Present: John Trefethen, Chair
Stuart Siegel, Member
Brian Forestal, Member
Also present: Emma Snellings, Assistant Town Planner

Call the Meeting to Order
Mr. Trefethen called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Mr. Trefethen stated that the meeting is being recorded and broadcast by WACA and explained that the meeting is being held virtually due to the current social distancing regulations. Mr. Trefethen shared how members of the public can access the meeting.

11 Cedar Hill Road Variance Public Hearing
Mr. Trefethen opened the public hearing by reading the legal notice, and reviewed the bylaws that apply to this case.

Mike Kotch, applicant, presented the proposed addition and the reasons for requesting the variance. Mr. Kotch is seeking to extend the front setback non-conformity. The RA district front setback is 40 feet, and the house currently encroaches on that setback requirement. The addition will be off the left hand corner of the house, coming out 12 feet and 18 feet across. Mr. Kotch noted that the site plan shows the measurement from the house to the fence line, however there is additional land between the fence and the curb. The addition will not block any traffic sight lines. Mr. Trefethen noted that the lot in question is smaller than the required lot size for the zoning district. Mr. Siegel asked whether the applicant considered other locations for the addition. Don Chemini, project architect, replied that putting the addition on the back of the house was not possible due to work done on the house in 2016. Mr. Siegel asked if the family room could be put in the basement, to which Mr. Chemini replied that the ceilings are too low for that use.

Mr. Forestal asked if there has been any public comment or feedback on the proposed project. Mr. Kotch replied that, in informal talks in the neighborhood, he had not encountered any opposition. Ms. Snellings stated that the Planning Department has not received any public comment on this project. Mr. Trefethen stated that he drove by the site and agreed that the traffic sight lines would not be impacted. Ms. Snellings displayed the proposed and existing building elevations on screen. Mr. Kotch shared that they want to be respectful of the existing conditions of the neighborhood, and is looking for the variance in order to stay in the neighborhood.

Mr. Trefethen opened the hearing to public comment. Mark Dassoni asked if the second floor would be in the same frame as the first floor. Mr. Trefethen stated that the addition is two stories and will be level with the existing house, which Mr. Chemini confirmed. Mr. Dassoni asked if the driveway will be impacted by the addition. Mr. Kotch shared that there will be no impact on the existing driveway.
Mr. Trefethen started the discussion by stating that variances are difficult to obtain because the legal standards are quite high, and that the variance must be necessary because of soil conditions, shape and topography effecting the lot. Mr. Trefethen stated that it is an unusual lot, because the front setback and lot size are non-conforming, and the shape is unusual. One of the grounds to consider granting a variance is shape and topography, and when Mr. Trefethen observed the neighborhood, it appeared that the shape of this lot is unique in the neighborhood. Mr. Forestal agreed that the size and shape of the lot are appropriate reasons to grant a variance, and while the addition increases the front setback non-conformity, it is not too close to street, and while the setback will be half the required distance, the lot size is half the required area as well. Mr. Siegel concurred that a variance would be appropriate in this case. Mr. Trefethen asked that a draft decision be prepared by Ms. Snellings in preparation for the next meeting.

Mr. Forestal motioned, and Mr. Siegel seconded, to continue the public hearing to Tuesday, May 26 at 7PM, which passed with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Trefethen voted aye.
Mr. Forestal voted aye.
Mr. Siegel voted aye.

Minutes Approval
The Board reviewed the meeting minutes from April 14, 2020. Mr. Forestal motioned, and Mr. Siegel seconded, to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2020 meeting which passed with the following roll call vote:

John Trefethen: Aye
Stuart Siegel: Aye
Brian Forestal: Aye

Other Business:
Ms. Snellings shared that an application for a special permit from 304-306 Union Street has been received, and this hearing will be on June 9.

The board briefly discussed audio delays during the Zoom meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55PM.

Documents Presented

1) ZBA Meeting Agenda for May 12, 2020
2) 10 Cedar Hill Road Variance Application Packet
3) April 14, 2020 draft minutes