

Luis Roldan

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From: afisher@nycap.rr.com  
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 11:55 AM  
To: BZA  
Subject: Zoning variance for Cong. Beth Abraham Jacob Fence

I am a member of Congregation Beth Abraham Jacob and writing to request your approval of the zoning variance for an 8' fence around our synagogue. Sadly anti-Semitic violence has been on the rise with attacks on individual Jews and Jews institutions across the country. In fact, today's CNN has an article on both types of attacks with one instance where the individuals took refuge in a synagogue. There have of course been other incidences as well. A 4' fence is not a sufficient deterrence or effective barrier to sufficiently protect against these types of attacks.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/23/us/new-york-police-presence-hate-crimes/index.html>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/suspect-arrested-hate-crime-charges-vandalism-multiple-nyc-synagogues-n1266082>

<https://abc7ny.com/stabbing-monsey-in-ny/5798565/>

[>https://patch.com/california/beverlyhills/beverly-hills-synagogue-vandalism-pa-man-pleads-no-contest\)>](https://patch.com/california/beverlyhills/beverly-hills-synagogue-vandalism-pa-man-pleads-no-contest)

V/r

Ari J Fisher  
Member - CBAJ

From: Joan Rosenblum <joan.rosenblum@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 8:31 PM  
To: BZA  
Subject: Fwd: Variance for 8' Fence at Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob

**Subject: Variance for 8' Fence at Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob**

I am writing as a member of this synagogue concerned about the safety of myself and my family as well as fellow congregants and their guests.

Synagogues have become a target of violence and hate crimes. Jews and Synagogues have become victims of hate crimes frequently and in rising numbers.

An eight foot fence constructed around the synagogue will be a definite deterrent against anyone wishing to attempt to do any harm to this Synagogue and its congregants.

We are willing to fund this project at our own expense. By approving this project you will be enabling us to provide our safety and security. Without it the risk of incidents causing injury or death to our congregants is increasingly greater and as a community we have a responsibility to prevent such dangers.

Joan Rosenblum

Luis Roldan

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From: Seanan Herrick <seanan@cbaj.org>  
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 3:23 PM  
To: BZA  
Subject: City of Albany, Zoning Board Appeals for gated fence at Congr. Beth Abraham - Jacob

To whom it may concern, regarding the City of Albany, Zoning Board Appeals for a gated fence at Congr. Beth Abraham-Jacob.

In these times of increased anti-Semitic rhetoric, it is understandable that members of CBAJ feel vulnerable as they are inside their synagogue praying or attending services, congregation events, or educational classes. Just for being Jewish, and walking to their synagogue on Shabbat, members of CBAJ, including young families and children, have had insults shouted at them from individuals in passing cars. As the office manager at CBAJ, I receive the calls from our members when these hurtful incidents happen; so we can notify the other congregants and our local Jewish community. These incidents are so disturbing and hurtful; often it is experienced by families, with young children. I believe these incidents cause members to feel vulnerable within their own community.

As their office manager, I can also attest that we receive letters and emails from people of other religions with messages of hate, ignorance, and attempts to prophesize or impose their religion onto the members of CBAJ.

In the four years that I have worked at CBAJ, and due to incidents of disturbed individuals walking into our building or lurking around our property, we have been forced to keep our doors locked at all times, even during office hours, services or classes.

In the aftermath of The Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, we have been cautioned to keep our window blinds closed along the Whitehall Road side of our building – which includes windows of our Sanctuary and Social Hall; install exterior security cameras as an attempt to discourage potential bad actors, and hire armed security guards on a regular basis when CBAJ members are gathered together. We have had to implement many security measures and yet strangers can still just walk up to our doors, onto our grounds, into our playground.

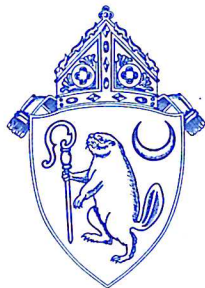
On Shabbat and holy days, as parents pray in one room and children attend their classes in another – the added security of a gated fence would provide peace of mind as well as a layer of protection in these troubled times.

Respectfully,

Seanan Herrick

Office Manager  
Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob  
380 Whitehall Road  
Albany, NY 12208  
518.489.5819 x 3

**The office is closed Wednesdays**  
[www.cbaj.org](http://www.cbaj.org)



## Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

40 North Main Avenue, Albany, New York 12203

*Office of Real Property*  
*Phone: 518-453-6623*

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May 13, 2021

Department of Planning and Development  
Luis Roldan  
200 Henry Johnson Blvd.  
Albany, N.Y. 12210

**Re: Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob-360 Whitehall Rd., Albany,  
NY**

Dear Mr. Roldan:

In this time of ongoing threats to many religious institutions, we sadly, yet full-throatedly endorse The Congregation of Beth Abraham-Jacob's proposal to erect a fence to protect their people and property from increasingly nefarious behavior from those who would seek to do them harm.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul A. Ehmann". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large loop at the end.

Paul A. Ehmann  
Director

*We are God's people sharing a responsibility to witness God's unconditional love  
and to bring Christ's healing presence to our world.*

Luis Roldan

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From: Martin Goldman <marting0328@gmail.com>  
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2021 9:07 AM  
To: BZA  
Subject: Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob proposed eight-foot high security fence

Mr. Richard Berkley  
Chair  
Albany Board of Zoning Appeals

Dear Mr. Berkley:

I am writing to you to respectfully request that you and the other six members of the Albany Board of Zoning Appeals please give positive consideration to my synagogue's (Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob) request to install an eight-foot high security fence around our property located at 380 Whitehall Road, Albany, New York 12208.

While I understand that this height is above the normal fence height that is approved for the city of Albany, one only has to listen to the news of terrible attacks that have happened in recent years to houses of worship including synagogues in the United States. Certainly Pittsburgh and San Diego are the most noted attacks on Jewish houses of worship in the last few years. However, there have been numerous other attacks that involved property damage as well as others that could have been deadly had they not been foiled with the help of security protocols including fences. Unfortunately, hate crimes are increasing in the United States and houses of worship have sadly been primary targets. It is incumbent upon houses of worship to take all necessary measures to minimize this threat.

Last fall, after discussions with security experts and law enforcement officials, our Congregation Beth Abraham-Jacob Synagogue Board of Directors along with our membership approved our enhanced security arrangements to include an eight-foot high perimeter fence which would deny or at least minimize the possibility of an attacker gaining access to our building. In addition, this fence would protect the most vulnerable in our community which is our young children who play in our outdoor playground which currently is very vulnerable to a potential attacker entering our property from Whitehall Road. To use the cliché, it is better to be safe than sorry.

When I served as a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, I was cognizant from my training that it was always better to take all necessary measures to protect personnel in any mission planning and never to leave anything to chance no matter how remote that possibility was. I am therefore respectfully requesting that you please give this same consideration for a zoning variance to permit us to erect an eight-foot fence around our property.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Martin Y. Goldman  
20 Aspen Circle  
Albany, New York 12208

Luis Roldan

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From: Andrew Kugler <andrew.kugler1@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 7:08 PM  
To: BZA  
Subject: Project #00415 - Beth Abe Security Fence

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals,

I am writing as I cannot attend the meeting this Wednesday regarding Congregation Beth Abraham Jacob's petition for a variance to allow a security fence around the synagogue. We are longtime residents of Albany. My wife was raised here on Milner Avenue, and we raised our own family on South Manning Boulevard for nearly 20 years - and are proud our two children are Albany High graduates who are now thriving young adults.

As a child of a holocaust survivor whose entire large family except for one brother was murdered in Treblinka, I feel particularly strongly about this request. It is disturbing that we can no longer have unmonitored open doors allowing anyone to enter our synagogue. Given the increase in anti-semitism and violent events against a variety of people, it has become necessary for our congregation to take security much more seriously.

CBAJ is a growing, thriving community and part of the greater Albany community. Security experts recommended this fence, among other measures, to help ensure the safety of our congregation. It is attractive, and its construction has been entirely funded by concerned members of our community.

I hope that you will agree to this variance which will help improve the security and peace of mind of our congregation and the many visitors who will soon again be able to take full advantage (in person) of all of the services, support, and community that Beth Abe has provided for nearly 180 years.

Thank you for your consideration.

Andrew Kugler  
258 S. Manning Blvd.