

BOROUGH OF WILDWOOD CREST
Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – 3 December 2025 5 p.m.

The following are the minutes of the Wildwood Crest Planning Board as held on Wednesday December 3, 2025, at Borough Hall. The proceedings of the meeting are recorded and available for public inspection.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Mr. Davenport called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., lead the Pledge of Allegiance and read the statement of compliance with the open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL:

Patrick Davenport: present	Barbara Hunt: present	Brian Melchiorre: present
Don Cabrera: absent	Joe Franco: present	Angela Daniels: present
Fred Mettler: present	Brian Stuart: absent	Vince Tenaglia: absent
Bradley Vogdes: present	Jane Reynolds: present	Alexa Alverado: present
Joe Viscomi: present		
Board Secretary Pamela Riper: present		
Rob Belasco: present		
Jacob Wright: present		

MINUTES:

Mr. Vogdes moved to dispense with the public reading of the executive session minutes of the meeting of 5 November 2025 and approve as distributed, Ms. Reynolds second, minutes approved as distributed.

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: abstain	Fred Mettler: abstain
Bradley Vogdes: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

APPLICATIONS:

4. APPLICATIONS:

Application PB-25-12 for 417 E. Monterey Avenue a/k/a blk 118.02 lots 15.02 & 17.01 in Zone R-2 owner KH NJ Ventures, LLC; seeking "C" Variance.

The Applicant was represented by Andrew Catanese, Esquire, who outlined the nature of the application and the relief sought.

The Subject Property is located at 417 E. Monterey Avenue, a/k/a Block 118.02, Lots 15.02 and 17.01, in the Borough's M-1-B (Hotel, Motel and Multi-family) zoning district.

In connection with this Application, the Board received the following plans, which are incorporated herein as fact:

Plans entitled "Survey of Premises, 417 E. Monterey Avenue, Block 118.02, Lots 15.02 and 17.01, Borough of Wildwood Crest, Cape May County, New Jersey," prepared and signed by Thomas A. Prendergast, P.L.S. of The Hyland Group, LLC, dated August 26, 2025.

Variance and Floor Plans entitled "New Single Family Dwelling, 417 E. Monterey Avenue, Block 118.02, Lots 15.02 and 17.01, Borough of Wildwood Crest, Cape May County, New Jersey," prepared by John E. Halbruner, P.E., R.A., of The Hyland Group, LLC, dated September 18, 2025, and last revised November 17, 2025.

The Subject Property is a 40ft. x 90ft. fully conforming lot developed with an existing two-family dwelling (duplex).

Mr. Catanese advised the Board that the Applicant intends to demolish the existing dwelling in order to construct a new single-family dwelling on site.

Mr. Catanese noted that single-family dwellings are a permitted use in the zone and the dwelling proposed by the Applicant fits well in the neighborhood.

He indicated that the removal of the existing duplex will also eliminate a number of pre-existing non-conforming conditions.

He informed the Board that the proposed single-family dwelling meets all applicable bulk requirements with the exception of building height.

The Applicant is requesting a maximum building height variance in order to permit a height of 42.75ft. whereas a maximum building height of 39ft. is permitted.

Mr. Catanese indicated that the Board Engineer identified a need for a maximum number of stories variance; however, he contended that it was not required based upon the definition of story and the use of the term floor in the M-1-B zone.

Mr. Catanese requested that the Board make a determination as to whether or not the additional variance for number of stories was required, and, in the event the Board determined that it was required, the Applicant was requesting variance relief.

Mr. Catanese argued that the Borough's residential zones regulate the number of stories whereas M zones specifically regulate the number of floors and do not reference stories.

Mr. Catanese identified two (2) prior approvals issued by the former Borough Zoning Board of Adjustment in 2020 and 2022 which did not require variance relief for maximum number of stories.

Mr. Catanese distributed a Zoning Board Resolution associated with 406 E. Miami Avenue within the M-1-B zone, where the former Zoning Board approved a variance for a maximum building height of 42.4ft., but did not require a variance to permit a 4-story structure, which was received by the Board and marked as Exhibit A-1.

Mr. Catanese distributed a photograph of the structure built at 406 E. Miami Avenue which was received by the Board and marked as Exhibit A-2.

Mr. Catanese distributed Zoning Board Resolution associated with 400 E. Louisville Avenue, where the former Zoning Board approved a variance for a maximum building height of 42.4ft., but did not require a variance to permit a 4-story structure, which was received by the Board and marked as Exhibit A-3.

Mr. Catanese distributed a photograph of the structure built at 400 E. Louisville Avenue which was received by the Board and marked as Exhibit A-4.

He indicated that both structures were designed with a ground-floor parking/storage area, with three (3) habitable stories above.

Board Chairman Patrick Davenport noted that the Borough's Ordinance, specifically the definition of story, has been revised since the approval of the structures referenced by Mr. Catanese.

Mr. Catanese referenced and distributed a copy of Borough Ordinance 14-42, which changed the definition of "story," and amended the R-1, R-1A, and R-2 zoning districts accordingly. A copy of the Ordinance was received by the Board and marked as Exhibit A-5.

Mr. Catanese noted that Ordinance 14-42 made no changes to the M-1-B Zone and that the regulations governing the M-1-B zone are the same today as they were when the approvals contained within Exhibits A-1 and A-3 were granted. Specifically, that the M-1-B zone makes no reference to "stories" and simply references "floors," which he contended was deliberate.

Mr. Catanese stated that the M Zones allow for taller structures, upwards of 68ft. over ground-level parking which he argued provides justification for the position that a maximum number of stories variance is not required.

The Board noted that Ordinance 14-42 did not establish a definition for "floor" and no definition has ever existed. The Board indicated that the changes to the definition of "story" were intended to encompass all residential uses within the Borough.

Board Members indicated that there is no difference between the reference to story and floor, considering that the dwelling proposed by the Applicant is a single-family dwelling rather than a hotel/motel or multi-family structure.

Board Members further noted that the term "floor" is not defined within the Ordinance. They took the position that the words floor and story were interchangeable.

Mr. Catanese acknowledged the Board's interpretation and indicated that the Applicant was requesting variance relief from the maximum number of stories in addition to maximum building height.

John Halbruner, P.E., R.A. of The Hyland Group, LLC, appeared before the Board and was accepted as an expert in the fields of engineering and architecture. Mr. Halbruner was placed under oath and testified before the Board.

Mr. Halbruner reviewed the existing and proposed site conditions for the benefit of the Board.

He confirmed that the Subject Property is a 40ft. x 90ft. lot that is currently developed with a two-story duplex.

He testified that the existing structure was built in 1955. It has a flat roof, sits 2ft. below the minimum design flood elevation, and contains a number of pre-existing non-conforming conditions.

He indicated that the proposed single-family dwelling fully conforms to the applicable bulk requirements with the exception of building height.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the Subject Property is undersized for a duplex, and the current site contains 100% impervious coverage whereas 55% is permitted.

He indicated that the existing front porch provides a 12.17ft. front yard setback whereas 18ft. is required.

Mr. Halbruner testified that no off-street parking currently exists whereas compliant off-street parking is proposed.

He further testified that an existing accessory shed located in the rear yard does not meet the minimum required rear yard or side yard setbacks.

Mr. Halbruner noted a total of eleven (11) pre-existing non-conforming conditions which would all be eliminated by demolishing the current duplex and building the proposed single-family dwelling.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the proposed single-family dwelling is similar in design to structures located on the north side of the street.

Mr. Halbruner distributed a document containing two photographs depicting the existing streetscape with the proposed dwelling which was received by the Board and marked as Exhibit A-6.

Mr. Halbruner referenced photographs and described the existing development pattern in the immediate vicinity of the Subject Property and within the surrounding neighborhood.

He advised that the surrounding area contains a mix of residential uses, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, multi-family dwellings, and hotels/motels.

Mr. Halbruner testified that several multi-family and lodging structures in the surrounding neighborhood are multi-story buildings, some of which exceed five (5) stories in height above parking levels.

He indicated that the proposed single-family dwelling will provide a nice transition from the existing larger structure to the west and an existing smaller structure to the east.

Mr. Halbruner reviewed the proposed floor plans for the benefit of the Board.

He indicated that the proposed single-family dwelling consists of three (3) habitable stories over a ground-level parking area.

The first habitable floor will contain four (4) bedrooms and will have 9ft. ceilings.

The second habitable floor will contain the primary living area and one (1) additional bedroom. It will also provide 9ft. ceilings.

The third habitable floor will contain a sixth bedroom along with additional living space.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the dwelling contains 3,700SF of living space.

He confirmed that the Applicant is proposing to install an in-ground swimming pool in the rear yard.

He testified that the single-family dwelling will have a total of four parking spaces which meets the requirements of the New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards.

Mr. Halbruner testified that stormwater management is addressed on site and runoff rates will be drastically reduced by nearly 50%. He further testified that recharge systems will mitigate and prevent stormwater management issues.

Mr. Halbruner distributed a second document containing two (2) additional photographs, the first photo showing the proposed site conditions and the second photo showing the existing site conditions.

Mr. Halbruner opined that the proposed single-family dwelling is consistent with the streetscape and the surrounding neighborhood, and that it will serve as an appropriate buffer from the tall neighboring structure to smaller buildings to the west.

Mr. Halbruner opined that several of the purposes of zoning, outlined within N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2, are advanced in connection with this application and support the relief sought by the Applicant as it:

Provides adequate light, air and open space;

Secures safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters;

Provides adequate light, air and open space

Promotes the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment;

Encourages the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight; and

Promotes a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement.

Mr. Halbruner opined that the Applicant's proposal presents no substantial detriments to the public good nor does it in any way impair the intent or purpose of the Borough's zone plan or zoning ordinance.

He opined that the proposal is not an overdevelopment of the site, and that the massing and height of the building is complementary to the neighborhood.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the Applicant's proposal will also comply with the requirements outlined within the Borough's landscaping ordinance.

Mr. Halbruner stated that the ground-floor consists of parking and storage space and is consistent with the neighboring structures.

A discussion ensued between the Applicant's professional and the Board concerning proposed stacked parking. It was confirmed that there is no prohibition on stacked parking.

Mr. Halbruner stated that five bedrooms for two families is what is existing and that six bedrooms for one family is less intense and what is proposed.

Borough Engineer Marc DeBlasio, P.E., P.P., C.M.E., prepared an Engineer's Report dated November 21, 2025, which was received by the Board, and which is incorporated herein as fact.

Jacob Wright, P.E., a professional engineer with Mr. DeBlasio's office, appeared at the meeting and reviewed said Report for the benefit of the Board, and he noted the conditions outlined therein. As a condition of approval, the Applicant will comply with any and all comments/conditions set forth within the Engineer's Report.

Mr. Wright confirmed the variance relief requested by the Applicant.

In response to a question posed by the Board Engineer, Mr. Halbruner confirmed there will be a fence and self-latching gate around the pool.

At the conclusion of the Applicant's presentation, the meeting was opened to the public for comment. No members of the public addressed the Board in connection with this Application. Accordingly, the public portion of this application was closed.

Board Solicitor Robert Belasco, Esquire reviewed the variance relief sought by the Applicant and provided the findings of fact for the record.

Findings of Fact accepted on motion of Ms. Daniels and second by Mr. Vogdes:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: yes
Bradley Vogdes: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: abstain		

The Board accepted the findings of fact and thereafter opened the Application up for deliberation.

During deliberations, Board Members expressed significant concerns regarding the height of the structure. They unanimously agreed that the proposed building height was too much for the lot and the location.

Board Members raised concerns about the 4th story stating that its inclusion is specifically what pushes the building height over what is permitted.

Board Members noted that the height of the proposed single-family dwelling is significantly taller than the structure located to the east.

Board Members indicated that the larger structure to the west is an outlier and a clear overdevelopment which does not provide justification for allowing a structure exceeding maximum building height at the Subject Property.

Board Members unanimously agreed that the purposes of zoning identified by Mr. Halbruner would not be advanced by the proposed development for the reasons outlined above and stated more fully on the record.

On Motion of Ms. Daniels and second by Ms. Alverado for approval:

Patrick Davenport: no	Barbara Hunt: no	Brian Melchiorre: no
Joe Franco: no	Angela Daniels: no	Fred Mettler: no
Bradley Vogdes: no	Jane Reynolds: no	Alexa Alverado: no
Joe Viscomi: abstain		

RESOLUTIONS MEMORIALIZING BOARD ACTIONS:

Resolution PB-25-19 approving **Application PB-25-11** for 312 E. Monterey Avenue a/k/a blk 125.01 lots 1.01 & 2.01 in Zone R-2 owner Sherri Altman; seeking "C" Variance.

Mr. Vogdes moved to approve, second by Ms. Hunt:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: abstain	Fred Mettler: abstain
Bradley Vogdes: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: abstain
Joe Viscomi: yes		

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next regularly scheduled meeting is 7 January, there is one application scheduled at this time to go before the board on that date.

ADJOURN: On motion of Ms. Hunt second by Mr. Vogdes and unanimous voice vote, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:37pm.

Pamela Riper
Planning Board Secretary