

In The Matter Of:
CITY OF CAMDEN
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

City of Camden Zoning Board of Adjustment Special Meeting
March 18, 2026

Regine A. Ervin Reporting
609-280-2230
RegineCSR@gmail.com

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ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
CITY OF CAMDEN

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Wednesday, March 18, 2026

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Transcript of proceedings of the Zoning Board of Adjustment SPECIAL MEETING held in City Council Chambers, 2nd floor City Hall, 520 Market Street, Camden, New Jersey 08101, commencing at 5:45 p.m.

B O A R D M E M B E R S P R E S E N T

- DARNELL HANCE, CHAIRMAN
- GUY STILL, VICE-CHAIRMAN
- ALICIA RIVERA
- YANIECE SPENCER
- TAMEEKA MASON

A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

- KYLE F. EINGORN, ESQUIRE, ATTORNEY FOR THE BOARD
- DEMBO, BROWN & BURNS, LLP
- EVITA MUHAMMAD, ZONING BOARD SECRETARY

Regine A. Ervin, CCR
Certified Court Reporter
Email: RegineCSR@gmail.com
(609-280-2230)

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1 CHAIRMAN HANCEL: Good evening ladies and
2 gentlemen. Welcome to the City of Camden Zoning
3 Board of Adjustment SPECIAL MEETING of March 18,
4 2026.

5 Reading of the Sunshine Law: In
6 accordance with the Sunshine Law of New Jersey,
7 notice of the meeting was posted in the Municipal
8 Clerk's office on Friday, March 13, 2026.

9 MR. EINGORN: We'll take a roll call.
10 Chairman Hance.

11 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Here.

12 MR. EINGORN: Vice-Chairman Still.

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Here.

14 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Merricks. Absent.
15 Ms. Nunez. Absent.

16 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Rivera.

17 MS. RIVERA: Here.

18 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Moss is absent.
19 Ms. Spencer.

20 MS. SPENCER: Here.

21 MR. EINGORN: And Ms. Mason.

22 MS. MASON: Here.

23 MR. EINGORN: Good evening, everyone.
24 Welcome to the SPECIAL MEETING. We don't have any
25 minutes.

1 MS. MUHAMMAD: Right.

2 MR. EINGORN: We'll go to the list. The
3 first matter is Dunamis Life Church, 1300 Thurman
4 Street.

5 MS. JAMES: Here.

6 MR. EINGORN: And 254 Tavistock, LLC,
7 1809 Broadway. We received a letter from counsel
8 this afternoon. That's been withdrawn. I don't
9 think anybody is here for that. But for the record,
10 that's not going to be heard.

11 The next matter on the agenda is RAE
12 Enterprises, LLC, 1404 Princess Avenue.

13 MR. ECCLESTON: Here.

14 MR. EINGORN: Good evening, sir. I met
15 you in the hallway.

16 Eddie Vazquez Morales, 1138 Lakeshore
17 Drive was deficient so that's not going to be heard
18 tonight. And then we have one Resolution.

19 I hate to bump the church here but we
20 would like to get Ms. Mason home so she could feel
21 better. So we're going to take RAE Enterprises first
22 because it needs a use variance. Are you ready?

23 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

24 MR. EINGORN: The next matter is RAE
25 Enterprises, LLC, 1404 Princess Avenue.

1 MR. EINGORN: Would you raise your right
2 hand, please.

3 - - -

4 RICHARD ECCLESTON, having first been duly
5 sworn/affirmed, was examined and testified as
6 follows:

7 - - -

8 MR. EINGORN: Please state your name and
9 address for the record.

10 MR. ECCLESTON: My name is Richard
11 Eccleston. My address is 7138 Willgoos Avenue,
12 Pennsauken, New Jersey 08110.

13 MR. EINGORN: Thank you, Mr. Eccleston.
14 A question for you.

15 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

16 MR. EINGORN: One question for you. The
17 applicant is a limited liability company. Are you
18 the sole member?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

20 MR. EINGORN: You are. Great. So you
21 have or you want to be a triplex?

22 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

23 MR. EINGORN: Is it already a triplex?

24 MR. ECCLESTON: I seen three meters
25 there. But when I came to the City they said that it

1 was registered as a duplex.

2 MR. EINGORN: So it's currently a
3 duplex?

4 MR. ECCLESTON: Correct.

5 MR. EINGORN: So the applicant is here
6 tonight. He needs a use variance, a bulk variance
7 for off-street parking and then lot depth, lot size,
8 lot width and max building coverage. The applicant
9 is proposing to renovate the first and second floor
10 and convert the basement into a two-bedroom, one
11 bathroom apartment with modern updates. Is that
12 accurate?

13 MR. ECCLESTON: Correct. Yes.

14 MR. EINGORN: We have a package of
15 photographs. Is this the property?

16 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

17 MR. EINGORN: Did you take these
18 photographs?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

20 MR. EINGORN: When did you take them?

21 MR. ECCLESTON: I think we were suppose
22 to come in March so in February, I think, around the
23 18th; around there, 18th.

24 MR. EINGORN: Is this the photograph of
25 the basement?

1 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

2 MR. EINGORN: There's nothing there
3 now?

4 MR. ECCLESTON: Nothing at all.

5 MR. EINGORN: What about like water
6 heaters and stuff like that; anything down there?

7 MR. ECCLESTON: Nothing.

8 MR. EINGORN: You have this photograph
9 labeled 'front-door access' to basement?

10 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. That would create a
11 front-door entrance right there. That's on the front
12 street of Princess.

13 MR. EINGORN: And this is currently like
14 a window or something?

15 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. It's like a window,
16 yeah.

17 MR. EINGORN: Is this a view from the
18 inside of the window?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

20 MR. EINGORN: Same spot?

21 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Same spot.

22 MR. EINGORN: And I'm showing you this
23 last photograph. Are these the meters that you were
24 referring to?

25 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. correct.

1 MR. EINGORN: Have you been able to
2 determine what these meters go to?

3 MR. ECCLESTON: Well, when I talked to
4 one of the representatives from PSE&G, they were
5 saying one for the first and the second floor. And
6 then I think the third one was like a landlord's
7 meter.

8 MR. EINGORN: So like a common
9 meter?

10 MR. ECCLESTON: Yeah, like a common area,
11 correct.

12 MR. EINGORN: Does this building have any
13 off-street parking, a driveway, a garage of any
14 sort?

15 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes, on the side.
16 There's a garage that's there that's able to
17 fit six cars. In the plans I have a drawing of it.
18 It has space to fit about six cars comfortably.

19 MR. EINGORN: I'm sorry but I don't have
20 a copy of the plans. Did you bring a copy with you?

21 MR. ECCLESTON: Oh, I have it in my
22 phone.

23 MR. EINGORN: We can't take your phone.

24 MS. MUHAMMAD: Whatever is here, is what
25 he submitted with the appeal application. He has

1 plans as part of the zoning which is two different
2 files.

3 MR. EINGORN: I understand. We can't
4 take stuff from your phone because we need it for our
5 files and you don't want to leave your phone here.

6 MR. ECCLESTON: I understand.

7 MR. EINGORN: Evita is checking the box.
8 I'd rather not make you come back if you don't have
9 to.

10 MR. ECCLESTON: I appreciate it. I also
11 own the property towards the rear. There's a back
12 entrance also towards to enter into the basement for
13 its own separate entrance.

14 MR. EINGORN: So there will be two
15 entrances to the basement then?

16 MR. ECCLESTON: Well, it will be two
17 entrances and then we'll do also two egress windows
18 for each bedroom.

19 MR. EINGORN: Got it.

20 Thank you, Evita. Are these the plans
21 that you were referring to?

22 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

23 MR. EINGORN: We're going to mark these
24 plans Exhibit A. They consist of a basement plan, a
25 first-floor plan, second-floor plan and a site plan?

1 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

2 MR. EINGORN: So right now we'll refer to
3 the site plan. Is this the six-car parking you were
4 referring to?

5 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

6 MR. EINGORN: It says, labeled driveway.
7 Is it a driveway or a garage?

8 MR. ECCLESTON: Yeah, it's a driveway.

9 MR. EINGORN: And so, the denial letter
10 says, 3.75 spaces are needed but there's six spaces.
11 So that would meet the ordinance requirement
12 according to the denial letter.

13 The house itself, it shares a wall on one
14 side with another house?

15 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

16 MR. EINGORN: And then on the other side
17 it looks to be a vacant property, or is that part of
18 the property itself?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: It's part of the property
20 itself.

21 MR. EINGORN: Is that where the driveway
22 is or it's on the other side?

23 MR. ECCLESTON: That's where the driveway
24 is at, correct?

25 MR. EINGORN: Is there a curb-cut or

1 anything?

2 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes, the curb is cut
3 already, yeah.

4 MR. EINGORN: Any questions for the
5 applicant? Are there separate entrances for the
6 first and second floors?

7 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

8 MS. RIVERA: You said that you're going
9 to have for six cars?

10 MR. ECCLESTON: It's space for six cars
11 there.

12 MS. RIVERA: So are they going to go like
13 this?

14 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

15 MR. EINGORN: I will pass the plans. I
16 apologize.

17 MS. RIVERA: So there's only one way in
18 and one way out?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: For parking?

20 MS. RIVERA: For the cars, yes.

21 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes, that's correct.

22 MS. RIVERA: So whoever comes first, it's
23 going to get mad.

24 MR. ECCLESTON: No, no. Technically like
25 with the parking, it can go slant like slanted. And

1 then on further up, there's even more space where
2 like people could also like park their car and be
3 able to move out.

4 CHAIRMAN HANCE: So you said it's a
5 duplex already?

6 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. It's currently a
7 duplex.

8 CHAIRMAN HANCE: And the reason why
9 you're going to make it a triplex?

10 MR. ECCLESTON: The reason why
11 I wanted to make it a triplex because when I seen it,
12 I said, oh, it's a big enough space so let me see if
13 I can convert it into a triplex and give another
14 person another place to stay, another family.

15 MS. MASON: Are there other duplexes or
16 triplexes in that area?

17 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Right behind me,
18 the street behind me, I think that's Bradley. They
19 just converted a building there into a four-unit
20 building. Also where they occupied the basement also.

21 Across the street there's a property for
22 sale for 250, which was an old church and I think
23 that just recently got approved for a five-unit. And
24 then right adjacent to 1404, there's another property
25 there where they're also doing renovations and

1 converting a basement also.

2 MS. MASON: Thank you.

3 MR. ECCLESTON: You're welcome.

4 MR. EINGORN: The driveway, it's not
5 currently configured for six cars. You're going to
6 expand it to make it larger?

7 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes, I'm going to expand
8 it. Correct.

9 MR. EINGORN: What's your plan for the
10 surface to expand it?

11 MR. ECCLESTON: Concrete.

12 MR. EINGORN: Have you looked into the
13 way the water is going to run; the impervious
14 surface? You may need other variances if you do an
15 impervious surface which we don't have before us. If
16 you do something like gravel.

17 MR. ECCLESTON: I can do gravel. That
18 would be even better. That would be so much more
19 cost-effective.

20 MR. EINGORN: Right. I think the concern
21 of the Board when we see these large driveways is,
22 where does the water go. Right? What does it do the
23 to the impervious coverage vis-a-vis the ordinance,
24 right?

25 MR. ECCLESTON: Okay.

1 MR. EINGORN: If it's a pervious surface
2 then you lose a lot of those considerations because
3 the water is going to go right through.

4 MR. ECCLESTON: I understand.

5 MR. EINGORN: So you would agree to a
6 gravel driveway?

7 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes, I would definitely
8 agree to do the gravel.

9 MS. MUHAMMAD: That's going to be a
10 condition.

11 MR. ECCLESTON: Okay.

12 MR. EINGORN: Does the Board have any
13 other questions?

14 MS. RIVERA: So each floor is going to be
15 an apartment, right?

16 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: How is the
18 condition of the first and second floor right now
19 currently?

20 MR. ECCLESTON: They are in good
21 stable condition.

22 MS. SPENCER: This isn't an updated
23 picture, though, correct? It's being worked on
24 since?

25 MR. ECCLESTON: Yeah, it started to get

1 worked on, yeah.

2 MS. MASON: Are there other duplexes?
3 They look like single-family?

4 MS. SPENCER: There's actually a triplex
5 on the 100 block right before that that just sold
6 like two weeks ago. And then there's one on the
7 corner of Bradley and Princess. And then like he
8 said, that old church, I think that's maybe
9 1401 Princess.

10 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

11 MS. SPENCER: That's for sale right now
12 too.

13 MS. MASON: Okay.

14 MS. SPENCER: So there are. But the
15 parking is very tight.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: How long have you
17 owned it?

18 MR. ECCLESTON: Since July.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Since July?

20 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Do you know the
22 condition of the roof?

23 MR. ECCLESTON: The roof is fine. It's a
24 brand new roof on there.

25 MS. MASON: Are the units going to be one

1 bedroom, two bedrooms?

2 MR. ECCLESTON: On the second floor it
3 would be a three-bedroom, two bath. Second floor
4 will also be a three-bedroom, two-bath. And then the
5 basement will be a two-bedroom, one bath.

6 MR. EINGORN: What kind of tenants are
7 you looking to --

8 MR. ECCLESTON: I was thinking to
9 probably come to the City and do probably Section 8
10 or find out about to see if I can set it up for
11 organizations for like Women Against Abuse; stuff
12 like that.

13 MS. MASON: Thank you.

14 MR. ECCLESTON: You're welcome.

15 MS. MASON: So you mentioned that the
16 cars can be on a slant?

17 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

18 MS. MASON: In this site plan, they're
19 kind of like behind one --

20 MR. ECCLESTON: Straight.

21 MS. MASON: -- another. So that could
22 cause if it's different tenants and their cars, that
23 could cause some havoc there? Cause it's one-way in
24 and one-way out?

25 MR. ECCLESTON: Yeah. Being that we're

1 going to be able to expand it, they'll be able to go
2 on a slant and then be able to reverse out singly.
3 So they won't really block each other in.

4 MS. MUHAMMAD: I have a question. What
5 do you mean by expanding?

6 MR. ECCLESTON: Like so the driveway,
7 it's wide. So like I'll be able to come over a
8 little bit more than what that plan is kind of
9 showing a little bit more.

10 MS. MASON: Like this?

11 MR. ECCLESTON: Like that.

12 MS. MUHAMMAD: Tell me how you're going
13 to do it?

14 MR. ECCLESTON: So the cars can come on
15 this angle right here parking this way.

16 MS. MUHAMMAD: Expand it. How are you
17 going to expand it?

18 MR. ECCLESTON: Not expand. The same way
19 how it is. Just how they would be able to park over
20 towards the side.

21 MR. EINGORN: Can we pass the plans back?
22 I think this is the question. So if this is what's
23 being shown in the plan, right, where does the
24 driveway start and end on the plan?

25 MR. ECCLESTON: Oh, the driveway starts

1 here and then the driveway ends -- this is the end.

2 MS. MUHAMMAD: So my question is, what do
3 you mean by expanding? Show it on here.

4 MR. ECCLESTON: Well, not expand.

5 MS. MUHAMMAD: You got to change your
6 lanes. What do you mean by that?

7 MR. EINGORN: For this discussion, does
8 the driveway as its currently now, does it end here
9 with concrete?

10 MR. ECCLESTON: Well, it's kind of -- it
11 has -- like it's concrete here and then right here,
12 it has like just two concrete paves where you can
13 drive on.

14 MR. EINGORN: I see what you're saying.
15 For the tires?

16 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. And then all the
17 way in the back, this is all concreted.

18 MR. EINGORN: So this is concrete here?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

20 MR. EINGORN: About this?

21 MR. ECCLESTON: Correct.

22 MR. EINGORN: And then how far is the
23 concrete in the front?

24 MR. ECCLESTON: In the front of the
25 concrete is from the driveway to about right here.

1 MR. EINGORN: To here?

2 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

3 MR. EINGORN: And then from here-to-here,
4 it's two concrete lines?

5 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

6 MR. EINGORN: Like this?

7 MR. ECCLESTON: Yep.

8 MR. EINGORN: I just want to be able to
9 show the Board what he's proposing so that they can
10 see. So these hash lines and I'm going to tear it up
11 even more. I'm sorry. All right.

12 So the testimony from the applicant and
13 I'll explain it this way too. This is the open area
14 of the driveway. It's concrete to here. There's two
15 concrete lines for the tires that go back to here and
16 then it's concrete back here.

17 And I think what he's saying is, he'll
18 put gravel here so that you could do six cars in the
19 middle on a slant. Let's turn it this way. So here
20 is concrete currently with the two concrete lines to
21 a concrete pad back here that's existing. And then
22 what he's proposing, I guess, is gravel here to
23 create the additional parking spots for six people.

24 MS. RIVERA: So he's going to put them
25 this way --

1 MR. EINGORN: Right. On an angle.

2 MS. RIVERA: -- then they don't have any
3 problem getting out?

4 MR. EINGORN: Right.

5 MS. RIVERA: Like if I'm the first one up
6 here, I won't have any problem getting out?

7 MR. EINGORN: Right. It would be angled
8 parking so that you could go around each
9 other.

10 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Were you saying that
11 they can back out of the driveway and then park and
12 back out again?

13 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

14 MS. MASON: Is it off-street-parking as
15 well?

16 MR. EINGORN: You mean on-street?

17 MS. MASON: Yes.

18 MR. EINGORN: Wait.

19 MS. SPENCER: It's a tight block.

20 MR. EINGORN: Right. This would be on
21 his property itself, not on the street.

22 MS. SPENCER: But they have the option to
23 park on the street.

24 MS. MASON: Right.

25 MR. EINGORN: You can't stop people from

1 the parking on the street.

2 MS. SPENCER: I think Tameeka was saying
3 like they can park on the street if they want to.

4 MR. EINGORN: Yes. Any other
5 questions?

6 CHAIRMAN HANCE: No.

7 MR. EINGORN: We will open to the public.
8 Anybody in the public here tonight that like to be
9 heard on the application regarding 1404 Princess
10 Avenue requesting a use variance for a triplex,
11 off-street -- they need off-street parking;
12 lot depth, lot size, lot width and building coverage?
13 Hearing none and seeing none, we'll close the public
14 portion.

15 The applicant is here tonight seeking a
16 use variance for a triplex, to add a unit in the
17 basement, and bulk variances related to that,
18 including lot depth, lot width, lot size and building
19 coverage. The applicant has demonstrated six parking
20 spaces where three and three quarters would be
21 required. The Board should do a discussion of the
22 Positive and Negative Criteria and make a motion.
23 And if it's a motion to pass then that motion should
24 be conditioned on use of gravel for the driveway. If
25 it's a motion to deny then obviously that wouldn't

1 matter.

2 CHAIRMAN HANCE: I'm not crazy about
3 backing out of the driveway into the street. I think
4 it's a hazard. Because if you can't see where you're
5 going and you're backing out into a street, that's
6 not good.

7 MR. ECCLESTON: I understand. Currently
8 my neighbors they do that often next door to exactly
9 where my property is at. They have about five or six
10 cars there. And they usually pull in and then back
11 out.

12 MS. SPENCER: I think it's different when
13 it's your personal car. Because I think directly
14 next door it's got personal cars. So you kind of
15 maneuver and hop in different cars and figure out how
16 to get out versus --

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Different
18 people.

19 MS. MUHAMMAD: I think mostly any
20 driveway for residential homes, you have to back out.

21 MR. EINGORN: Yes, it's pretty common.

22 MS. MUHAMMAD: He has the space for six
23 cars. That don't mean there's going to be six cars
24 there at any time.

25 MR. EINGORN: That's true.

1 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Like you know, I'm
2 envisioning these cars parked diagonally but then
3 also compensating for the space in the rear of the
4 car for other cars to back out. Now, the backing out
5 is pretty regular. But like that's my thing. So
6 parking them diagonal you have a set of stairs here.
7 So either car number four, five or six is not really
8 going to be flush against that wall right here.

9 But to have them parked diagonal and then
10 have enough space here in the rear to come out and do
11 it without like hitting someone else's car, that's
12 kind of funky to me. But I do see what he's saying
13 here. But like she said, that's their personal
14 vehicle so it's a little easier than to have all
15 these different people.

16 Now, you have to for this to function
17 easily, you would have to hope the first person that
18 pulls in, pulls to the rear. You know what I mean?
19 And then everybody else pulls behind him.

20 MR. EINGORN: Remember that that's a site
21 plan consideration. He hasn't been cited for site
22 plan.

23 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Got you.

24 MR. EINGORN: Realistically, if he wanted
25 to do stacked parking like it is in the plan, he has

1 six spaces. That would be a tenant problem figuring
2 out, you know, timing of getting in and out and all
3 of that stuff, right?

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Got you.

5 MR. EINGORN: What he's shown is, I've
6 got parking for six spots. And however they want to
7 park is a tenant problem. Right? Whether or not
8 they can back out or not, that's really a site plan
9 issue which isn't really before us. It hasn't been
10 requested and he wasn't cited for that.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Got you.

12 MR. EINGORN: But I get the consideration
13 is, hey, it's kind of tight; are they going to back
14 into the house.

15 MS. MASON: I mean, overall I think it's
16 a good project. And, you know, you trying to provide
17 affordable housing, it's also something that's good
18 as well. I think what everybody is concerned about
19 is the parking. But I can say on Cooper Street, you
20 have apartments and similar parking areas as well.
21 And it's also on a slant. It is tight but they work
22 it out.

23 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: They make it work.

24 MS. MASON: And there's no accidents on
25 Cooper Street because those apartments go back

1 straight back on Cooper Street. But, I mean, again,
2 you have two units and the two bedroom. I think it
3 was coming as initially it was a duplex. I did see
4 the three meters in there so it does make sense to
5 make it a triplex and hopefully a beautiful for folks
6 that could have an opportunity to be in a beautiful
7 home like that.

8 MR. ECCLESTON: Correct. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN HANCE: And my last question.
10 In the basement, are they going to be coming into the
11 back of the house to get in?

12 MR. ECCLESTON: They will have two
13 entrances, through the front and through the rear.

14 CHAIRMAN HANCE: You're talking about the
15 steps here?

16 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN HANCE: So that's leading up to,
18 I guess, the first-floor apartment?

19 MR. EINGORN: No, no. So I think the
20 testimony was, there's an opening in the rear here
21 with the steps.

22 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Yes. That's the back of
23 the house.

24 MR. EINGORN: Right. And then he's going
25 to turn this into a door. So this window becomes a

1 door. This is the outside of the window.

2 CHAIRMAN HANCE: So I guess they're
3 walking down?

4 MR. EINGORN: This is the inside. And I
5 think the applicant testified there will be egress
6 windows in both.

7 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Yes.

8 MS. SPENCER: So this will be similar to
9 the house that they're doing a block right before
10 yours?

11 MR. ECCLESTON: Correct.

12 MS. SPENCER: They took away a window and
13 made steps?

14 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. Correct.

15 MS. MASON: Similar projects already
16 there in the neighborhood as well.

17 MS. RIVERA: Have you spoken to any of
18 the neighbors and stuff like that?

19 MR. ECCLESTON: Yes. I've talked to a
20 lot of people in the neighborhood. They're ecstatic
21 of the project that I'm doing. They're excited.
22 I've sat and talked to a couple of people and just
23 getting to know them and stuff like that. They came
24 and checked out the property; did a couple little
25 walk-throughs and they like what I'm doing in the

1 neighborhood.

2 MS. MASON: Chairman, can I make a
3 motion?

4 MR. EINGORN: To?

5 MS. MASON: To approve -- what was it?

6 MR. EINGORN: To grant the requested
7 variances with the conditions?

8 MS. MASON: Yes.

9 MR. EINGORN: We have a motion. Do we
10 have a second on that motion?

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Second.

12 MR. EINGORN: We have a motion and a
13 second. We'll take a roll-call vote. Chairman
14 Hance.

15 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Yes.

16 MR. EINGORN: Vice-Chairman Still.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Yes.

18 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Rivera.

19 MS. RIVERA: Yes.

20 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Spencer.

21 MS. SPENCER: Yes.

22 MR. EINGORN: And Ms. Mason.

23 MS. MASON: Yes.

24 MR. EINGORN: Having five in favor and
25 none opposed, the motion passes. Congratulations,

1 sir. Good luck with your project.

2 MR. ECCLESTON: Thank you. I appreciate
3 it. Have a good one.

4 MR. EINGORN: You too.

5 So next we'll take Dunamis Life Church
6 Good evening.

7 MS. JAMES: Good evening. Sonia James on
8 behalf of Dunamis Life Church located at 1300 Thurman
9 Street, the Whitman Park neighborhood. This is an
10 application for c(1) bulk variances only relating to
11 two existing storage shed used in connection with the
12 church's food pantry. Shed 1's frontage is
13 deficient. And Shed 2's side setback is deficient.
14 We will have testimony tonight from Pastor Saki
15 Wilcox.

16 MR. EINGORN: Would you raise your right
17 hand, please.

18 - - -

19 SAKI WILCOX, having first been duly
20 sworn/affirmed, was examined and testified as
21 follows:

22 - - -

23 MR. EINGORN: Please state your name and
24 address for the record.

25 MS. WILCOX: Saki Wilcox. My address is

1 508 Mackin Drive, Cherry Hill.

2 MR. EINGORN: Thank you.

3 MS. JAMES: Pastor Wilcox, what is your
4 role at Dunamis Life Church?

5 MS. WILCOX: So I am the co-founder and
6 the senior pastor of Dunamis Life Church. We've been
7 in Whitman Park for about 20 years.

8 MS. JAMES: And how long have you been
9 with the church?

10 MS. WILCOX: Twenty years.

11 MS. JAMES: Are you familiar with the
12 property at 1300 Thurman Street?

13 MS. WILCOX: Yes. So the church sits on
14 the corner. We have a rear yard but we sit right on
15 the corner. There's a marquee and we have worship
16 services there and we also run a food pantry out of
17 our lower level. The food pantry is an agency of the
18 South Jersey Food Pantry under our other nonprofit
19 which is Safe Passage Community Technology Center
20 which is pretty much a community development outreach
21 portion of the church of Dunamis Life Church and Safe
22 Passage Community Technology Center.

23 MS. JAMES: Related to the food pantry,
24 can you describe how the increase during the COVID
25 Pandemic affected your distribution to the

1 community?

2 MS. WILCOX: Sure. So Safe Passage
3 originated just as a STEM organization founded by two
4 engineers, myself and my partner and worship leader,
5 Dr. Bolton. So it was started as a STEM organization
6 we did provide. So addressing the kids, obviously
7 hunger became an issue that's impacting their
8 education and their learning. So over time, summer
9 meal plan and one thing led to another and we became
10 a full-blown agency with the food pantry of South
11 Jersey. So coming out of -- prior to COVID, we were
12 only open the fourth Saturday of the month. So like
13 80 people or 80 households, I should say.

14 Coming out of COVID they had a pandemic
15 relief grant and funding. We were funded and so we
16 went from once a month on a Saturday to every week
17 during the week. We were open twice initially during
18 the early onset of COVID. So that utilized the
19 entire lower level of the church now. So with that
20 funding came equipment, the Capacity Building. And
21 the sheds were funded all through the grants with
22 regard to that to increase our capacity.

23 So right now the biggest impact we have
24 with the sheds is, the fact that it allows us to --
25 the one shed, Shed #1 in the picture, that is the one

1 that is slated to have temperature control because we
2 want to be able to be compliant with like regular --
3 as if the can goods or shelf stable was in our lower
4 level. So it has to be temperature-controlled. It
5 has to be finished out; pest control; all of that.
6 So we're waiting to get that aspect. We've already
7 been funded for that work.

8 The grant allowed us to purchase the
9 shed and install it but not complete the work until
10 like the electrical can be added to that. But it
11 came out of the demand from going to -- I think we
12 were servicing like over almost 300 families a month
13 now as opposed to 84. And that's like 300 kids and
14 almost 200-some adults that could come every week.

15 MS. JAMES: Now, you refer to the
16 picture. I'm handing you what was included in your
17 application. Can you describe -- how are you
18 familiar with this picture personally?

19 MS. WILCOX: The rear yard of the church
20 and it kind of sits up. We have steps that go up.
21 That's the wrought iron. There's almost like a
22 three-foot from the sidewalk up. So it's a yard that
23 you have to step up into. But it's not that large.
24 The first one was installed from the initial Pandemic
25 Grant and the second one was installed last year

1 under an additional Capacity Building Grant.

2 You know, hindsight, we probably should
3 have had the forethought of needing a permit to
4 install them. But the permit never came up with the
5 installer or the contractor, because all the other
6 permits the contractors brought it up and they helped
7 us prepare it. So I definitely take responsibility
8 for that hindsight. But they're fitted in a way that
9 we could get anything out of them with the equipment
10 to unload the pallets in the truck and then the
11 equipment is also in there. We have equipment to
12 process our lines really well and things like that.
13 That helps with winterization too.

14 MS. JAMES: Referring to Shed 1 in the
15 picture which is the left side of the picture, can
16 you explain why it was positioned here and any
17 future plans that necessitated staying in the
18 position that it is in?

19 MS. WILCOX: This was the first one that
20 was installed so we put it there so that we could
21 still use the yard for other things for like a
22 barbecue, a back-yard barbecue and some of the other
23 things that we were doing. So as the pantry grew,
24 the congregation, we've foregone that now because of
25 the demand. So now if we do a barbecue, it's the

1 L-shaped on the block. We have tents, barbecues,
2 everything now.

3 If we do a barbecue, it's kind of a
4 smaller thing but it's around the side of it. That
5 was installed first and it was still to have
6 utility. And this was the only way to fit it so they
7 can't -- they're perpendicular to each other. So
8 pulling them forward makes the door and everything
9 in utility of its kind, we spaced it as best we can
10 for outdoor use.

11 MS. JAMES: And Shed #2, that was the
12 second shed that installed?

13 MS. WILCOX: Yes.

14 MS. JAMES: So going back to Shed #1,
15 what else in the yard inhibits you from relocating
16 Shed #1?

17 MS. WILCOX: We have an underground oil
18 tank so the cap to refuel the oil is to the left of
19 Shed #1 so that can't go -- I would eventually
20 impede that.

21 MS. JAMES: Are there any plans
22 additional to Shed #1 would that also inhibit moving
23 the shed as you expand the use of Shed #1?

24 MS. WILCOX: I don't know where to go if
25 it goes forward but then it's right up against that.

1 We've tried -- actually one of the things with
2 installers, they had to make sure it would fit. So
3 we put them where we thought they could fit and what
4 they could fit. You can move it in the gradient and
5 level it off. That was the other impact there. So
6 it's kind of hard to move them from a utility
7 perspective. Obviously, they're not on concrete
8 slabs.

9 MS. JAMES: What was the expense for
10 Shed #1 and Shed #2?

11 MS. WILCOX: They were about \$5,000 a
12 piece.

13 MS. JAMES: Do you know the approximate
14 installation cost of the sheds?

15 MS. WILCOX: About \$600.00.

16 MS. JAMES: Per shed?

17 MS. WILCOX: Yes.

18 MS. JAMES: Per shed?

19 MS. WILCOX: Yes.

20 MS. JAMES: Where did the church receive
21 these monies to pay for them?

22 MS. WILCOX: The South Jersey Food
23 Bank.

24 MS. JAMES: Was it a grant?

25 MS. WILCOX: Yes, it was a grant.

1 MS. JAMES: It was a grant?

2 MS. WILCOX: Yes, it was funds.

3 MS. JAMES: So it was not funds that were
4 readily available by the church?

5 MS. WILCOX: No. It was all funded.

6 MS. JAMES: Going back to the picture.

7 Can you describe your neighbors as it relates to the
8 sheds?

9 MS. WILCOX: So behind Shed #1 is
10 another property that's adjacent. So actually we
11 just -- Safe Passage just purchased that property.
12 That property was owned by a resident that was there
13 for 30 years. We've been there 20 years. The
14 granddaughter inherited it. And just out of
15 collaboration for vision for the community, they
16 allowed us to purchase it from them, from the
17 estate. So we now own that property. What's behind
18 Shed #2 is our only neighbor. And they're food
19 pantry participants and we know them. That's the
20 only neighboring neighbor that's adjacent to the
21 church or the church property.

22 MR. EINGORN: Are both sheds up against
23 the fence?

24 MS. WILCOX: There's about a foot,
25 foot-and-a-half. You could walk behind it.

1 MR. EINGORN: But there's fencing to the
2 rear of each of them?

3 MS. WILCOX: Yes it's fenced all around.
4 Behind Shed #1 is chain link and it's chain link
5 behind Shed #2 as well. And there's wrought iron in
6 the front.

7 MS. JAMES: Has there been any issues of
8 noise, traffic or anything like that with neighbors
9 having complaints?

10 MS. WILCOX: No, not that we know of.

11 MS. JAMES: How do your neighbors
12 receive the food pantry and the use your property?

13 MS. WILCOX: It's like walking up to a
14 grocery store. Because one of the things that the
15 space has allowed us, is we can get fresh produce.
16 Last year we got another grant that gave us a brand
17 new Ford 350 cargo van. We branded it. It actually
18 says food pantry. I would have to probably pull up a
19 phone as I have a picture on my phone. So they see
20 the vans.

21 So now that gave us the ability to not
22 just depend on food delivery to us. Right? Now we
23 can go to them and pick up extra produce and we go
24 to -- they also have a protocol called rescue. You
25 know how grocery stores and Walmart don't want to

1 throw out their stuff so we go to Sprouts. So now
2 the fresh produce, milk, cheese, eggs, all of those
3 things, are a big aspect because now we can provide
4 more space and put more can goods on the shelf staple
5 stuff to the shed.

6 MS. JAMES: What shed would that be?

7 MS. WILCOX: Shed #1 is going to be the
8 temperature-controlled one. And then Shed #2 will
9 remain equipment.

10 MS. JAMES: And why is it important for
11 you to keep the sheds where they are?

12 MS. WILCOX: I don't see where to put
13 them. We would probably have to come up with a
14 financial thing to have an installer come back and
15 shift and move them. We tried the feasibility to get
16 them in there initially. It's challenging but...

17 MS. JAMES: And that additional expense
18 would be a hardship to the church?

19 MS. WILCOX: Yes. Because everything
20 else is -- like most of the stuff we get, we don't
21 pay for any of the food or anything. It came all in
22 the Capacity Building. Other than the electricity,
23 we have like commercial refrigerator freezers that we
24 didn't even have before 2020. We didn't have any of
25 that.

1 MS. MASON: I have a question as it
2 pertains to the application. It's talking about
3 electrical upgrades, right?

4 MS. WILCOX: Yes.

5 MS. MASON: What's the material of the
6 sheds? Are they wood; are they --

7 MS. WILCOX: They're wood. You walk in,
8 it smells just like -- well, the newest one does
9 smell like fresh pine wood like plywood. The one
10 that's going to be electrical, it has to be fully
11 insulated and sheetrocked.

12 MS. MASON: That's my next question.

13 MS. WILCOX: Because it has to meet --

14 MS. MASON: What does that look like, an
15 electrical upgrade? Outlets? All of that is
16 involved for the shed?

17 MS. WILCOX: For Shed #1 -- well, Shed #2
18 is just going to have a light to turn on. Shed #1 is
19 going to have a window unit; temperature-controlled
20 heat and AC; one of those split ones that can do heat
21 and air on the side. And it's going to have a light
22 and just one electrical outlet. But it has to be
23 sheetrocked because the Food Bank of South Jersey
24 requires pest control. Like it has to look like
25 it's --

1 CHAIRMAN HANCE: It's code?

2 MS. WILCOX: Yeah. The other one is just
3 going to remain the way it is. It's equipment. I
4 don't know if that helps.

5 MR. EINGORN: Any other questions?

6 MS. RIVERA: Do you put can goods in Shed
7 #2 and stuff like that?

8 MS. WILCOX: Pardon me?

9 MS. RIVERA: In Shed #2, you put can
10 goods as well?

11 MS. WILCOX: No. That's not compliant
12 right now. That's going to be the equipment shed.
13 Yeah, that's equipment.

14 MS. RIVERA: When you say equipment, what
15 kind of equipment?

16 MS. WILCOX: We have dollies; we have
17 tables. We have -- you know the little pylons you go
18 to like Chick-fil-A that do the lines, we have that
19 too to have a line. We try to be efficient so people
20 don't have to stand in line three and four hours at
21 our place. There's a lot of food pantries in Camden
22 and we are a preferred one to the point where when
23 that weather came through, we were shut down.

24 We were closed for two weeks just because
25 of the snow and shoveling. And people were

1 distraught. Like one person said, why aren't you
2 guys open? I said, the mounds of snow, it was hard
3 as a rock. I said, we have no where to park; can't
4 get the van in. So, yeah, it's -- they've become
5 accustomed to it and we try to provide them with
6 better service than what they're normally used to get
7 as far as likeliness and all of that.

8 CHAIRMAN HANCE: So Shed #1 is going to
9 have all your power?

10 MS. WILCOX: Both will have lights but --

11 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Both will have power but
12 the main one will be Shed #1?

13 MS. WILCOX: Yes. Shed #1 is going --

14 CHAIRMAN HANCE: And you're going to put
15 your freezer in there and your --

16 MS. WILCOX: No. It's only for shelves
17 for like --

18 CHAIRMAN HANCE: For storage?

19 MS. WILCOX: Yeah, like can goods. And
20 sometimes we have pampers and stuff like that so we
21 have an overflow of that. But stuff can't be -- they
22 have to be off the floor. There's a spec that we
23 have to -- so the Food Bank of South Jersey is going
24 to have to inspect it. And they're going to inspect
25 every year with everything else in our inspection.

1 So we'll have to get Western to come out. And when
2 they do the main building, they'll do that and so
3 forth and so on.

4 MR. EINGORN: Open to the public?

5 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Yes.

6 MR. EINGORN: Anybody here tonight in the
7 public that like to be heard on the application
8 regarding 1300 Thurman Street, a request for bulk
9 variances for two sheds? Hearing none, seeing none,
10 we'll close the public portion.

11 Counsel, do you have any closing
12 argument?

13 MS. JAMES: Very quickly if I may to
14 wrap. This is not a use variance. It's just a
15 permitted use. The sheds were installed during
16 COVID-19 due to increased demand for food
17 distribution and have served hundreds of residents.
18 The lot is approximately 40-by-100 and already
19 approved with a church building.

20 There's no practical conforming location
21 to relocate the sheds. The sheds are modest,
22 well-maintained and have existed since 2020 with no
23 complaints or negative impact. The church has also
24 acquired adjacent property mitigating setback
25 concerns. This application seeks to legalize an

1 existing condition that benefits the community.
2 Clearly, we respectfully request approval of the bulk
3 variances.

4 MR. EINGORN: Thank you.

5 So the Board has heard the testimony
6 regarding the lot size, the sheds and their usage and
7 the church and its mission. So the Board should do a
8 discussion of the Positive and Negative Criteria for
9 the c(1) bulk variances and make a motion.

10 CHAIRMAN HANCE: I think it's very
11 positive. This is something that Camden needs. Not
12 only Camden but around the world. People are hungry;
13 children are hungry. It actually helps out the
14 stores too because if there's spillage, they don't
15 throw it in the trash. They give it to someone that
16 can use it.

17 So I think it's very positive and is
18 well-needed in Camden. I actually went past the food
19 pantry, Urban Promise and they had it together. It
20 was nice; people were in line; they got service; they
21 were very grateful for it. And this is what we need
22 right now. We need to come together.

23 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: I think they're
24 enhancing what they already do. I think that's what
25 makes it a little easiest for me to understand

1 because it's something they're already doing.
2 They're just enhancing what they already do; making
3 it a lot easier for access; making it a lot easier
4 for distribution.

5 MS. MASON: Yeah, I am familiar with the
6 Food Pantry. It does well. And one thing that folks
7 have a hard time with is storage and being able to
8 keep the food fresh. Because it's one thing to be
9 able to give the food. But you want to make sure
10 that it's maintained and that you're giving them
11 fresh food. So being able to have that temperature
12 control which is what the application is about, I
13 think that, you know, I would say is a good thing.

14 And to continue what they're doing and to
15 make sure that they're providing fresh food. And I
16 commend you guys for the work that you're doing as
17 well and the work in getting those grants. Because I
18 also know how that is as well and going through that
19 process to be able to get the food, get the pantry
20 and all of that. I commend you guys for that.

21 MR. EINGORN: Is there a motion?

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Motion to pass.

23 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Second.

24 MR. EINGORN: We'll take a roll-call
25 vote. Chairman Hance.

1 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Yes.

2 MR. EINGORN: Vice-Chairman Still.

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Yes.

4 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Rivera.

5 MS. RIVERA: Yes.

6 MR. EINGORN: Ms. Spencer.

7 MS. SPENCER: Yes.

8 MR. EINGORN: And Ms. Mason.

9 MS. MASON: Yes.

10 MR. EINGORN: Having five in favor and
11 none opposed, the motion passes. Congratulations.

12 MS. WILCOX: Thank you.

13 MR. EINGORN: Thanks for coming in.

14 The last thing that we have is Adoption
15 of a Resolution from February for Glassy Brown
16 Cookies, granting bulk variance approval at 1250
17 Haddon Avenue. Chairman Hance, Ms. Rivera and
18 Ms. Mason can vote on a motion. Do we have a motion
19 to adopt the Resolution?

20 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Motion to adopt.

21 MR. EINGORN: Do we have a second?

22 MS. MASON: Second.

23 MR. EINGORN: We'll take a roll-call
24 vote. Chairman Hance.

25 CHAIRMAN HANCE: Yes.

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MR. EINGORN: Ms. Rivera.

MS. RIVERA: Yes.

MR. EINGORN: And Ms. Mason.

MS. MASON: Yes.

MR. EINGORN: Having three in favor and none opposed, the motion passes. We need a motion to adjourn.

VICE-CHAIRMAN STILL: Motion to adjourn.

MS. MASON: Second.

MR. EINGORN: All in favor?

THE BOARD: Ayes.

MR. EINGORN: So moved.

- - -

*** (Meeting concluded at 6:20 p.m.) ***

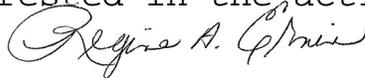
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2
3
4 I HEREBY CERTIFY that I am a Certified Court
5 Reporter and Notary Public.

6 I FURTHER CERTIFY that the witness was sworn
7 to testify to the truth.

8 I FURTHER CERTIFY that the foregoing is, to
9 the best of my ability, a true and accurate
10 transcript of the testimony taken stenographically by
11 me at the time, place, and date hereinbefore set
12 forth.

13 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither a relative,
14 employee, attorney or counsel to any of the
15 parties to the action, nor a relative or employee of
16 such attorney or counsel and that I am not
17 financially interested in the action.

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supervision of the certifying reporter.)

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