



TOWN OF  
**BEEKMAN**  
*New York*

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**Town of Beekman Zoning Board of Appeals  
Minutes of February 3, 2026**

The following members were present:

Chairman: Cristian Hanganu  
Stella Slattery  
Linda Porter  
Colleen Hayes  
David Garland

Town Attorney – Joe Eriole  
Secretary – Sheryl Discher

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 PM.

The Chair welcomed attendees and announced the location of emergency exits. All attendees were invited to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Hearing**

**Applicant:** Standke Pole Barn – Area and Height Variance - Continuance  
**Property Address:** 15 Walker Road  
**Grid Number:** 6759-00-100442  
**Zoning District:** R-90

**Relief Requested:**

- **Square Footage Variance:**
  - Proposed structure: 60 ft x 88 ft (approx. 4,800 sq. ft.)
  - Code allows accessory structure up to 25% of principal structure (approx. 478 sq. ft.)
  - Applicant requesting relief of approximately 4802 sq. ft. beyond allowable percentage.
- **Height Variance:**
  - Proposed height: 24 ft
  - Height exceeds principal structure height but remains under 35 ft maximum.
  - Relief requested due to elevation differences.

**Submission of Additional Materials**

The Board acknowledged receipt of:

- Photographs and measurements confirming principal structure height (approximately 24 ft total; 20 ft to flat roof).
- Photographs of a 1,462.5 sq. ft. barn located at applicant's primary residence.

- Four examples of larger accessory structures within the Town for Board consideration.

### **Board Review of Comparable Structures**

The Board discussed the four examples provided by the applicant:

- Three of the four structures are located within agricultural districts.
- The fourth (227 Dorn Road) is a horse barn built in 1991, prior to adoption of the Town's Master Plan and current zoning provisions.

Board members expressed that:

- Agricultural buildings in agricultural districts are not directly comparable to residential accessory structures in the R-90 district.
- Pre-Master Plan approvals carry different context.
- The proposed accessory structure is more than double the size of the principal residence, raising concerns.

The Board emphasized its responsibility to balance:

- The benefit to the applicant
- Against potential detriment to the health, safety, and welfare of the community
- Consistency with the Master Plan
- Neighborhood character
- Precedent-setting implications

### **Applicant Presentation**

The applicant clarified:

- The provided examples were not intended as direct comparables, but to demonstrate that large accessory structures exist in the Town.
- The property consists of approximately 17 heavily wooded acres.
- The structure would not be visible from public roads and would be minimally visible to neighbors.
- The proposed barn would consolidate existing personal equipment and hobby materials currently stored in multiple locations.
- No commercial manufacturing activities are proposed for the structure.
- No additional fuel storage beyond normal residential equipment (e.g., tractor fuel, lawn equipment) is proposed.
- The applicant is willing to comply with all building and fire codes and reasonable screening conditions.
- Heating method has not been finalized and would comply with applicable codes.

The applicant stated that:

- A smaller structure would not adequately accommodate existing equipment and hobby workspace needs.
- Equipment currently used for personal woodworking and home improvements already generates noise comparable to normal residential activity.

## **Board Discussion**

### **Key Points Raised:**

#### **Substantial Variance**

- The Board acknowledged the variance request is substantial in size.
- Concerns were raised regarding the structure being significantly larger than the principal dwelling.

#### **Neighborhood Character**

- Applicant and counsel argued that due to lot size and seclusion, the structure would not alter neighborhood character.
- The Board discussed whether residential accessory structures of this magnitude are consistent with R-90 zoning expectations.

#### **Future Implications**

- Board members expressed concern about future property subdivision or resale.
- Questions were raised regarding potential future uses of the structure.

#### **Environmental & Safety Considerations**

- Discussion included:
  - Potential fuel storage
  - Heating methods
  - Fire access via long driveway
  - Noise from tools and hobby equipment
- Applicant stated:
  - No commercial manufacturing would occur.
  - All work is personal hobby use.
  - Compliance with fire and building codes would be maintained.

#### **Alternative Solutions**

- Board inquired whether the applicant could:
  - Reduce the size further
  - Store items elsewhere
  - Relocate structure placement

Applicant indicated:

- 4,800 sq. ft. is already a reduction.
- Smaller size would not meet storage needs.
- Proposed placement minimizes visibility.

#### **Legal Counsel Commentary**

Applicant's counsel reiterated:

- The Board must apply the statutory balancing test.
- The benefit to the applicant outweighs potential detriment.

- Given the lot size, topography, and vegetation, no adverse impact to neighborhood character would result.
- Zoning Administrator submitted a letter recommending approval.

Town Counsel reminded the Board:

- All variance factors must be weighed, not solely visibility.
- The substantial nature of the variance remains a relevant consideration.

### **Board Discussion**

The Board continued deliberation regarding the requested variances for the proposed 4,800 sq. ft. accessory structure.

### **Substantiality of Variance**

Board members emphasized:

- The requested square footage variance represents approximately ten times what is permitted under Town Code.
- This was described as one of the most substantial variance requests presented to the Board.
- Granting such a large variance could create precedent concerns for future applications.

### **Self-Created Hardship**

The Board noted:

- The need for the structure at the proposed size was considered self-created.
- Alternatives were discussed in prior meetings.
- The applicant stated that smaller structures or divided structures would not meet their needs.

### **Neighborhood Character**

Board members expressed concern that:

- Similar-sized accessory structures in Town are typically either agricultural or commercial.
- The proposed structure, while labeled a barn, is comparable in scale to a small warehouse (approximately 5,000–15,000 sq. ft.).
- Even if screened by trees and not visible from the road, approval could impact future applications elsewhere in Town.

### **Environmental & Community Impact**

Concerns discussed included:

- Potential noise from equipment.
- Future unknown uses.
- Impact to surrounding properties.
- Long-term community character considerations.

The applicant reiterated:

- The structure would be used solely for personal hobbies and storage.

- No commercial activity would occur.
- Truck traffic would be limited to personal vehicles and construction.
- The building would be well-maintained and aesthetically appropriate.

Applicant's counsel reiterated:

- Any future improper use would be subject to zoning enforcement.
- No current neighbors formally objected.
- The Code Enforcement Officer submitted a letter recommending approval.
- The balancing test weighs in favor of approval given lot size, topography, and seclusion.

### **Public Comment**

The Board opened the floor for public comment.

#### **Teresa Rahilly at 21 Walker Road**

A neighboring property owner expressed concerns regarding:

- Long-term impact on resale value of her property.
- Potential assessment changes.
- Water runoff and stream quality.
- Driveway proximity and setback distance.
- Future neighborhood character.

Counsel clarified:

- Property assessments are based on individual property value, not directly on neighboring improvements.
- The proposed building setback from property lines is approximately 150 feet.
- Driveway modifications must remain within property boundaries and legal easements.

Public comment was then closed.

### **Final Board Deliberations**

Board members restated that:

- The size of the requested variance remains the primary concern.
- Granting such a significant variance may create difficulty denying similar future applications.
- The Board must apply the five statutory variance factors as written in the Town Code.
- Alternatives, such as multiple smaller structures or partial open-sided structures, could be considered in a future application.

### **Motions & Votes**

#### **Square Footage Variance**

**Request:** Variance to allow approximately 4,800 sq. ft. accessory structure.

**Motion:** To grant the square footage variance.

**Second:** Received.

**Roll Call Vote:**

- Nay – Stella Slattery
- Nay – Linda Porter
- Nay – Cristian Hanganu
- Nay – David Garland
- Nay – Colleen Hayes

**Result:** Motion failed. Variance denied.

**Height Variance**

**Request:** 10-foot height variance for proposed structure.

After discussion, Board determined it would be inconsistent to approve the height variance given denial of the square footage variance.

**Motion:** To grant height variance.

**Second:** Received.

**Roll Call Vote:**

- Nay – Stella Slattery
- Nay – Linda Porter
- Nay – Cristian Hanganu
- Nay – David Garland
- Nay – Colleen Hayes

**Result:** Motion failed. Variance denied.

**Resolution**

Town Counsel was authorized to draft a written resolution memorializing the Board's findings and denial of both variances.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous approval.

Meeting adjourned.