

BOROUGH OF WILDWOOD CREST
Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – 7 May 2025 5 p.m.

The following are the minutes of the Wildwood Crest Planning Board as held on Wednesday May 7, 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: absent	Brian Melchiorre: present
Don Cabrera: absent	Joe Franco: present	Angela Daniels: present
Fred Mettler: present	Brian Stuart: present	Vince Tenaglia present
Bradley Vogdes: absent	Jane Reynolds present	Alexa Alverado: present
Joe Viscomi: present		
Board Secretary Pamela Riper: present		
Rob Belasco: present		
Engineer Will Hanson: present		

MINUTES:

Ms. Daniels moved to dispense with the public reading of the minutes of the meeting of 3 March 2025 and approve as distributed, Mr. Stuart second, minutes approved as distributed.

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: abstain	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: abstain	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

To discuss pending litigation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(7).

On Motion of Mr. Melchiorre and second by Mr. Mettler to go into close session:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

On Motion of Mr. Mettler and second by Ms. Daniels to go back into session:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

APPLICATIONS:

Application PB-25-02 for 8301 Atlantic Avenue a/k/a blk 133.02 lot 1 in Zone M-1B owner 8301 Atlantic Avenue, LLC; seeking Minor Subdivision & "C" Variance.

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

The Subject Property is located at 8301 Atlantic Avenue, a/k/a Block 133.02, Lot 1, in the Boroughs M-1-B zoning district.

The Subject Property is currently developed with the Ala Kai Motel.

Mr. Monzo informed the Board that the Applicant is also the owner of the Blue Marlin Motel located at 401 E. Toledo Avenue which is the subject of an identical application that seeks the same relief and approvals.

Mr. Monzo advised the Board that the Applicant proposes to demolish the existing motel and is seeking minor subdivision approval to create three (3) lots.

Two (2) of the proposed lots will be oriented towards Atlantic Avenue and the third lot will be oriented towards Toledo Avenue.

The proposed lots meet or exceed the minimum area requirements within the M-1-B zone.

Mr. Monzo informed the Board that the Applicant is proposing to develop a single-family dwelling on each lot.

The proposed single-family dwellings will conform to all applicable bulk requirements of the zone with the exception of maximum building height and maximum number of stories.

Mr. Monzo indicated that the Applicant is requesting variance relief to permit a building height of 42.9ft. whereas a maximum building height of 39ft. is permitted, and to permit four (4) stories whereas only three (3) stories are permitted.

The proposed ground floor consists of a garage, living space, and entrance area.

The Applicant distributed the following exhibits which are incorporated herein by reference:

Exhibit A-1: An aerial photograph depicting existing conditions.

Exhibit A-2: A color rendering depicting the proposed single-family dwellings inlaid with the existing neighborhood.

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

A Minor Subdivision Plan, prepared by The Hyland Group, consisting of one (1) sheet, dated February 17, 2025, and last revised February 26, 2025; and

Architectural Plans, prepared by The Hyland Group, consisting of three (3) sheets, dated February 28, 2025.

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

Mr. Halbruner discussed the existing site conditions and reviewed Exhibit A-1 with the Board.

He advised the Board that the Subject Property has 161ft. of frontage along Toledo Avenue and 91ft. of frontage along Atlantic Avenue. The lot area is 13,780SF.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the existing development contains a number of pre-existing non-conforming conditions which will be eliminated through the demolition of the existing motel.

The lot contains 100% impervious coverage, and the front, side, and rear yard setbacks are all non-conforming.

Mr. Halbruner reviewed the existing development in the surrounding neighborhood.

Along the east side of Atlantic Avenue, within the M-1-B zone, there are a number of existing multi-family dwellings, hotels, and single-family dwellings.

Along the west side of Atlantic Avenue, within the R-2 zone, there are a number of existing single-family dwellings and single-family semi-detached dwellings.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the minor subdivision proposed by the Applicant will result in the creation of three (3) fully conforming lots that will be developed with single-family dwellings.

He confirmed that the single-family dwellings will comply with all applicable bulk conditions of the M-1-B zone with the exception of building height and number of stories.

Mr. Halbruner reviewed Exhibit A-2 with the Board.

In response to a question posed by the Board, Mr. Halbruner testified that the design of the proposed corner lot single-family dwelling will be revised to comply with the Ordinance, § 85-92(h), requiring that the main entry façade or front of the structure face Atlantic Avenue. As a condition of approval, the Applicant will comply with § 85-92(h) of the Borough Code and ensure that the main entry facade or front of the structures along Atlantic Avenue face the public right-of-way.

In an effort to further assuage Board concerns, the Applicant agreed, as a condition of approval, that the front of the corner lot facing Atlantic Avenue would be designed to provide a front door and an elevated decorative porch with railings.

A discussion ensued between the Applicant's professionals and the Board concerning revisions to the architectural plans and the Board's desire to review revised plans prior to continuing to proceed with the Application.

Mr. Halbruner discussed the modifications that would be made to the architectural plans associated with the corner lot, and the Board indicated that, provided the façade along Toledo Avenue was designed to appear as if it were a second front yard, the Board was comfortable proceeding with the hearing.

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

He advised the Board that the ground floor of the dwellings will consist of a garage, a family room that will be constructed above the base flood elevation, and a half bathroom.

Two and a half (2.5) floors of living space are proposed above the ground floor, consisting of bedrooms, living space, a kitchen, and bathrooms.

Each dwelling is proposed to contain five (5) bedrooms.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the proposed ½ story is treated as an additional story by the Borough's Ordinance which necessitates variance relief as only three (3) stories are permitted.

With respect to building height, Mr. Halbruner testified that the increase in building height is de minimis as the proposed height is less than 10% taller than the permitted building height in the zone.

He opined that the proposed building height is consistent with the height of existing structures in the surrounding neighborhood as the majority of the dwellings to the east all consist of four (4) stories or more.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the zone permits a variety of uses, and a multi-family dwelling can be constructed to a maximum building height of 65ft.

In response to a question posed by the Board regarding interior ceiling heights, Mr. Halbruner testified that the first three (3) floors provide 8ft. ceilings and the fourth floor provides a vaulted ceiling that is 13ft.

He noted that building and lot coverages will be substantially reduced and will conform to the requirements of the M-1-B zone.

He indicated that the proposed single-family dwellings are a better zoning alternative for the neighborhood and reduce the overall density of the area.

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:

Encourages municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this State, in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;

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 appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies; and

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

Mr. Halbruner further opined that the application can be granted as there are no substantial detriments to the public good and the application does not impair the intent and/or purpose of the zone plan or zoning ordinance.

The proposed single-family dwellings will conform to current construction, fire, and flood codes.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the proposed single-family dwellings provide off-street parking in compliance with Borough Code which will be an improvement compared to the existing motel.

He further testified that the Applicant's proposal is consistent with the Borough's current Master Plan that seeks to promote single-family development.

Board Members expressed concerns in relation to the number of stories and the proposed building height.

Board Members questioned the proposed design and the decision to provide 8ft. interior ceiling heights and the decision to propose a fourth story.

Mr. Halbruner testified that the proposed fourth story is more akin to a ½ story, and he reiterated that the building height is not out of character with the surrounding neighborhood considering that multi-family dwellings are permitted to be built to a height of 65ft.

He noted that the Applicant's request for a building height variance is not unique as there are other dwellings in the surrounding neighborhood which received building height variances.

Mr. Halbruner further testified that the increase in building height is primarily tied to providing a compliant roof pitch.

Board Members indicated that a compliant roof pitch could be provided if the Applicant eliminated the fourth story which would result in a reduction of the building height.

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

Will Hanson, P.E., C.M.E. 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. Hanson confirmed the variance relief sought in connection with this Application.

He advised the Board that the proposed subdivision is essentially by-right as the lots will conform to the area requirements of the M-1-B zone.

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 Mr. Tenaglia and second by Mr. Stuart:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: 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, the Board acknowledged that the Applicant's subdivision was a by-right subdivision.

The Board elected to vote on the subdivision separate from the 'C' variance relief tied to the proposed single-family dwellings, and the proposed minor subdivision was unanimously approved by the Board.

With respect to the variances associated with the proposed single-family dwellings, a majority of the Board expressed concerns in relation to the proposed building heights.

A majority of Board Members questioned the number of stories, interior ceiling heights, and overall height of the building.

They contended that the proposed fourth story was an issue that increased the overall mass of the dwellings.

The majority took issue with the Applicant's reference to the permitted building height for multi-family dwellings and hotels/motels as the proposal involves the development of single-family dwellings.

The majority also took issue with the Applicant's representation that the architectural plans may change based upon design preferences of future owners. As a condition of approval, the Applicant agreed that the proposed single-family dwellings would be constructed consistent with the building elevations and the rendering marked as Exhibit A-2.

A minority of the Board took no issue with the 3.9ft. building height increase as they felt it was consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

A majority of the Board found that the purposes of zoning outlined by Mr. Halbruner would not be advanced in connection with this Application and they do not support the relief sought by the Applicant.

A majority of the Board further found that the proposed variance relief presents a substantial detriment to the zone plan and zoning ordinance and outweighs the positive criteria put forth by the Applicant.

The Board agreed that the Applicant's proposal does not amount to a better zoning alternative compared to what is permitted and could be developed at the subject property.

On Motion of Ms. Daniels and second by Mr. Melchiorre for approval of the subdivision:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: abstain	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: abstain	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

On Motion of Mr. Tenaglia and second by Ms. Reynolds for "C" Variance approval:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: no	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: no	Fred Mettler: no	Brian Stuart: no
Vince Tenaglia: yes	Jane Reynolds: no	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: abstain		

Application PB-25-03 for 401 E. Toledo Avenue a/k/a blk 126.02 lot 1, 3, 5, 7 & 9.01 in Zone M-1B owner 401 Toledo Avenue, LLC; seeking Minor Subdivision & "C" Variance.

Tabled to 2 July 2025. No additional notice required.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart and by Ms. Alverado to table application:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: abstain		

RESOLUTIONS MEMORIALIZING BOARD ACTIONS:

Resolution PB-25-06 denying **Application PB-25-01** for 8501 Bayview Drive a/k/a blk 140 lot 16 in Zone R-2 owner David DiStefano; appealing decision of an Administrative Officer.
Variances.

Ms. Reynolds moved to approve, second by Mr. Stuart:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: abstain	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: abstain	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

Resolution PB-25-07 approving **Application PB-24-21** for 6210 Seaview Avenue a/k/a blk 38.01 lots 2.02 & 3.01 in Zone R-2 owner Edward & Shelley Galena; seeking "C" Variances.

Variances.

Ms. Reynolds moved to approve, second by Mr. Stuart:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: abstain	Joe Franco: yes
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: abstain	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Bike Connectivity Path

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance Revisions (Accessory Lots and Bulkhead Setback)

On Motion of Mr. Tenaglia and by Mr. Mettler to recommend ordinance revisions to governing body:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes	Joe Franco: abstain
Angela Daniels: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Brian Stuart: yes
Vince Tenaglia: yes	Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michael Gericke, owner of property located at 5501 Pacific Avenue. Questions the ordinance revision regarding accessory lots and bulkhead setbacks.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next regularly scheduled meeting is 4 June, there are no applications scheduled at this time to go before the board on that date.

ADJOURN: On motion of Ms. Daniels, second by Mr. Stuart and unanimous voice vote, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:18pm.

Pamela Riper
Planning Board Secretary