated that other structures within half a mile of his property are just as high.

Mr. Conroy stated that one is the Fire Department and not the same thing as a residential property, and the other is in a commercial zone. He stated that we have to follow the rules. We don't care what you put in the building, but we judge the size, shape, and how it fits on the property. The hardship goes with the land, not what you want. He stated that he has an issue with the garage door height.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Petlack, 1000 North Farms Road, stated that he lives next door and also has a barn that stands approximately 25 ft. tall. He can't get his tractors into an 8 ft. door. He added that with property this large, you need large equipment to maintain it. He noted that he looks out over Mr. Soltis' yard, and this barn won't bother him.

Ms. Torre added that he can have large doors without the higher roof. She noted that the variance needs the hardship, but the exception does not.

Mr. Soltis stated that if he altered the roof pitch and brought the walls down to 12 ft with a 10-foot door, the overall height would still be over 15.3 feet.

Hearing no public comment, Chairman Wolfer closed the public hearing and asked for discussion or possible action.

Mr. Conroy: Motion to approve #26-008 Special Exception Request for total garage area of 2,864 sq. ft., where 864 sq. ft. exists, and a maximum 1,644 sq. ft. is permitted to construct a 2,000 sq. ft. detached garage at 992 North Farms Road as shown on Improvement Location Survey, Land of Charles and Nicole Slabaugh, 992 North Farms Road, dated August 19, 2015, and submitted plans received May 14, 2026, subject to:

- 1. Comments of the Town Planner, dated 6/8/2026**
- 2. Comments from the Health Department, dated 6/1/2026**

Ms. Raddatz: Second

Vote: Conroy – yes to approve; Gross – no to approve; Raddatz – no to approve; Rys - no to approve; and Chairman Wolfer – no to approve.

The application is denied.

Mr. Conroy: Motion to approve #26-009 Variation Request for an accessory structure height of 19.3 ft. where a maximum of 15 ft. is permitted to construct a 2,000 sq. ft. detached garage at 992 North Farms Road as shown on Improvement Location Survey, Land of Charles and Nicole Slabaugh, 992 North Farms Road, dated August 19, 2015 and submitted plans received May 14, 2026, subject to:

- 3. Comments of the Town Planner, dated 6/8/2026**
- 4. Comments from the Health Department, dated 6/1/2026**

Ms. Raddatz: Second

Vote: Conroy – no to approve; Gross – no to approve; Raddatz – no to approve; Rys - no to approve; and Chairman Wolfer – no to approve.

The application is denied.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

1. May 18, 2026, Regular Meeting

Mr. Gross: Motion to accept the Minutes of the May 18, 2026, Zoning Board of Appeals as submitted.

Ms. Raddatz: Second

Vote: Unanimous

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Raddatz: Motion to adjourn the June 15, 2026, regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals at 7:25 p.m.

Mr. Conroy: Second

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl-Ann Tubby
Recording Secretary