1 2 3 4		ZOI	NING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT 268B MAMMOTH ROAD LONDONDERRY, NH 03053
5 6	DATE:	JUNE 17, 200	09
7 8	CASE NO.:	6/17/2009-3	
9 10 11 12	APPLICANT:	119 ROCKIN	ID RACHEL M. WETSON IGHAM ROAD ERRY, NH 03053
13 14	LOCATION:	119 ROCKIN	IGHAM ROAD, 16-87, AR-I
15 16 17 18 19 20	BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:		VICKI KEENAN, CHAIR JIM SMITH, VOTING ALTERNATE MICHAEL GALLAGHER, VOTING ALTERNATE MATTHEW NEUMAN, VOTING ALTERNATE LARRY O'SULLIVAN, CLERK
21 22 23	ALSO PRESENT:		RICHARD CANUEL, SENIOR BUILDING INSPECTOR/ ZONING OFFICER
24 25 26 27	REQUEST:		AREA VARIANCE TO ALLOW A 6-FOOT HIGH FENCE TO BE LESS THAN 40 FEET FROM THE FRONT PROPERTY LINE AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 3.14.
28 29	PRESENTATION:		
30 31 32	RACHEL WETSON: I have multiple pictures that I'd like to hand out to each of you. It'll help explain all of the questions.		
33 34	VICKI KEENAN: Great.		
35 36	RICHARD CANUEL: Yeah, you can just give those to the Board.		
37 38	RACHEL WETSON: Oh, okay.		
39	RICHARD CANUEL: Thanks.		
40 41 42	LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Yeah, he's not voting.		
42 43 44	[laughter]		
45	RACHEL WETSON	N: What's that	! ?

49 RACHEL WETSON: Oh. On the back, there's numbers, just so you can refer to them when I talk about certain questions. 50

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52 MATT NEUMAN: Wonderful.

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54 RACHEL WETSON: I'm not a photographer. I tried.

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56 JIM SMITH: Thanks.

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58 VICKI KEENAN: Thank you.

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60 Case No. 6/17/2009-3 was read into the record with no previous cases listed.

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62 VICKI KEENAN: So if you could start by telling us who you area and then presenting your 63 case, that'd be great.

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68 69 RACHEL WETSON: Sure. I'm Rachel Wetson. My husband is not here, which is why you probably thought he was [referring to audience member], he's not sitting with me. He's my neighbor. So, I'm Rachel Wetson and I live at 119 Rockingham Road, which is Route 28 in Londonderry and my husband and I are trying to put a six (6) foot fence up closer to the front property line than forty (40) feet. And I'll explain further when you look at the pictures as to why I want it closer to the front property line than forty (40) feet. Do you want me to go through the questions now or...?

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73 VICKI KEENAN: Actually, why don't you talk about why you want to put it up and then 74 we'll...

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76 RACHEL WETSON: Okay. The main reason that we would like the six (6) foot fence is for 77 privacy. My husband and I moved in about seven (7) years ago and since then, the area has 78 really become more overpopulated. Route 28 is a very busy road. You guys probably drive 79 down it. So we have many cars driving at all times of the day. It's a very busy road, a loud 80 road, so we would like to increase our privacy, increase our property value and hopefully take away some of the noise that we can hear in our house. Make it more of a home environment. 81

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83 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Had you considered shrubbage [sic] or trees or something along those lines? 84

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86 RACHEL WETSON: We haven't, actually, we really wanted a fence. We actually do have a lot 87 of trees in the front of our yard. You can kind of see that in the picture. But we really would 88 like the look of a fence better.

90 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: One of the reasons why the Town requires a distance between the front 91 of a parcel... 92 93 RACHEL WETSON: Mm-hmm. 94 95 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: ...and a side is because it more greatly affects the traffic and your 96 neighbors across the street. Can you address that? 97 98 RACHEL WETSON: Okay. Well, by traffic, I guess I can explain my road. It's a very straight road. Having the fence very close to our front property line is not gonna obstruct the view of 99 motorists in any way. It's not gonna obstruct the view of the road ahead for them. Also, as you 100 can see from the picture, I guess I'll refer to it now, picture two (2) [see exhibit "B"], picture two 101 (2) is a picture I took right from where we would be pulling out of our driveway. The fence is 102 103 actually gonna be behind those trees. So, it would not obstruct the view of motorists seeing us pull out of our driveway in any way and we would still be able to see motorists driving down 104 105 the road when we pull out of our driveway. So I don't see it's gonna increase any danger in any 106 wav. 107 108 MICHAEL GALLAGHER: Actually, how far is that back from that tree line that's on the road 109 there? On Rockingham Road. 110 111 RACHEL WETSON: Okay, so you see the road on the right and then the trees begin. There's a 112 black line I drew in. Again, I'm not a photographer... 113 114 MICHAEL GALLAGHER: I see that on here. 115 116 RACHEL WETSON: ...but I drew the black line and that's where we would like to put the 117 fence. That's about fifteen (15) feet from the property line. 118 119 MICHAEL GALLAGHER: Fifteen (15)? 120 121 RACHEL WETSON: Yup. 122 123 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: From the property line or from that tree line? 124 125 RACHEL WETSON: From the property line. The property line begins a little bit closer to our house. It's kind of in the middle of those trees is where our property line actually begins. 126 127 128 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Okay, so you're aware that the Town has access to the first, what is it,

131 RACHEL WETSON: Yes...

ten (10) feet, Richard?

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133 RICHARD CANUEL: Well, that varies. You can't really go by the...

VICKI KEENAN: How close to the driveway do you plan on putting the fence?

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174 RACHEL WETSON: We plan on having, probably, about four (4) or five (5) feet from the 175

driveway until when our fence begins.

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177 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: No gate? to your neighbors. A four (4) foot fence is acceptable in town up to, what fifteen (15) feet? I don't know if it's fifteen (15) feet in the front yard, Richard?

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RICHARD CANUEL: Well, by our ordinance, the front yard is considered that portion from the front property line back to the forty (40) foot setback line. That's considered the front yard.

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LARRY O'SULLIVAN: "Fences located in the front yard of residential properties may not exceed four (4) feet in height...The front yard, for the purpose of this section, shall be that portion of the property encompassing the area from the front property line to the forty (40) foot setback line."

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VICKI KEENAN: So even at four (4) feet, they would still require the forty (40) foot setback. Can you take us through your application?

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RACHEL WETSON: Sure. Okay, so, I'll begin at question four (4). A variance is requested of the zoning ordinance to permit an installation of a six (6) foot fence fifteen (15) back from our front property line. Facts supporting this request. The proposed use would not diminish surrounding property values because this fence will be elegant, it will be picket style and we would like it to be of cedar wood. It will add style and elegance to our neighborhood and street, to our home. It'll add value to our home and hopefully improve the value of our neighboring homes also. (B), granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because this fence would not obstruct the public's view of the road since we are not on a corner lot. This fence will be placed far enough away from our driveway entrance so motorists will have the ability to see us pulling out of our driveway and we will see motorists when we are pulling out of our driveway. (C), special conditions exist such that literal enforcement of the ordinance results in unnecessary hardship: one (1), an area variance is needed to enable the applicant's proposed use of the property, given the following special conditions of the property. And I can refer you to picture one (1), so you can see what I'm talking about. Our home lies fifty five (55) feet back from our front property line. If we built the fence forty (40) feet back from our front property line, we would only have fifteen (15) feet of land between our home and the fence. Building the fence fifteen (15) back from our front line of property allows us to have a front yard and will still allow motorists to see us pulling out of our driveway and will allow us to view motorists before pulling out of our driveway. Two (2), the benefit sought by the applicant cannot be achieved by some other method reasonably feasible for the applicant to pursue other than an area variance because the only way to place a fence forty (40) feet back from our front line of property while maintaining a front yard would be to move our house back and this is, of course, not feasible. (D), granting the variance would do substantial justice because we have two (2) boxer dogs and, of course, at times, they can get off the leash and our dogs have actually run into Route 28 and have been in danger of getting hit and also causing accidents. Again, it's a very busy road. The fence would improve the safety of our dogs and also make it a little quieter for our neighbors when they don't see the cars driving by and stopping and people running down the road. And also we hope this fence will buffer some of the noise from vehicles passing by our house since we live on Route 28, again, a main State road. And lastly, this fence will add elegance, privacy and value to our home. (E), the use is not contrary to the spirit of the ordinance because we live on a part of Route 28 that is straight. You can refer to picture two (2)

- again to see this. No curves or corners. Therefore, this fence will not obstruct the public's view
- of the road. Also, this fence will be placed fifteen (15) feet away from our driveway entrance,
- behind the trees that you see in the picture, allowing motorists to see us pulling out of our
- 270 driveway and allowing us to view the road and motorists before pulling out of our driveway so
- it wouldn't impose any danger to the public.

- 273 VICKI KEENAN: A question. Have you contemplated additional landscaping? More shrubs
- 274 and trees?

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276 RACHEL WETSON: We haven't. Again, we really would like the look of the fence.

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278 MATT NEUMAN: How about fencing in the backyard?

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- 280 RACHEL WETSON: We wanna do that, too, but we don't need the area variance for that, so,
- yeah, we'd like to have a full fenced...

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283 MATT NEUMAN: I know that's a big part of our reasoning for it is for the dogs...

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- 285 RACHEL WETSON: Yeah, I mean, we would like to fence in the whole yard. Have the front
- 286 yard and the backyard, everything fenced in. Yeah, to let the dogs run around, yeah.

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288 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Is your pool fenced in now?

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- 290 RACHEL WETSON: We have a Gibraltar pool. We don't have any fence around our yard at all.
- 291 We have a Gibraltar pool, it's got its own little fence around it, of course, for safety but...

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293 JAMES DUNN: Above ground.

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295 RACHEL WETSON: Above ground, yeah. Thanks.

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- 297 VICKI KEENAN: Any other questions from the Board? Why don't we open it up to the public.
- 298 Is there anyone here to speak in favor of the application? Can you come up to the microphone
- and introduce yourself.

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JAMES DUNN: We have the same problem with the noise.

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LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Could I get your name, please, for ...?

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- JAMES DUNN: James Dunn, 117 Rockingham. The road is downhill. A lot of the truck drivers
- downshift, creating a lot of noise. Like she said, road traffic. And I think, like her yard slopes
- down, so a four (4) foot fence wouldn't do it. I mean, you'd be looking over and still seeing the
- road. It would have to be a six (6) foot just to...I mean, I stand in my driveway and the road is
- 309 like up to here when I look out.

311 RACHEL WETSON: Our friends call our house "exit 119," not "number 119" Rockingham 312 Road. It's like we live on a highway. 313 314 JAMES DUNN: Yeah. 315 316 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Are they directly across the street from you? 317 318 JAMES DUNN: Next door. 319 320 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Are there people directly across the street from you? 321 322 JAMES DUNN: Yes, their house is set back further and there's usually either, what, a florist there or... 323 324 325 RACHEL WETSON: Yeah, a pool place... 326 327 JAMES DUNN: A pool place or... 328 329 RACHEL WETSON: There's something commercial across the street. I don't know what they 330 are now. 331 332 JAMES DUNN: I'm not sure what's there now. 333 334 RACHEL WETSON: Yeah, me neither. It changes. It's been changing. 335 336 VICKI KEENAN: Okay. Any other questions from the Board? Seeing that, we'll close the public hearing and the Board will deliberate and discuss, okay? 337 338 339 **DELIBERATIONS:** 340 341 VICKI KEENAN: Want to walk through the five (5) points of law just like we did last time and discuss each one? 342 343 344 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Sure. 345 VICKI KEENAN: Okay. The proposed would not diminish surrounding property values? 346 347 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: I would take exception to that as well. Because the folks to the left and 348 349 right aren't gonna be the ones who we need to protect, as a Board. It's the people on the opposite side and the drivers and our issue...there's a couple of issues here. One of them is the 350 351 six (6) foot and the other one is the fifteen (15) feet. What you're doing is, you're building an echo chamber. The people who live to the rear of her property now, probably you'd cut a lot of 352 353 the noise by the trees and they do, too. Because the road is busy, it's the noise that usually is the annoyance. Safety on a stretch that, as straight as this, isn't the major issue. It's gonna be the 354

noise pollution that's created. I believe it's gonna be amplified by this. I think that's why we have the zoning. I think that's to the detriment of the people across the street.

VICKI KEENAN: But they could encircle their backyard with a six (6) foot fence and not need a variance and create the same issue, right?

361 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Right.

VICKI KEENAN: By right.

LARRY O'SULLIVAN: No. There's no issue if it's fifteen (15) feet from the road. I mean, fifteen (15) feet from the road is really what the issue is. Fifteen (15) feet, six (6) feet high. That's an echo chamber that you're building. Move it forty (40) feet away, it's not such an issue. But having it right next to the road is like somebody yelling in your ear. That's why they do this on highways. That's why when you see 93, you see the buffers and the walls that they put up. That's to keep the sound reflected back on the drivers. That's cool, that's fine when you have it on both sides. And where all the complaints happen are on the residential side that's opposite it. The sound is gonna go a lot further amplified and that's what that reflection that echoes is gonna give. So, I have a problem with that close to the road. I think that's why our ordinances are the way they are, so we eliminate this situation.

JIM SMITH: I think my reading on it, with the tree line and brush and so forth in front of it, I think that's gonna mitigate that effect.

VICKI KEENAN: [inaudible] for that.

JIM SMITH: Because they're gonna have the fence behind the trees.

LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Jim, if you have any restrictions that we place on an approval on it, you then need to require that the trees be there because you can cut these trees down just like, you know, as easy as can be. Once the fence is up, what's the purpose of the trees? I mean, I understand there's other reasons to have trees but at the same time, right now they act as a buffer. I think that's why they should be considering the landscaping because I also believe that that's a less expensive, less intrusive solution. Everybody else up and down that street's gonna put up a six (6) foot fence fifteen (15) feet from the road.

VICKI KEENAN: I mean, I would argue that I don't see any diminishment of the surrounding property values because it sounds, from an aesthetic standpoint, what they're gonna put in is going to be good and I'm having a hard time sort of thinking that an echo chamber is going to be created by it because of the tree buffer. And because of the short distance of the fence. But what I have a problem with is...

397 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: The short distance of the fence? I missed that.

399 VICKI KEENAN: The length of the fence.

400 401 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: A hundred and fifty (150) feet long? 402 403 VICKI KEENAN: Yeah, I just, when you look at that in comparison to the length of the road, I just...just with the tree line, I don't see it creating a big echo. But what I do have a problem with 404 405 is the area variance, section one (1), two (2), three (3), I'm having a hard time with that. How 406 about granting the variance would be contrary to the public interest? 407 408 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: That's what I think I was addressing in my comments as well. 409 410 VICKI KEENAN: Mm-hmm. I'm having a hard time understanding the special conditions of 411 the property that are unique to anybody else who lives on that section of road. 412 413 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Everybody on the road has the same scenario. 414 415 VICKI KEENAN: Right. 416 417 MATT NEUMAN: Right. 418 419 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: You can see the overheads of the houses. The houses are about the 420 same distance. I mean, this is requesting something that we've prohibited succinctly and 421 specifically two (2) different ways and you really have to have an outstanding reason to go and 422 allow a variance in these circumstances because everyone on this street has practically the same 423 scenario. 424 425 VICKI KEENAN: The setbacks look very similar to the other homes. 426 427 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: So, you know, it's a tough thing to approve for one and not for others 428 but at the same time, if there was a significant difference between this property and any of the 429 surrounding properties, that would be the thing to look at. Most of the time, we do look for 430 that. As a matter of fact, we try to pull teeth to get it out of the applicants 'cause applicants 431 typically don't look at the uniqueness and this is really one of those scenarios where there's got

to be something unique and I can't find it.

VICKI KEENAN: I agree. I think it would be setting a precedent which would go against our zoning about, sort of, open landscape. I worry, too, about the safety from exiting the driveway around the fence on that side.

LARRY O'SULLIVAN: It's not so much the safety of the residence, although that is a consideration. It is the safety of the drivers. I have all the sympathy in the world for somebody who feels as if they have to have a fence in order to prevent the noise from coming in and to keep their pets in the yard and I have to say that there are alternatives.

443 VICKI KEENAN: Yeah, see, I...

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445	LARRY O'SULLIVAN: And all their neighbors have them. So
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447	VICKI KEENAN: I can't find a passing reason for (C.1) and (2), unless anybody else can
448	convince me otherwise.
449	IIM CMITIL. I think she could accomplish what shelp towing to do by multipa up the form (4)
450 451	JIM SMITH: I think she could accomplish what she's trying to do by putting up the four (4) foot fence and additional landscaping and plantings which would address the noise issue, so I
452	think that's a reasonable alternative to
453	think that's a reasonable afternative to
454	LARRY O'SULLIVAN: I think there's a less expensive, reasonable alternative to begin with.
455	The neighbors have done them.
456	The height of that we have them.
457	JIM SMITH: A four (4) foot fence would be, I would think, sufficient to contain the dogs and a
458	lot heavier plantings would certainly, probably be more effective as far as the noise goes when
459	you come right down to it.
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461	VICKI KEENAN: Mike and Matt, do you have anything?
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463	MATT NEUMAN: Yeah, I was having a real tough time with the fact that there are the
464	alternatives and it is setting, I think, a really tough precedent in that area because like you said,
465	Larry, everybody on that road is just gonna do the same thing and
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467	VICKI KEENAN: Mm-hmm.
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469	MATT NEUMAN: Then where are we?
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471	JIM SMITH: Yeah, when you look at that plan there that shows the three (3), four (4), five (5),
472	six (6), seven (7) homes that are allthe distance back from the road is pretty much the same, so
473 474	there's nothing really unique about this particular piece of property versus the rest of them.
474 475	VICKI KEENAN: You can measure some of them on the GIS and a lot of them are similar
475 476	setback. Okay, how about granting the variance would do substantial justice? This was a no-
477	pass for me. Okay, how about granting the variance would do substantial justice: This was a no-pass
478	for me.
479	Tot lie.
480	LARRY O'SULLIVAN: This is a what?
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482	VICKI KEENAN: This was no-pass for me.
483	•
484	LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Did not[inaudible].
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486	VICKI KEENAN: Any comments on those two (2)?
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- 488 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: I think one of the things we see from applicants is that they talk about
- their need as opposed to why the rules are on the books and why the ordinance exists and folks 489
- 490 don't address that part of the ordinance when they're supposed to be addressing it. Contrary to
- 491 the spirit of the ordinance and, you know, what is it we're trying to accomplish with an
- 492 ordinance and then how could it be against it? What we're trying to accomplish with an
- ordinance in this instance is so that we don't wind up with walls and what you have close to the 493
- 494 road. So, the answer that was provided doesn't address that. It addresses the public's view of
- the road when that's not what the issue is. 495

497 VICKI KEENAN: Is there any further discussion? Is there a motion? Does anyone have any 498 more comments?

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500 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: I would suggest that in our findings that we make it clear that the 501 request will create an unnecessary detrimental situation in a residential area, given that there are options that needed to be addressed at the very least and that it will change the integrity of 502 503 the neighborhood and I do mean the residential side of the neighborhood.

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505 VICKI KEENAN: We should add that there are no special conditions.

LARRY O'SULLIVAN: I believe it'll increase traffic noise.

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507 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: And there are no special conditions, right. 508

509 VICKI KEENAN: I think that's the big one.

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- 512 513 VICKI KEENAN: Is someone writing these down on their sheet? Could someone? Mike, that's
- 514 great.

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516 MICHAEL GALLAGHER: I'll write it.

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518 VICKI KEENAN: Does anyone want to make a motion or have any additional comments?

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520 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Did you get it all down, Mike?

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522 MICHAEL GALLAGHER: No, I didn't.

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524 VICKI KEENAN: So there was no special condition of the property. We felt that there were other feasible methods... 525

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527 LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Yes.

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529 VICKI KEENAN: ...to achieve what they were trying to achieve.

- 531 JIM SMITH: Yeah. I think that's the key thing. There's other reasonable means to
- 532 accomplish...

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579	MICHAEL GALLAGHER: Yes.
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581	VICKI KEENAN: Okay, there's a motion to deny
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583	JIM SMITH: I'll second.
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585	VICKI KEENAN: Secondcase 6/17/2009-3 and a second. Any discussion on the motion?
586	Seeing none, we'll take a vote. All those in favor of denying case 6/17/2009-3, signify by saying
587	'aye.'
588	
589	JIM SMITH: Aye.
590	
591	MICHAEL GALLAGHER: Aye.
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593	MATT NEUMAN: Aye.
594	
595	LARRY O'SULLIVAN: Aye.
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597	VICKI KEENAN: Aye. Opposed? Abstentions?
598 500	
599	[no response in opposition or to abstain]
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601	RESULT: THE MOTION TO DENY THE AREA VARIANCE WAS APPROVED, 5-0-0.
602	DECDECTELLL IV CLIDMITTED
603 604	RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
605	
606	
607	LARRY O'SULLIVAN, CLERK
608	TYPED AND TRANSCRIBED BY JAYE A TROTTIER, SECRETARY
609	THED THAD TRANSCRIBED DI JAHEA INCHIEN, SECRETARI
610	APPROVED JULY 15, 2009 WITH A MOTION MADE BY LARRY O'SULLIVAN, SECONDED
611	RV IIM SMITH AND APPROVED 4 0.1 WITH VVES STECER ARSTAINING AS HE DID NOT

ATTEND JUNE 17, 2009 THE MEETING.