

EGGLESTON & KRENZER ARCHITECTS, PC

The Trolley Bldg
1391 East Genesee Street
Skaneateles, New York 13152

August 28, 2025

Town of Skaneateles Planning Board and ZBA
24 Jordan Street, Skaneateles, NY 13152

Re: Eugene and Tracy Franchini, Area Variance, Special Permit and Site Plan Review
1417 Thornton Height
Tax Map# 057.-01-31.0

NARRATIVE

The Franchini property is 8,004 SF, 50 ft wide on a private road and has 64.4 lineal feet of shoreline in the RF District and Skaneateles Lake watershed. The majority of the lot has a moderate slope less than 12% with a steep bank that extends down to the lake. The lot has a two story, 4-bedroom dwelling that is 72.1 ft from the lake and 4.8 ft and 6.4 ft non-conforming side yards and a conforming front yard. The lake front has a 333 SF boathouse gravel area deck and stairs. The building footprint is 1,542 SF/19.3% whereas 6% is allowed. The living space is 1,759 SF/22.0% whereas 10% is allowed. The dwelling is in poor condition with a partial cellar that is failing. The interior structure is under sized and not code compliant. The retaining wall at the roadside is in good condition but the retaining walls and steps around the house are not in good condition. A new septic system has been designed and approved, placing a new leach area between the house and road. The ISC is 24.4% and TSC is 39.8%.

This application will remove the existing dwelling and construct a similar size, three-bedroom, two story dwelling with cellar foundation that will be used for storage and mechanical space in the same location as the existing dwelling. The front yard remains conforming and the side yards will be made less non-conforming. The lake yard will be increased; 73.3 ft for the house and 72.4 ft for the deck. A conforming 240 SF deck will be placed between the house the 50 ft shore line area, replacing the random walks and steps around the house. The failing impermeable retaining wall east of the house will be replaced in kind with a permeable modular masonry retaining wall. The total living space will be reduced to 1,726 SF (21.6%) and the building footprint will be reduced to 1,485 SF (18.6%). The resulting ISC will be 21.9% and the TSC 36.1%. Parking remains within the Thornton Heights Lane roadway. There will be no changes to the shoreline structures. There is no increase or new impermeable footprint created as a result of the project. The house remains within the original footprint and excess impermeable surfaces have been removed or changed to permeable structures.

Area variances are required for development on any lot with less than 20,000 SF and 75 ft of shoreline. Because this is a new structure and not a renovated structure, area variances are required for the lake yard setbacks, even though they are both less non-conforming. An variance is required for reducing to three bedrooms on a lot with 64.4 ft lake frontage whereas 75 ft is required for four bedrooms. Site Plan Review is required for disturbance greater than 200 SF within 200 feet of the lake and a Special Permit required for redevelopment on a lot with more than 10% ISC.

The ISC has been reduced to 22.2% and the owner is prepared to make a payment into the Town's Land and Development Rights Acquisition Fund for the balance of the land necessary to make the ISC 10%. The 1,775 SF ISC requires a 17,750 SF lot to be at 10% ISC. This is 9,746 SF of additional land and at \$1.09/SF would result in a payment of \$10,623.14 to the Town's LDRA Fund.

To control the storm water the house roof gutter downspouts will be tied into a drain that will be placed along the north property line and will drape over the steep bank and discharge at the bottom and spill onto large rocks to prevent erosion at the shoreline.

A temporary driveway of crushed stone on geo-fabric will be placed on the south side of the property for access to the construction site. Smaller scale equipment will be used for construction on this site. Silt fence will be placed below the disturbed area to prevent potential erosion.

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE

1. Install sediment logs/silt fence below work area, maintain during construction.
2. Mark the proposed septic area to prevent construction traffic and storage.
3. Remove the existing dwelling. (Fall 2026)
4. Excavate for the new foundation, removing soils from the site.
5. Construct foundation walls and first floor deck. Backfill against foundation.
6. Install retaining walls and storm drains. Install new septic tank and system.
7. Rough grade and spread straw mulch to winter over during construction.
8. After roof and fascia are complete, install roof gutters and tie into storm drain.
9. After siding and trim and decks are complete, finish grading, spread topsoil, seed and mulch over any disturbed areas. Water during dry periods.
10. After lawn is established, remove silt fence/sediment logs.

AREA VARIANCE CRITERIA

The following criteria should be considered in granting an area variance:

- 1) *Whether an undesirable change will be produced in the character of the neighborhood or a detriment to nearby properties will be created by the granting of the area variance.*

Granting the requested variances will not change the character of the neighborhood or be a detriment to nearby properties. The neighborhood is made up of small seasonal and year-round homes on small lots. The proposed redeveloped dwelling will have a smaller foot print and living area and be further from the lake than the existing dwelling. It remains in line with other homes and further back from the lake than the neighboring homes in Thornton Heights.

- 2) *Whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by some method, feasible for the applicant to pursue, other than an area variance.*

The benefit sought by the applicant can not be achieved by any method other than an area variance. Because the lot is less than 20,000 SF and 75 ft of shoreline, an area variance is required for most improvements. Maintaining a space for the septic system 100 ft from the lake prevents the house from being pushed back further from the lake. The building footprint and living space has been reduced to be less nonconforming.

- 3) *Whether the requested area variance is substantial.*

The requested variance is not substantial. Existing structures are allowed to be 60 ft from the lake, where as new construction are required to be 100 ft. The 73.3 house and 72.4 ft deck setback is an improvement of the current dwelling. The current condition of the cottage does not make it feasible to remodel. The lot being only 147 ft deep would allow for only a 17 ft deep dwelling and no place for septic. The side yards, number of bedrooms, living space and building footprint are less non-conforming than the existing structure.

- 4) *Whether the proposed variance will have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district.*

Granting the requested variances will not have an adverse effect on the physical or environmental conditions of the neighborhood. The ISC is being reduced by 2.2% and the TSC is being reduced to 3.8%. The house is being reduced from four bedrooms to three bedrooms. The septic is currently a drywell system and will be improved using the area between the parking and house and be further than 100 ft from the lake. The stormwater drainage from the house will be managed in a controlled manner to direct it to the bottom of the bank to prevent long term erosion of the bank. A contribution is being made to the Town's LDRA Fund for the ISC remaining above 10%.

- 5) *Whether the alleged difficulty was self-created, which shall be relevant to the decision of the Board but which shall not necessarily preclude the granting of the area variance.*

By virtue of making application, one can state that this is self created. The property has been owned by the same family for almost 60 years. The lot and dwelling have become non-conforming with changes in the zoning law over the years. The improvements to this lot will reduce seven non-conforming aspects of the property. Storm water management and erosion control will improve as a result of this work. Granting the variance will allow reasonable use of the property and be a substantial improvement for both the property and the neighborhood.



GRADING PLAN

SC.: 1"=10'-0"

SITE INFORMATION IS OBTAINED FROM SURVEY
DONE BY PAUL J. OLSZEWSKI, P.E., L.L.S. DATED 08/11/2025
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BY EGGLESTON & KRENZER
ARCHITECTS P.C.

architect

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1391 EAST GENESEE STREET
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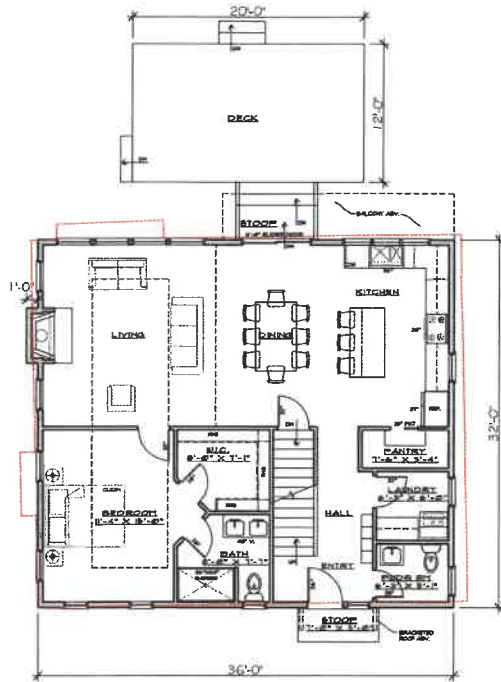
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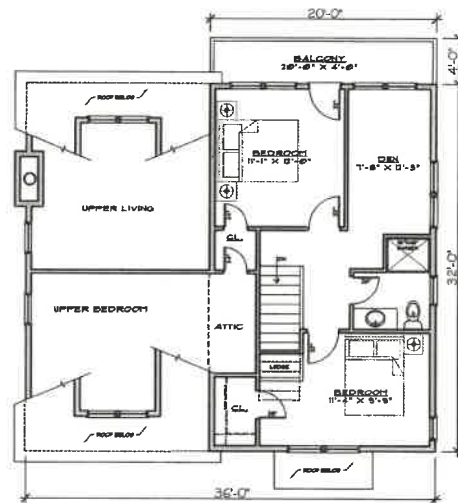
PROJ.: 20196

DATE:
29 AUG 2025

2 OF 4



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
3/16"=1'-0" 1,152 SF



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
3/16"=1'-0" 574 SF

architect

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NEW HOUSE

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3 OF 4



WEST ELEVATION

1/8" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION

1/8" = 1'-0"



EAST ELEVATION

1/8" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION

1/8" = 1'-0"

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4 OF 4