

Township of Lawrence
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

TO: File

FROM:  Brenda Kraemer, Assistant Municipal Engineer

SUBJECT: Bulk Variance Application No. ZB-4/25
Sreenivas Vanga, 32 Canal View Dr.
Tax Map Page 52.04, Block 5201.09, Lot 41.02

DATE: October 14, 2025

General:

The applicant has requested a floodplain buffer variance to permit construction of a single-family dwelling on Block 5201.09, Lot 41.02 in Yorkshire Village. For the Board's information, the lot was originally created as Lot 41 in 1995 (when Yorkshire Village was approved) to contain the relocated Ann Vaccaro house. Subsequently, subdivision approval was granted by the Planning Board in 1999 to permit two lots for relocation of historic homes. Several variances were granted by the Planning Board per Resolution 20-99. A home was relocated to the subject property; however, it was demolished due to structural issues. The area is currently maintained as lawn. Approval has now been requested for construction of a single-family dwelling.

The previous application included establishment of a conservation easement which encompasses environmentally restricted areas. The variance from §431.J is required for disturbance within 100' of a 100-year floodplain, a provision that was not contained in the prior ordinance or approvals.

The plans have been updated to reflect concerns raised at the previous Zoning Board meeting regarding the façade and size of the dwelling. Testimony shall be provided to explain the revisions and quantify the proposed square footage.

Detailed Report:

1. The applicant shall provide testimony regarding the method of construction to prevent any disturbance in the wetlands and floodplain area. The footprint of the dwelling is shown at the conservation limit line which does not allow for any maneuvering of construction equipment. At a minimum, temporary chain link fencing will be required to delineate the limit of disturbance.

Shifting the garage to the 25' front yard setback would provide an additional 2' for construction and is recommended.
2. The landscaping required by the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission has been noted on the plan provided and shall be installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
3. A plot plan conforming to Engineering Department requirements shall be submitted for approval prior to issuance of a building permit. As as-built plan will also be required.
4. The applicant's engineer shall confirm the proposed floor elevations meeting current FEMA requirements.
5. The applicant should be aware that there is limited area for a deck or patio improvement. Disturbance in the conservation area is not permitted.

BK/jrl

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Documents Reviewed:

- Application No. ZB-4/25 and Supporting Documents
- Site Plans, Sheet 1 of 1, revisions dated October 3, 2025
- Grading & Utility Plan, revisions dated September 29, 2025

October 10, 2025

Lawrence Township Zoning Board of Adjustment (via e-mail)
2207 Lawrenceville Road
PO Box 6006
Lawrence Township, NJ 08648



Re: Sreenivas Vanga – ZB-4/25
Block 5201.09, Lot 41.02 – 32 Canal View Drive
Bulk Variance Relief
PVD-2 Planned Village District 2

Dear Board Members:

Pursuant to the Board's request, we have reviewed the above captioned matter for compliance with the Land Use Ordinance of the Township of Lawrence. The material reviewed included, as supplied by the applicant, included the following:

1. Land Use Application and supporting documents.
2. Grading and Utility Plan and Details, prepared by Douglas Pelikan, PE, dated January 2, 2025 and last revised September 29, 2025, consisting of 2 sheets.
3. Floor plans and elevations, prepared by Lionel A. Scriven, RA, dated October 3, 2025 consisting of 1 sheet.

Based on the information provided, the applicant seeks bulk variance relief to construct a two-story, single-family detached dwelling on the above referenced property. According to the architectural plans, a four bedroom, 2 and a half bath structure with attached two-car garage is proposed.

The subject property, known as Block 5201.09, Lot 41.02, with a street address of 32 Canal View Drive, is a 12,225 square foot lot with frontage on Canal View Drive. Presently the property is vacant and encumbered by flood hazard area as well as required buffers for adjacent wetlands. Surrounding uses are all single-family detached dwellings, with one other house having been constructed on the adjacent lot to the north in a very similar fashion.

Zoning

The subject property is located in the PVD-2 Planned Village Development District, and the existing single-family use is permitted. The table on the following page lists the bulk requirements for the PVD-2 District and compares them to the applicant's proposal. While many of the lots the Board has reviewed in this development recently don't comply with the bulk requirements, this lot largely does with the exception of the front yard setback. As the applicant notes, front yard setback relief was previously granted permitting 26.2', however, the applicant

proposes 25'. The applicant's engineer will need to provide calculations for minimum usable yard area to determine if relief is required, particularly for the rear yard. Given the wetland and floodplain immediately adjacent to the dwelling there may not be any usable rear yard and relief may be required from §412.E.1.h.

	Permitted	Existing	Proposed
Minimum Lot Size	9,000 SF	12,225 s.f.	No Change
Minimum Lot Frontage	75'	96.59'	No Change
Minimum Lot Width	75'	102.5'	No Change
Minimum Lot Depth	90'	110.82'	No Change
Minimum Front Yard	30'	N/A	25'*
Minimum Side Yard	10'	N/A	10'
Minimum Rear Yard	35'	N/A	35'
Minimum Useable Yard Area	20% of each yard	N/A	>20%
Maximum Building Height	35' / 2.5 stories	N/A	N/A

* Indicates variance required

As indicated in the table above, the applicant requires the following bulk variance relief:

1. §412.E.1.e – minimum front yard setback, where 30' is required, 26.2' was previously approved and 25' is proposed.

As noted in the engineering review, the applicant also requires bulk variance relief from §431.J, which limits disturbance within 100' of the 100-year floodplain. As the established floodplain is directly adjacent to the proposed dwelling and the proposal clearly exceeds the 500 square foot disturbance exemption in §431.J.2, relief is required. While this lot was created prior to this standard being adopted, since there is no dwelling on the lot and this requirement limits "disturbance", this condition cannot be considered a legally existing nonconforming one. We note that most of Canal View Drive lies within 100' of the 100-year floodplain.

Consideration of Bulk Variances

The Board has the power to grant c(1) or hardship variances "(a) by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, (b) or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, or (c) by reason of an extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or the structure lawfully existing thereon, the strict application of any regulations...would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon the developer of such property." The Board may also consider the grant of c(2) variances where the purposes of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law would be advanced and the benefits of the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment. In either case, the Board cannot grant "c" or bulk variances unless the negative criteria are satisfied, or that there

is no substantial impact to surrounding properties (first prong) and the grant of the variance will not cause substantial impairment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan (master plan) or zoning ordinance (second prong).

Relative to the first prong of the negative criteria for the setback variance, the applicant notes that front yard setback relief was previously granted to permit 26.2', and the proposed setback is generally consistent with what was previously approved. The revised proposal better addresses concerns over proximity of the proposed dwelling to the adjacent wetland buffer and we note the structure is not overly deep. Comparing the setback proposed to those that exist directly across the street, most dwellings have front yard setbacks around 25', so this proposal is not entirely inconsistent with conditions in the neighborhood. As to the second prong of the negative criteria and the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance, the Board will need to be satisfied grant of relief will not negatively impact light, air and open space. Here consistency with setbacks of adjacent properties is relevant.

In considering relief for disturbance within 100' of the 100-year floodplain, the Board will need to be satisfied the proposal will not result in impact to adjacent properties. It appears the area of disturbance is maintained lawn or meadow and is consistent with the way the dwelling on adjacent Lot 41.01 was constructed. Relative to the intent of the standard, the Board should consider the intent of the floodplain regulations and required buffer, which are implemented to protect public health, safety and welfare related to flooding concerns.

Plan Comments

1. As noted the applicant will need to provide a calculation of usable yard area to determine if relief is required, particularly for the rear yard.
2. The applicant has revised the plan to move the dwelling closer to Canal View Drive, addressing concerns about proximity to constrained areas.

We trust the Board will find this information useful in consideration of the matter at hand and reserve the right to provide additional comment based on the applicant's presentation at the public hearing. Should you wish to discuss this review memo, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Kyle', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

James T. Kyle, PP/AICP, Board Planner

Cc: Brenda Kraemer, PE (via e-mail)
Ed Schmierer, Esq., Board Attorney (via e-mail)