



**BOROUGH OF GLEN RIDGE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Summary of the Minutes
August 6, 2025 – Virtual via Zoom

OPMA STATTEMENT & ROLL CALL

Chair Darby called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and Mr. Tajzler read the Sunshine Act Notice and called the roll.

This meeting was held virtually on the Zoom platform.

PRESENT:

Chair Geoffrey Darby
Vice Chair Christine Yewaisis
Nicholas Colello
Robert Deacon
Joaquin Stearns
Dina Deshan (Alt. 1)
Jeff Link (Alt. 2)
Steven Smolyn, AIA (Consultant)
Alexei Tajzler, RA (Consultant)

HEARING OF THE APPLICATIONS

Chair Darby introduced himself and then briefly described the hearing process to the applicants and the members of the public.

14 Stonehouse Road (25-023)

Facade and Entranceway Changes

Scott Murphy

Chair Darby called for the application. The Owner, Mr. Scott Murphy, presented the proposal to repair and replace various elements of his colonial home's facade, including the corner stone, front porch, windows, and steps.

The Commission reviewed a set of architectural drawings and photographs. No public comment was made.

The motion contingent on Anderson Wood Windows to be installed instead of vinyl and the railing design to be finalized and approved before installation was made by Commissioner Link, seconded by Commissioner Deacon was approved by the commission with 7 votes.

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Darby | Yes | | | | |
| Colello | Yes | Stearns | Yes | Yewaisis | Yes |
| Deacon | Yes | Deshan (Alt.1) | Yes | Link (Alt. 2) | Yes |

251 Ridgewood Avenue (25-024)

Entranceway and Sidewalk Changes

David and Elizabeth Chang

Chair Darby called for the application. The Owner, David and Elizabeth Chang's presented their proposal to replace their concrete sidewalk and walkway with brick and bluestone that match the previously approved brick and bluestone on the house. The application will need to resubmit if they decide to modify the step design or add a railing.

The Commission reviewed a set of architectural drawings and photographs. No public comment was made.

The motion to approve as submitted was made by Commissioner Stearns, seconded by Commissioner Link was approved by the commission with 5 votes.

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|-----|---------------|---------|
| Darby | No | | | | |
| Colello | Yes | Stearns | Yes | Yewaisis | Abstain |
| Deacon | Yes | Deshan (Alt.1) | Yes | Link (Alt. 2) | Yes |

480 Ridgewood Avenue (25-025)

Addition

Sabrina and Aaron Kramer

Chair Darby called for the application. The Architect, Mr. Daniel Kopec presented the proposal for an addition which had been revised from a previous submission viewed in July 2025. Overall, the Commission commended the changes and new design that was modified from the previous month to reduce overall massing, attach the addition as a wing rather than a separate structure, and improve residential articulation with increased fenestration. The commission discussed technical details about roof lines, basement construction, and driveway placement, with Commissioner Stearns raising questions about the addition's connection to the existing structure and Vice Chair Yewaisis noting that any changes to the driveway would require subcommittee review. Commissioner Deacon pointed out an error in the window box design, which Daniel agreed to fix. The conversation ended with Commissioner Link praising Mr. Kopec's hand-drawn renderings for their soft appearance compared to computer-generated elevations.

The Commission reviewed a set of architectural drawings and photographs. No public comment was made.

The motion to approve contingent on revised drawings showing landscape plan showing driveway termination and backyard hardscape, proper elevation of basement walls if visible from north elevation, and an updated topographical survey for exact basement/grade elevation was made by Commissioner Yewaisis , seconded by Commissioner Stearns was approved by the commission with 7 votes.

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Darby | Yes | | | | |
| Colello | Yes | Stearns | Yes | Yewaisis | Yes |
| Deacon | Yes | Deshan (Alt.1) | Yes | Link (Alt. 2) | Yes |

38 Edgewood Road (25-026)

Facade Changes

Paul Bowden

Chair Darby called for the application. The Architect, Mr. Jonathan Wolfe presented a dormer addition and window replacement. The HPC required changes to the window specifications from vinyl-clad to Marvin Ultimate Wood windows and further research on historical window patterns, either 1-over-1 or 6-over-1 based on research. The new siding was also noted to be fiber cement with smooth face instead of vinyl.

The Commission reviewed a set of architectural drawings and photographs. No public comment was made.

The motion to approve contingent on revised drawings showing the historical window pattern and fiber cement siding was made by Commissioner Deacon, seconded by Commissioner Yewaisis was approved by the commission with 7 votes.

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Darby | Yes | | | | |
| Colello | Yes | Stearns | Yes | Yewaisis | Yes |
| Deacon | Yes | Deshan (Alt.1) | Yes | Link (Alt. 2) | Yes |

146 Sherman Avenue (25-027)

Two-Story Addition

Paul Giacomini

Chair Darby called for the application. The Architect, Mr. George Azrak presented a proposed addition to a historic house, a 3,000 square foot addition that would more than double the size of the existing 1,000 square foot house. Commissioners suggested that the addition should be more subordinate to the original structure, with Chair Darby recommending a 2/3rds to 1/3rd width ratio and a 30% reduction in depth. Commissioner Stearns proposed rethinking the roof line to better integrate with the existing house. The commissioners agreed that the current design was too large and overwhelming for the original house, and suggested exploring options to reduce the scale while still meeting

modern living needs such as considering adding a basement/crawl space to achieve desired square footage without increasing above-grade footprint or rotating the addition 90 degrees.

The Commission reviewed a set of architectural drawings and photographs. No public comment was made.

The motion to deny was made by Commissioner Yewaisis, seconded by Commissioner Colello, was approved by the commission with 7 votes.

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Darby | Yes | | | | |
| Colello | Yes | Stearns | Yes | Yewaisis | Yes |
| Deacon | Yes | Deshan (Alt.1) | Yes | Link (Alt. 2) | Yes |

311 Ridgewood Avenue (25-028)

Balustrade Removal

Frank and Aleksandra Roda

Chair Darby called for the application. The Owner, Mr. Frank Roda, presented the proposal to remove balustrades above his front entrance that had fallen into significant disrepair. The Commission reviewed several historic photographs and it was determined the balustrades in question were mostly likely not original nor present at time of significance (most likely added in the 1990's), but the piers were. The applicant agreed to keep the piers accordingly.

The motion to approve as shown was made by Commissioner Link, seconded by Commissioner Stearns was approved by the commission with 6 votes.

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|---------|---------------|-----|
| Darby | Yes | | | | |
| Colello | Yes | Stearns | Yes | Yewaisis | Yes |
| Deacon | Yes | Deshan (Alt.1) | Abstain | Link (Alt. 2) | Yes |

595 Ridgewood Avenue (25-029)

Rear Pergola and Retaining Wall

Nirmal Mehta

Chair Darby called for the application. The Owner, Mr. Nirmal Methra, along with his Landscape Designer and Pergola Vendor, presented the proposal for a new pergola and an already constructed wall. The commission discussed a built fence and wall that was constructed without HPC approval but had received Building Department permits. Thus they pivoted to only focus on the pergola.

The group examined site plans and elevations, noting the structure's visibility from Watchung Avenue and its proximity to neighboring properties. Concerns were raised about the modern style of the pergola not aligning with the historic district and mid-century modern house. The team discussed potential color options and architectural packages to better integrate the structure with the existing home. The applicant agreed to prepare new renderings for review at the next meeting. The Commission reviewed a set of architectural drawings and photographs. No public comment was made.

The applicant opted to withdraw the application concerning the Pergola for resubmission next month.

| | | | |
|---------|---------|----------|--|
| Darby | | | |
| Colello | Stearns | Yewaisis | |

| | | |
|--------|----------------|---------------|
| Deacon | Deshan (Alt.1) | Link (Alt. 2) |
|--------|----------------|---------------|

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval for the meeting minutes for July 2025 was made by Commissioner Link and seconded by Commissioner Colello with amendments for changing the address from 330 to 332 Ridgewood for violations which was approved unanimously. No public comment was made.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Tajzler confirmed that the subcommittee approved 39 Woodland (Retaining Wall) and 90 Ridgewood (Retaining Wall). 15 Summer Avenue is in administrative review.

VIOLATIONS

Mr. Smolyn presented three active enforcement actions – 332 Ridgewood (Pergola and deck without a permit), 404 Ridgewood (Column removal), and 201 Hillside Avenue (Siding removal). Homeowner at 404 Ridgewood to proceed with garage work by early next year and remaining work by end of next year. Homeowner at 201 Hillside Ave to submit HPC application in September for bulk siding removal job.

Chair Darby noted that some applications might not require full commission review, such as 332 Ridgewood Road, where the homeowner is addressing structural issues. The commission agreed to prioritize enforcement actions and applications with significant changes.

Mr. Smolyn will follow up on 3/11 Ridgewood structural issues during next week's site visit.

OLD BUSINESS

- Revisions to the Historic Ordinance remain ongoing. City Council has opted to wait until after the summer recess to put it to a vote.

NEW BUSINESS

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Vice Chair Yewaisis, seconded by Commissioner Deshan with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexei Tajzler, RA
Consultant to the Historic Preservation Commission