

BOROUGH OF WILDWOOD CREST
Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – 15 January 2025 5 p.m.

The following are the minutes of the Wildwood Crest Planning Board as held on Wednesday January 15, 2025, at Borough Hall. The proceedings of the meeting are recorded and available for public inspection.

CALL TO ORDER:

Solicitor Robert Belasco 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: present	Joe Franco: present	Angela Daniels: present
Fred Mettler: absent	Brian Stuart: present	Vince Tenaglia: present
Bradley Vogdes: present	Jane Reynolds: present	Alexa Alverado: present
Board Secretary Pamela Riper: present		
Rob Belasco: present		
Engineer Will Hanson: present		

This was the annual reorganization meeting.
Affirmation and swearing in of planning board members.

The Solicitor presided for the election of Officers:

On nomination of Mr. Cabrera, second by Mr. Melchiorre and unanimous roll call vote Patrick Davenport was elected chairman for the 2025 calendar year.

On nomination of Mr. Vogdes, second by Ms. Reynolds and unanimous roll call vote. Barbara Hunt was elected vice-chairman for the 2025 calendar year.

Chairman Mr. Davenport takes over the meeting.

Resolution PB-A-25-01 was memorialized reflecting election of Officers for the 2025 Calendar Year.

On nomination of Ms. Daniels, second by Mr. Melchiorre and unanimous roll call vote, Pamela Riper was appointed secretary for the 2025 calendar year; memorialized as Resolution PB-A-25-02.

On nomination by Mr. Vogdes, second by Ms. Hunt and unanimous roll call vote, Robert T. Belasco, Esq. was appointed solicitor for the 2025 calendar year; memorialized as resolution PB-A-25-03.

On nomination of Ms. Hunt, second by Ms. Daniels and unanimous roll call vote, Marc DeBlasio of DeBlasio & Associates was appointed board engineer for the 2025 calendar year; memorialized as Resolution PB-A-25-04.

On nomination of Ms. Hunt, second by Mr. Stuart and unanimous roll call vote planners Taylor Design Group were appointed board planners for the 2025 calendar year; memorialized as Resolution PB-A-25-05.

On nomination of Ms. Hunt, second by Ms. Reynolds, and unanimous roll call vote, memorializing dates, places, and publication of meetings for the 2025 calendar year was memorialized by acclamation and memorialized as Resolution PB-A-25-06.

Patrick Davenport, Barbara Hunt, Brian Melchiorre, Don Cabrera, Joe Franco, Angela Daniels, Brian Stuart, Vince Tenaglia, Bradley Vogdes, Jane Reynolds, Alexa Alverado take the oath of office reappointing them as members of the Wildwood Crest Planning Board.

Engineer Will Hanson is sworn in.

MINUTES:

Ms. Hunt moved to dispense with the public reading of the minutes of the meeting of 4 December 2024 and approve as distributed, Ms. Daniels second, minutes approved as distributed.

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: abstain	Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: yes
Brian Stuart: abstain	Vince Tenaglia: yes	Bradley Vogdes: yes
Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes	

APPLICATIONS:

Application PB-24-14 6307 New Jersey Avenue a/k/a blk 43 lots 20.02, 21.02, 22.02 in Zone B-1 owner Pearce Homes LLC; seeking "C" Variances.

The Applicant was represented by Jeffrey Barnes, Esquire, who outlined the nature of the application, and the relief sought in connection with same.

Mr. Barnes advised the Board that the subject property is a 100ft. x 80ft. lot containing 8,000SF located in the Borough's B-1 zoning district.

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

A Site Plan entitled "Preliminary and Final Site Plan, Proposed Mixed Use Building for Pearce Homes, LLC" prepared by Gibson Associates, P.A., signed and sealed by Louis A. Scheidt, P.E., consisting of seven (7) sheets, dated May 4, 2023, and last revised December 5, 2024.

Architectural Plans entitled "New Mixed Use Building For: Ed Pearce" prepared by Blaine Steinman Architect, LLC, signed and sealed by Blane Steinman, R.A., consisting of five (5) sheets, dated December 6, 2024.

The subject property was previously developed with a gas/service station that has since been demolished. In September of 2023, the Applicant obtained approvals to construct a mixed-use structure consisting of three (3) ground-floor commercial units with three (3) residential units above.

The prior approval was memorialized by the Board within Resolution PB-23-18.

Mr. Barnes reminded the Board that the Applicant obtained a D(3) conditional use variance, multiple 'C' variances, and waivers in connection with the development of the proposed mixed-use structure.

He indicated that after the prior approvals were received the Applicant identified an issue associated with the fact that only one set of ingress/egress stairs were provided for the proposed second-floor residential units whereas construction/fire codes require that at least two sets of ingress/egress stairs be provided.

Mr. Barnes informed the Board that modifications to the plans to comply with the prior approvals were nearly complete, and there were limited areas left on site to provide the required second set of stairs.

Mr. Barnes advised the Board that the Applicant redesigned the rear portion of the structure and was able to incorporate the second stairs along the south side of the rear yard.

Incorporating the second set of stairs resulted in a slight increase of building coverage. A maximum building coverage of 50% is permitted whereas 56% was previously approved and 58.6% is now proposed.

In order to accommodate the stairs, the parking configuration and the location of rear yard trash enclosure were modified which resulted in one parking space being reduced to 8ft. x 18ft. whereas 9ft. x 18ft. is required.

The parking space in question is an ADA parking space which provides an 8ft. defined landing area adjacent to the parking space. The size of the parking space complies with ADA requirements; however, it is slightly undersized in relation to the Borough's 9ft. x 18ft. parking space dimension requirement, necessitating variance relief.

Mr. Barnes indicated that with the exception of the variances requested, no additional modifications were made to the previously approved structure and site plan.

Blaine Steinman, R.A. of Blane Steinman Architect, LLC appeared on behalf of the Applicant, and he was recognized as an expert in the field of architecture. Mr. Steinman was placed under oath, and he testified from the proposed Architectural Plans.

Mr. Steinman presented a copy of the previously approved site plan which also included a copy of the modified site plan.

He confirmed that no changes are proposed to the approved commercial or residential units, and rear yard storage areas that were approved in connection with the original site plan application remain in their previously approved location.

Mr. Steinman testified that the stairs which were depicted on the original site plan located along the north side of the property and an adjacent trash enclosure were essentially flipped to facilitate a modified parking arrangement.

The new stairs proposed along the south side of the property are located in an area of a previously proposed parking space, and the ADA parking space was relocated adjacent to same.

Mr. Steinman testified that the ADA parking space is slightly undersized as it relates to the minimum parking space dimensions established by the Borough; however, he confirmed that the space complies with ADA requirements and is fully accessible with the adjacent 8ft. landing area.

Mr. Steinman testified that both stairs are fully code compliant.

He confirmed that no additional changes are proposed to the previously presented building elevations, and the size of the residential and commercial units remain unchanged.

In response to a question posed by the Board, Mr. Steinman testified that relocating the trash enclosure actually improved the ability to remove trash cans from the enclosure to transport same to New Jersey Avenue for trash collection.

He indicated that relocating the trash enclosure now provides two routes to access New Jersey Avenue. Louis A. Scheidt, P.E., P.P. with Gibson Associates, P.A. also appeared on behalf of the Applicant, and he was recognized as an expert in the fields of engineering and land planning. Mr. Scheidt was placed under oath, and he testified from the proposed Site Plan.

Mr. Scheidt reviewed the previously approved and amended site plans for the benefit of the Board.

He indicated that the increase in building coverage is de minimis, and that the increase is tied exclusively to the incorporation of the second set of stairs rather than any actual expansion of the building.

Mr. Scheidt testified that the inclusion of the second set of stairs, while required, makes the overall project safer for future residents of the site.

Mr. Scheidt further testified that the amended site plan will have no impact on neighboring property owners as the previously approved setbacks and building height are maintained.

Mr. Scheidt confirmed that all parking spaces comply with the required 9ft. x 18ft. required dimensions with the exception of the ADA parking space.

He reviewed the ADA parking standards and advised the Board that the space, while non-compliant with Borough standards, is compliant with applicable ADA requirements.

Mr. Scheidt testified that the only other modification made to the previously approved site plan was the elimination of landscaping in the area of the ADA parking space which increased impervious coverage in the front yard, requiring an additional variance.

He informed the Board that additional landscaping was added in the southwest corner of the site and within the public right-of-way to offset the loss of landscaping in the area of the parking spaces.

Mr. Scheidt opined that 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; and

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

Mr. Scheidt further opined that the Application presents no substantial detriments to public good, nor does it impair the intent or purpose of the Borough's zone plan or zoning ordinance.

Borough Engineer Marc DeBlasio, P.E., P.P., C.M.E., prepared an Engineer's Report dated January 2, 2025, which was received by the Board, and which is incorporated herein as fact.

Will Hanson, P.E., a professional engineer, and employee with Mr. DeBlasio's office, appeared at the meeting and reviewed said Report for the benefit of the Board. As a condition of approval, the Applicant will comply with all comments/conditions set forth within the Engineer's Report.

Mr. Hanson indicated that the addition of landscaping in the right-of-way and the southwest corner of the site will serve as a visual buffer to the parking area.

He confirmed that the ADA parking space conforms to state regulations and the ADA itself.

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. Vodges and 2nd by Ms. Hunt:

Patrick Davenport: yes

Barbara Hunt: yes

Brian Melchiorre: yes

Don Cabrera: yes

Joe Franco: yes

Angela Daniels: yes

Brian Stuart: abstain

Vince Tenaglia: yes

Bradley Vogdes: yes

Jane Reynolds: yes

Alexa Alverado: abstain

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

During deliberations, the Board commended the Applicant for taking the time to modify the approved plans while adhering to the comments provided by the Board during the November work session meeting.

The Board agreed that the benefits associated with the Applicant's proposal outweighed any detriments associated with a lack of off-street parking.

The Board found that the purposes of zoning identified by Mr. Scheidt would be advanced in connection with this proposal and supports granting the relief requested by the Applicant.

The Board determined that granting the proposed variance relief presents no substantial detriments to the public good nor will it impair the intent or purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance.

On Motion of Mr. Vodges and 2nd by Mr. Hunt for approval:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: yes	Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: yes
Brian Stuart: abstain	Vince Tenaglia: yes	Bradley Vogdes: yes
Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: abstain	

Application PB-24-18 7701 Seaview Avenue a/k/a blk 99.01 lots 13.01, 14.01 in Zone R-2 owner Scott Peter; seeking minor subdivision & "C" Variance.

The Applicant, Scott Peter, was self-represented. Mr. Peter was placed under oath, and he testified before the Board.

The Subject Property is a corner lot located at 7701 Seaview Avenue, a/k/a Block: 99.01, Lots: 13.01 and 14.01, in the Borough's R-2 zoning district.

The subject property is developed with a single-family dwelling.

Mr. Peter advised the Board subject property is currently recognized as two (2) independent, standalone lots. The lots in question have not been formally consolidated by the Borough, and the Borough's Tax Assessor has acknowledged that two (2) lots exist.

The Applicant has the ability to demolish the existing single-family dwelling, and he would be permitted to develop the existing lots, subject to complying with applicable bulk regulations.

Mr. Peter testified that the R-2 zone requires that lots contain a minimum area of 3,200SF.

He indicated that the subdivision that he is proposing simply seeks to relocate the existing lot line separating lots 13.01 and 14.01 in an attempt to equalize the size of same.

Mr. Peter testified that proposed lot 13.01 will contain 3,224SF, and proposed lot 14.01 will contain 3,436SF. Both proposed lots exceed the minimum lot area required in the R-2 zone for the development of single-family dwellings.

Mr. Peter further testified that the proposed lots also exceed the minimum required lot frontage and lot width in the R-2 zone.

He indicated that a lot depth variance is requested due to the angle of Seaview Avenue and the impact that it has on the size of the existing lots.

Mr. Peter testified that he does not foresee any detriments to the public good or the surrounding neighborhood in connection with this proposal.

He stated that equalizing the size of the lots in question will result in lots that are more consistent in size with the properties in the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Peter further testified that he intends to demolish the existing single-family dwelling which has fallen into a state of disrepair.

He advised the Board that he intends to develop single-family dwellings on the proposed lots that will conform to all applicable bulk standards.

Mr. Peter opined that his proposal is a far better zoning alternative than maintaining the existing lots and developing same with single-family dwellings as one of the existing lots would contain a dwelling that is smaller and inconsistent with the dwellings in the surrounding neighborhood.

In response to a question posed by Board, Mr. Peter testified that the proposed single-family dwellings would front on to Seaview Avenue.

A discussion ensued between the Applicant, the Board, and the Board's professionals in regard to the consolidation of undersized lots and the doctrine of merger.

The Board Solicitor advised the Board that the Borough has not consolidated the existing lots notwithstanding the fact that lots are and have been in common ownership, one of the lots is undersized, and there is an existing single-family dwelling that spans both lot lines.

Under current case law, two (2) lots exist and can be developed once the single-family dwelling is demolished.

The Board acknowledged that the proposed subdivision, while not a by-right subdivision, will improve the existing conditions by essentially equalizing the frontage of the lots in question.

The Applicant was advised that the Borough's ordinance requires the payment of a fee of \$100 per lot for tax map maintenance purposes, and satisfaction of the aforementioned tax map maintenance fees would be made a condition of approval.

As a condition of approval, the Applicant will ensure that the existing structure located on site is demolished prior to the recording of the plan of subdivision with the Cape May County Clerk's Office.

As a condition of approval, the Applicant will obtain lot numbers and property addresses from the Borough Tax Assessor and reflect same on revised plans prior recording the plan of subdivision.

Borough Engineer Marc DeBlasio, P.E., P.P., C.M.E., prepared an Engineer's Report dated August 28, 2024, which was received by the Board, and which is incorporated herein as fact.

Will Hanson, P.E., a professional engineer, and employee 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 all comments and conditions set forth within the Engineer's Report.

Mr. Hanson confirmed the variance relief and waivers sought in connection with this Application. He advised the Board and confirmed that the lot depth variance is required due to the angle of Seaview Avenue which reduces the lot depth of the lots in question.

The Meeting was opened to the public for comment. One (1) individual addressed the Board in connection with this application, namely:

Paul Muller, owner of the property located at 7709 Seaview Avenue, appeared and he was placed under oath to testify before the Board. Mr. Muller indicated that he was not opposed to the Application. He questioned the existence of the two lots in question and asked for confirmation that the proposal amounted to relocating an existing lot line.

No additional members of the public spoke out in favor or against the application, and accordingly the public portion of the meeting 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. Hunt and 2nd by Mr. Stuart:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: abstain	Joe Franco: abstain	Angela Daniels: abstain
Brian Stuart: yes	Vince Tenaglia: yes	Bradley Vogdes: abstain
Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes	

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

During deliberations members of the Board found that the applicant had met the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law and the Borough Ordinance for the approval of the proposed minor subdivision. The Board further finds that the lot depth variances are appropriate in light of the fact that two lots currently exist, and the proposed lots associated with this minor subdivision exceed the minimum lot area required in the R-2 zone.

The Board finds that the Applicant's proposal presents no substantial detriment to the public good nor will it impair the intent or purpose of the Borough's zone plan or zoning ordinance.

The Board agreed that the Applicant's proposal amounts to a better zoning alternative for the subject property rather than maintain two (2) lots of unequal size.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart and 2nd by Mr. Tenaglia for approval:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: abstain	Joe Franco: abstain	Angela Daniels: abstain
Brian Stuart: yes	Vince Tenaglia: yes	Bradley Vogdes: abstain
Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes	

APPLICATION APPROVED.

RESOLUTIONS MEMORIALIZING BOARD ACTIONS:

Resolution PB-25-01 for Application PB-24-17 for 6510 Park Boulevard a/k/a blk 70 lots 1-8 & blk 71 1.01 – 8.01 in Zone MC owner Greater Wildwood Yacht Club; seeking request for Waiver from Site Plan Review and Approval and Façade Review.

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

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: abstain	Joe Franco: absent	Angela Daniels: absent
Brian Stuart: abstain	Vince Tenaglia: yes	Bradley Vogdes: absent
Jane Reynolds: yes	Alexa Alverado: yes	

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Bike Connectivity Path

Approved Ordinances – Commissioners Approved Ordinance No. 1442 & 1443.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Cabrera thanks the entire board, secretary, engineer and solicitor for their commitment and hard work.

OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michael Gericke, owner of property located at 5501 Pacific Avenue. Questions about how many lots in the Borough are currently multiple lots with one single home. Chairman Pat Davenport mentioned quite a few.

Joe Viscomi, owner of the property located at 308 E Washington Avenue. States the Board is going in the right direction. States how North Wildwood and Wildwood, have a lot of square buildings. Appreciates the Crest is trying to avoid that square box look. Builders are simply trying to build cheap to flip houses quickly. Appreciates the "look" of the Crest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next regularly scheduled meeting is 5 February, there are two applications scheduled at this time to go before the board on that date.

ADJOURN: On motion of Mr. Melchiorre, second by Mr. Stuart and unanimous voice vote, the Chairman adjourned the meeting 6:46pm.

Pamela Riper
Planning Board Secretary