

EGGLESTON & KRENZER ARCHITECTS, PC
The Trolley Bldg
1391 East Genesee Street
Skaneateles, New York 13152

June 20, 2024

Revised August 20, 2024

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

Re: James Ranalli- Boat Canopy
Special Permit and Variance
1808 West Lake Road Tax Map # 062.-01-09.2

NARRATIVE

The property at 1808 West Lake Road is 2.9 acres, has 202.1 ft of lake frontage and has 212.8 ft road frontage on West Lake Road in the RF District and Skaneateles Lake watershed. It has a single-family dwelling with attached garage, porch, patio and pool with on-shore structures that include a shed, deck, gravel area and concrete boat ramp. It has an 8 ft wide x 97.3 ft long dock and concrete boat launch off shore. The on-shore structures total 1,025 SF and off-shore structures are 926 SF whereas 800 SF is allowed for each.

This revised application is to add 5 ft wide docks on permanent steel piles to create a 12 ft x 31 ft boat slip with a 14 ft x 31 ft canopy/boat hoist over it. The total off shore docks will be 982 SF (reduced 45 SF) whereas 800 SF is allowed and the boat canopy will be 434 SF (reduced 140 SF) whereas 300 SF is allowed. **Total off shore structures are 1,530 SF (reduced 185 SF) whereas 1,000 SF is allowed)**

The perimeter envelope is 5,129 SF. The side yard setback from the property line projected from the center line of the Lake is over 160 ft on the north and 12.5 ft on the south. The level of the dock is 866.5' which will remain the same for the dock added for the boat slip. The lake bottom is 8 ft below the dock at the east end. The boat canopy will be 15 ft above the high-water level.

A floating silt curtain will be placed around the dock and boat canopy area during construction and will be removed after the lake water has cleared. Most of the work will be done from a barge.

Site Plan Review is required for the additional dock and Special Permit is required for the boat canopy and perimeter envelope greater than 4,000 SF. An area variance is required for the size of the boat canopy, off-shore dock and total off0shore structures.

The applicant has selected a shorter boat to help reduce the size of the boat canopy necessary. These higher performance boats are expensive and require protection not only from zebra mussel infestation while being moored, and from wave action, being tied to a dock but most important, sun radiation which requires being under a canopy. While temporary canopies are an option, one large enough to hoist a 9,000 lb boat is large, bulky and difficult to place in and out of the lake during the restricted DEC fish reproduction

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cycles, before July 15 and after September 30. Furthermore, an attractive permanent boat canopy and dock eliminates the need for the metal temporary hoist from being stored on shore or on a dock for 6 months of the year, as well as temporary dock sections.

When drafting the current lakeshore regulations adopted in January 2024, a lot of thought went into the revised regulations, reaching out to multiple stakeholder. The new regulations were based on shore conditions and not size of lot. Small, non-conforming lots were given the same allowances as large conforming lots. This and the limited size of boat canopy was brought to the Town Board's attention at the multiple public hearing for the amended regulations with the final comments from Supervisor Aaron being that they need to start somewhere. Consideration needs to be taken for the application of the regulations as they are applied to large, conforming estate lots with shallow lake frontage.

Part of the consideration in drafting the regulations was the large multiple boat canopies and docks built on the lake prior to the Town having jurisdiction from NYS. The boat canopy on the property north of this property is an example. That boat canopy is 1,672 SF with 888 SF of dock for a total off shore structure of 2,560 SF. This application is modest by comparison with the boat canopy one quarter the size, and the total off shore structures almost half the size. The two properties are similar in lot size and lake frontage.

While the boat itself is 9'-6" x 30'-8" (291 SF), the boat slip should have at least 18" on each side to allow for bumpers and the hoist mechanism (13' x 33' = 429 SF). The columns supporting the canopy roof need to be at least 12' beyond the boat slip on three sides (15' x 36' = 540 SF). A narrower boat slip requires more precision navigation into the slip especially with wave action and cross currents from the wind. The applicant has reduced the boat slip to only 15" each side of the boat and the canopy to 12" on two sides. The dock structure on the south and west side of the boat canopy has been reduced from 6 ft to 5 ft placing the steel piles 3 ft apart. The closer the piles, the more difficult it is to install them. The double piles are necessary to add stability to the canopy columns as well as providing access to both sides of the boat. This can not be reduced any further.

Reverse engineering the 300 SF boat canopy limit, the canopy would be 13' x 23', boat slip 11' x 22' for an 8' x 21' boat. This is a smaller, less expensive boat, more suitable for a temporary hoist.

This property is in a neighborhood of large, conforming and oversized lots set in a shallow cove. There are large expansive, natural shore lines between neighboring off shore structures. The existing dock has a length of 97 ft out of necessity and was made DEC conforming 8 ft wide prior to the Town establishing area limits. The original property only had a 114 SF concrete boat launch for small water craft stored on shore.

The applicant could remove the concrete boat launch and reduce the existing dock to 6 ft by removing half the steel piles and resetting them 2 ft closer to the remaining piles. This would be a 257 SF reduction in dock area and 371 SF reduction in total off-shore structures, but still result in a non-conforming 1,159 SF total off-shore structures. Furthermore it would create excessive lake bed disturbance and cost for minimal benefit.

The applicant has made significant reductions to reduce the requested area variances and still accomplish the requirements for additional off shore structures.

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE

- 1) Install floating silt curtain and maintain during construction.
- 2) Install new steel piles and frame work for dock and boat canopy.
- 3) Install additional dock and boat canopy.
- 4) After lake water is clear, remove floating silt curtain.

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 year-round dwellings on large size lots, with long docks and boathouses or boat canopies. Because the water is shallow, this and the neighboring properties have existing docks in the range of 100 ft from shore. The off-shore dock and boat canopy will conform with the required side yard setback, height and water depth. **Significant reductions have been made in the requested variances with a 50% reduction in the requested boat canopy size.**

- 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 cannot be achieved by any method other than an area variance. The lake is shallow and the existing dock needed to be 97 ft from the lake line to achieve 6.5 ft of water depth (3.5 ft during low water), making the existing off-shore structures greater than 800 SF. The boat **selection is reduced to 30.5 ft long including a swim platform** and needs a boat slip that is 12 ft wide and 31 ft long. The resulting boat canopy **has been reduced to 14' x 31'** which is 434 SF

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

The requested variance is not substantial. **The off-shore dock has been reduced to 982 SF (182 SF variance) and total off shore structures reduced to 1,530 SF or 530 SF larger than allowed**, the proposed additional dock is only 170 SF larger than the current area. The excess area is due to the 97 ft length **required** over the shallow lake bed. This is one of the first boat canopy applications of the amended shoreline regulations that set the maximum size of a boat canopy at 300 SF. The use of the regulation has not been in place long enough to understand its practical application. The applicant has a larger boat that needs the larger boat canopy size. **Compared to the allowed size of boat canopy, only an 8 ft x 21 ft boat would tightly fit under a compliant canopy.** Compared to the lot size that exceeds a conforming size lot by 50%, the size of the off shore structures are not out of line and have been concentrated in one area.

- 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. This is a larger lot on a shallow portion of the lake shore and needs the extra area to be functional similar to neighboring properties. Having a permanent boat canopy eliminates the twice a year disturbance of the lake bed putting in and pulling out a seasonal boat hoist and canopy during critical fish reproduction periods. The dock and canopy provide some shading of the lake that is desirable to some fish species. **Storing a large temporary boat hoist on shore or on the dock for 6 months is unsightly. While reducing the requested variance, removing the concrete boat launch and rebuilding the dock to 6 ft wide would create needless disturbance of the lake bed.**

- 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 existing off-shore structures became non-conforming with recent changes in the zoning law. The construction of the boat slip and canopy is a one-time disturbance of the lake bed and is not out of scale with the larger size lot or neighborhood **which is set within a cove and not projecting into the main area of the lake. The applicant has selected a smaller boat and reduced the boat slip and canopy to the minimum size practical and still be functional. If necessary, the applicant will remove the concrete boat launch to further reduce to total off shore structures.**



3 OF 3