

**Application for Zoning Board of Appeals Variance**  
22 Knowles Road, PO Box 201, Middle Haddam, CT 06456

**Description of the Project:** A new 4,865 GSF house to replace the original house which was destroyed by fire on February 2, 2018. The original house was a historic riverfront colonial with four bedrooms, a historic tavern room, fireplace, 2.5 baths, porch, and three floor levels. The new house is an historic Italianate style home with three bedrooms, fireplace, 3 baths, porches, three floor levels and an unoccupied cupola (light well only.)

**Strict application of the regulations would produce undue hardship because:** The original house did not meet current codes and zoning regulations since it was built prior to their existence. The unique lot geometry also existed prior to zoning. It would be impossible to construct a house that would meet the current regulations.

The north foundation of the original house built in the early 1700's was constructed on the north (side yard) property line. Current zoning regulations require a side setback of 25'-0" and front/rear setbacks of 50'-0". The applicant is building a new house to match the original location and footprint but moved 4'-6" to the south to allow for safe construction of foundations and to provide floodwater drainage. Moving it farther south is inadvisable due to steeply sloping grades on a limited site.

The parcel is in a FEMA flood zone with a recently designated 100 year flood elevation of 19.5' NAVD 1988. The ground floor of the original house was built lower than the new allowable FEMA elevation. Therefore the lower level of the new house must be higher than the original to observe new FEMA regulations and avoid catastrophic flooding . This required lower floor elevation forces the new house roof to be higher than the allowable 30'-0" maximum building height.

**The hardship created is unique and not shared by all properties alike in the neighborhood because:** The original house, which was constructed when codes and regulations were not in existence, was destroyed by fire on February 2, 2018. The original house sat on the side-yard property line, on a building lot with a unique, shape, topography, and elevation, abutting the riverfront and now subject to new coastal flood regulations. It sits close to the steeply sloping Knowles Road, leaving little room to reach the first floor entry. The house is on the only building area of the site per coastal requirements.