

**BELMAR ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
APRIL 23, 2026**

PRESENT: Charles Ross, Mark Fitzgerald, Phil Greig, Tony Almeida, Barry Lubin, Mark O’Neill, Clare Hayner and Jim DiOrio

ABSENT: Mark Spagnuolo and Board Secretary April Claudio

ALSO, PRESENT: Board Attorney Kevin Kennedy, Esq., Acting Board Secretary Anna Orgeron

The Board Attorney said that adequate notice of this meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment was sent by email to our official newspapers, the Coast Star and the Asbury Park Press and by posting a copy of said notice at the Municipal Complex and on the Borough’s Website.

The Board Attorney advised that April Claudio, the Board Secretary (who also serves as the Borough Clerk) was not present at the meeting because earlier in the day, she, unknowingly, received an award from the New Jersey Municipal Clerk’s Association for being the Municipal Clerk of the year. There was a round of applause for April Claudio. The Board Attorney advised that the Borough Mayor, the Administrator, and the family of April Claudio attended the reception in support of April Claudio. The Board Members expressed congratulations for the Board Secretary, and thanked her for all the things she does, both as the Borough Clerk and as the Board Secretary.

Mr. Greig made a Motion to Approve the previously submitted March 26, 2026 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Mr. Lubin seconded the said Motion.

Tony Almeida, James DiOrio, Phillip Greig, Barry Lubin, Mark O’Neil, Charles Ross, and Clare Hayner voted to adopt the Minutes. (Chairman Mark Fitzgerald did not partake in the vote, as he was absent from the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting).

The Board Attorney read the highlights of the Gretskey Resolution, including the Plan revisions/Conditions associated therewith. Thereafter, Mr. Greig made a Motion to adopt the Resolution as presented. Ms. Hayner seconded the said Motion. The following Members voted to adopt the Resolution: Tony Almeida, James DiOrio, Phillip Greig, Barry Lubin, Mark O’Neil, Charles Ross, and Clair Hayner. (Chairman Mark Fitzgerald did not partake in the vote, as he was absent from the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting).

**Rotunno/Castello Property
416 14th Avenue
Belmar, NJ
Block 133, Lot 9.01**

The Board Attorney explained that the within Application was a continuation from the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting. The Chairman stated that while he would participate in the upcoming Hearing, he would not vote on the matter, as he was not present for the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting. As such, it was acknowledged that Alternate #1, Clair Hayner, would participate and vote on the said matter.

The Board Attorney explained that the Rotunno/Castello Public Hearing first commenced at the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting. The Board Attorney furthermore advised that at the aforesaid time, the Board Members expressed a need to have some of the Applicants’ technical information clarified/ revised. The Board Attorney furthermore explained that, at the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting, there was a request that the Applicants’ architect submit documentation and/or provide live testimony.

The Board Attorney marked the following items into the record as Evidence: Communication from the Applicants to the Borough of Belmar, dated April 13, 2026, introduced into Evidence as A-6; (The Board Attorney read the letter into the record). Architectural Plans, prepared by Ronald M. Schneider, dated November 26, 2025, last revised April 09, 2026, consisting of 2 pages, introduced into Evidence as A-7; Carol Castello was advised that she was sworn in at the March 26, 2026 Board Meeting and was still under oath. Miss Castello acknowledged the same. Ronald Schneider, Architect, was also sworn. Mr. Schneider indicated that his licenses, credentials, and certifications are current and up to date.

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The Applicants' architect verified the accuracy of the previously submitted calculations. (The architect indicated that he had reviewed the matter with Ted Bianchi, the Municipal Zoning Officer). Board Members indicated that the Application might also require a Variance for the covered porch on the second floor. After discussion, the Applicants formally requested the aforesaid Variance relief. Mr. Castello and the architect explained various aspects of the proposal. Board Members asked questions and made comments with respect thereto.

The matter was opened to the public. No members of the public presented any questions or comments in connection with the Application.

The Board Members commented on the many, many issues and delays which would have been created had the Plans not been updated/verified/clarified/corrected and voted upon. At the request of the Board Members, the Board Attorney reviewed a list of potential Conditions associated with the proposal. The Applicants and the architect agreed to the list of Conditions as read by the Board Attorney. After debate and discussion, Mr. Greig made a Motion to Conditionally Approve the subject Application, (with the noted Conditions). Ms. Hayner seconded the said Motion to Conditionally Approve the subject Application, (with the noted Conditions). Tony Almeida, James DiOrio, Phillip Greig, Barry Lubin, Mark O'Neil, Charles Ross, and Clair Hayner voted to Approve the subject Application, (with the noted Conditions). (Chairman Mark Fitzgerald did not partake in the vote, as he was absent from the initial Hearing on March 26, 2026 Board Meeting).

At the conclusion of the Rotunno/Castello vote, Board Member, Hayner, left the dais and vacated the room.

John & Sheila O'Connor
417 South Lake Drive
Belmar, NJ
Block 83, Lot 9

Michael Coskey, Esq. entered his appearance into the record, on behalf of the Applicants. The Chairman indicated that the Applicants had publicly Noticed the meeting to occur at 7:00PM, as opposed to 6:00PM. The Chairman discussed various options associated therewith. With the consent of the Applicants, the meeting continued.

The following Witnesses were sworn John O'Connor, Applicant; Sheila O'Connor, Applicant; Joseph D'Ambrose, Design Professional (who was not sworn in as an architect).

The following items were marked into the record as Evidence: Development Application, dated February 12, 2026, introduced into Evidence as A-1; Application Rider, introduced into Evidence as A-2; Borough of Belmar Application Checklist, introduced into Evidence as A-3; Floor Plans and Elevations, prepared by ARCH Design Studios, dated January 05, 2026, introduced into Evidence as A-4.

The Applicants indicated that they are the Owners of the property, having purchased the same in or about February of 2020. The Applicants indicated that there is a single-family home at the site, and that they live at the site. It was explained that the Applicants are proposing an approximate 180 SF addition at the site (36 SF addition on the first-floor and 144 SF addition on the second-floor). The Applicants' representatives testified about the irregular shape of the property. There was also a discussion regarding the undersized nature of the Lot, as well as the location of the existing structures on the site. The testimony indicated that all of the above issues complicated the ability of the Applicants to satisfy all prevailing Bulk requirements.

here was a discussion regarding that compliance with the Rear Yard Setback requirements would be very difficult to achieve. The testimony indicated that there is a need for increased living space at the site, particularly in light of the fact that one of the Applicants' children would be returning to the Belmar site, and would need her own bedroom, etc. The testimony and arguments presented indicated that there were no other real viable/functional locations on the site to host the proposed addition (other than what was set forth herein).

At or about 7:00PM, two (2) members of the public entered the Municipal Courtroom (where the Zoning board meeting was taking place).

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The Board Members took a break and officially stopped the meeting. The meeting reconvened at approximately 7:10PM. At the return of the meeting, a roll call was again taken.

The following Board Members were present for the continuation of the Hearing:

- A. Mr. Mark Fitzgerald, Chair
- B. Mr. Tony Almeida, Vice Chair
- C. Mr. James DiOrio, Board Member
- D. Mr. Phillip Greig, Board Member
- E. Mr. Barry Lubin, Board Member
- F. Mr. Mark O'Neil, Board Member
- G. Mr. Charles Ross, Board Member

At the reconvened meeting, the Applicants' Attorney indicated that the two (2) individuals who arrived at 7:00PM had no objections to the Application, but only had questions, and that the said questions were satisfactorily addressed.

At this time, the Board Chair advised that in 2021, the Belmar Zoning Board of Adjustment Conditionally Approved a different Application for the same Applicants, at the same site. However, some of the calculations and Coverages referenced in the 2021 Resolution of Conditional Approval seemed very different from the numbers/calculations associated with the most instant Application. Specifically, there were questions raised as to the accuracy of Building Coverage calculations, Impervious Coverage calculations, Setback Coverage calculations, and Floor Area Ratio Coverage calculations. There was confusion as to why/how the numbers were different, let alone so very different.

All present discussed the possibility of various reasons for the confusion – including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. General confusion;
- B. Potentially inaccurate information set forth on the previously Approved Plans;
- C. Potentially inaccurate information set forth on the most recently submitted Plans;
- D. Potentially inaccurate information set forth in the previously adopted Resolution of Conditional Approval;
- E. Potential confusion regarding the corner nature of the site, and the fact that the 2021 designation of the front and rear yard areas may be different from the 2026 designation of the front and rear yard areas;
- F. Recognition that perhaps the previously Approved project was “underbuilt”;

That notwithstanding, all present, including the Applicants and the Applicants' Attorney recognized the need to have the meeting adjourned so that the confusion could be further corrected and clarified. All present acknowledged that there would only be delays and problems if the Board Approved information only turned out to be inaccurate. Board Members also indicated that under no circumstances could they Approve Plans which were potentially inaccurate.

The matter was opened to the public. Bill McGrath, a neighboring property Owner, was sworn. Mr. McGrath indicated that he only attended the meeting because he had certain questions he wanted to be addressed. He further testified that his questions were addressed. He further testified that he had no objection to the Application, and that he would not be coming back to any adjourned meeting.

There was also a specific discussion regarding the Floor Area Ratio referenced in the 2021 Resolution, and the Floor Area Ratio referenced in the most recent Application. Board Members questioned how the Floor Area Ratio (which appears to be at a maximum) was not changing as a result of the within Application, notwithstanding that 180 SF of habitable space was going to be added to the house. All present acknowledged that the said issue needed to be clarified.

There was a discussion regarding the possibility of adjourning the Application to Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 6:00PM.

The Board Attorney advised that no further Notice would be required, if there was no material change to the Application or the initially submitted calculations/Coverages/ Setbacks, etc.

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However, if the calculations were materially changed, or if the nature of the Application materially changed, then, in that event, updated/new Notice (with the correct time) would need to be secured.

Upon questioning from the Board Attorney, John O'Connor, and Michael Coskey, Esq. agreed to extend the timeframe within which the Board had to act on the matter.

Mr. Almeida made a Motion to adjourn the O'Connor Hearing to **Thursday, May 28, 2026**, at **6:00PM**, with further Notice, only if necessary. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded the said Motion. Mark Fitzgerald, Tony Almeida, James DiOrio, Phillip Greig, Barry Lubin, Mark O'Neil, and Charles Ross voted to adjourn the Hearing date.

There was a brief discussion as to whether the general Zoning Board Application should be modified so as to include a question as to whether or not any prior Approvals/Denials have been issued with respect to a particular site. Some Members thought that such an idea would advance the general public interest. Some Members thought that such a request could be cumbersome and time consuming for Borough employees. No definitive action was taken in the said regard.

On Motion of Mr. Fitzgerald, and second of Mr. Almeida, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27PM. All present voted in favor of the adjournment.