

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

The following are the minutes of the Wildwood Crest Planning Board as held on Wednesday March 5, 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: present	Joe Franco: present	Angela Daniels: absent
Fred Mettler: absent	Brian Stuart: absent	Vince Tenaglia: present
Bradley Vodges: present	Jane Reynolds: absent	Alexa Alverado: absent
Joe Viscomi: present		
Board Secretary Pamela Riper: present		
Rob Belasco: present		
Engineer Will Hanson: present		

Rob Belasco swears engineer Will Hanson in.

MINUTES:

Mr. Vogdes moved to dispense with the public reading of the minutes of the meeting of 5 February 2025 and approve as distributed, Mr. Tenaglia second, minutes approved as distributed.

Patrick Davenport: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes	Don Cabrera: abstain
Joe Franco: abstain	Vince Tenaglia: yes	Bradley Vodges: yes
Joe Viscomi: yes		

APPLICATIONS:

Application PB-24-20 for 113 & 115 E. Columbine Road a/k/a blk 43 lots 15 & 16 in Zone R-2 owner Eva Marie DiGuglielmo; seeking "C" Variances.

The Applicant was represented by Andrew Catanese, Esquire.

Mr. Catanese outlined the nature of the application, and the relief sought in connection with same.

The subject property is located at 113 and 115 E. Columbine Road, a/k/a Block 43, Lots 15 & 16.

The lots in question are undersized, each measuring 30ft. x 100ft. (3,000SF).

Each lot is developed with 1-story single-family dwelling.

Mr. Catanese advised the Board that there is a common driveway between the properties which leads to a shared accessory storage shed that straddles the property line.

The Applicant originally sought variance relief associated with minimum front yard landscaping requirements associated with the lot 15; however, as outlined below, during the presentation, the Applicant agreed to comply with the front yard landscape requirements eliminating need for two (2) additional variances.

Mr. Catanese indicated that the situation associated with the subject properties is unique as the existing dwellings are located on undersized 30ft. x 100ft. lots, and there is limited space to accommodate additional storage without elevating the existing structures or constructing new dwellings.

Robert Bear, the husband of the Applicant, appeared, and he testified before the Board.

Mr. Bear informed the Board that his wife purchased 115 E. Columbine Road in October 2018, and they reside there on a full-time basis.

He testified that over the years he has renovated the existing building in order to improve the overall aesthetics of the property and to address much needed repairs.

Mr. Bear testified that he hired a contractor to construct an addition to the accessory storage shed and offered to expand the portion of the shed owned by the owners of 113 E. Columbine Road.

During construction, he inquired if the contractor could eliminate an existing stone area in the front yard in order to improve the overall safety of the site.

Mr. Bear testified that he was unaware that the decision to concrete the front yard violated the zoning ordinance as several neighboring properties had concrete in their entire front yard areas.

With respect to the accessory shed, Mr. Bear testified that the shed has a divider wall down the middle which separates the shed into individual space for each property, and separate access doors were installed on the side of the structure.

Mr. Bear confirmed that the accessory shed is utilized exclusively for storage purposes, and there is no heating or air conditioning in same.

Mr. Catanese distributed a packet consisting of five (5) pages, containing photographs depicting before and after construction conditions of the subject properties, which was received by the Board, and marked as Exhibit A-1.

Mr. Bear reviewed Exhibit A-1 and he discussed the conditions that existed prior to the renovations to the shed and front yard and after the work was completed.

Vincent Orlando, P.E., P.P., L.L.A., C.M.E. with Engineering Design Associates, P.A. appeared before the Board on behalf of the Applicant. Mr. Orlando was accepted by the Board as an expert in the fields of engineering and land planning and he was placed under oath and testified from the proposed Variance Plan, consisting of one (1) sheet, dated October 23, 2024, and last revised November 1, 2024, which was received by the Board, and which is incorporated herein as fact.

Mr. Orlando reviewed the former site conditions as well as the current/proposed site conditions for the benefit of the Board.

He advised the Board that the application is fairly simple in that it seeks to approve the expansion of the existing storage shed by approximately 40SF on each property.

Mr. Orlando testified that an addition measuring 4.7ft. x 8.47ft. was added to the portion of the shed located on 113 E. Columbine Road, and 4.57ft. x 8.53ft. was added to the portion of the shed located on 115 E. Columbine Road.

He confirmed that there were no changes to the existing rear and side yard setbacks.

Mr. Orlando provided testimony in relation to improvements to the front yard that consisted of replacing a prior stone area with concrete.

A small strip of decorative stone was maintained along with two (2) planters.

After a discussion between the Board, the Applicant, and the Applicant's professionals, the Applicant agreed to modify the front yard landscaped area to comply with the provisions of § 85-69 of the Borough Code thereby eliminating the need for variances associated with minimum front yard impervious coverage and minimum front yard plantings.

As condition of approval, the Applicant will submit a revised Variance Plan that depicts the proposed landscaping in the front yard and which modifies the applicable zoning table.

With respect to the remaining variances, Mr. Orlando testified that the Applicant is experiencing a hardship due to existing site conditions and the fact that the subject property is fully developed which makes compliance with the applicable Ordinance impractical and which supports granting the requested variance relief.

Mr. Orlando also 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 as the Applicant's proposal provides needed storage space while preserving the character and appearance of the neighborhood;

Provides adequate light, air, and open space as the only real impact is to the owners of the subject properties; and

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

Mr. Orlando 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.

He noted that the 0ft. side yard setback is an existing condition which requires variance relief due to the expansion of the accessory shed.

The party wall within the shed is located directly on the property line which results in a 0ft. setback.

With respect to off-street parking, Mr. Orlando testified that there is no legitimate parking provided on site; however, there is a shared driveway which is utilized by the owners of the subject properties which can accommodate a minimum of two (2) parking spaces.

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 confirmed the variance relief required in connection with the Applicant's proposal in light of the Applicant's representation that they would comply with the front yard landscaping requirements.

The Meeting was opened to the public for comment. Four (4) individuals addressed the Board in connection with this application, namely:

John Gericke, owner of the property located at 110 E. Wisteria Road, appeared and he was placed under oath to testify before the Board. Mr. Gericke raised concerns in regard to the fact that the Applicant failed to obtain required permits/approvals prior to completing the work. He expressed concerns about flooding and drainage issues, but acknowledged that the Applicant's willingness to comply with the front yard landscaping requirements was a good thing. He indicated that he felt that the expansion of the accessory shed was excessive given the size limitations on accessory structures within the Borough's Ordinance. He was opposed to the Application.

Thomas Troy, owner of the property located at 109 E. Wisteria Road, appeared and he was placed under oath to testify before the Board. Mr. Troy raised concerns about impervious coverage and parking. He was advised that no legal off-street parking exists on site, and no off-street parking is proposed.

Michael Zigahn, owner of the property located at 109 E. Columbine Road, appeared and he was placed under oath to testify before the Board. Mr. Zigahn indicated that he had no concerns with the Applicant's proposal. He took no issue with the addition to the shed, and he was in favor of the Applicant's willingness to comply with landscaping requirements.

Donna Bruno, owner of the property located at 107 E. Columbine Road, appeared and he was placed under oath to testify before the Board. She indicated that she supported the Applicant's proposal.

No additional 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. Melchiorre:

Patrick Davenport: yes

Brian Melchiorre: yes

Don Cabrera: yes

Joe Franco: yes

Vince Tenaglia: yes

Bradley Vogdes: yes

Joe Viscomi: yes

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

The Board commended the Applicant for agreeing to modify the Application to provide compliant landscaping in the front yard area pursuant to § 85-69.

Board members agreed that the modification to the rear yard accessory shed was not an issue as the addition only impacts the subject properties and has no impact on neighboring properties.

The Board agreed that the benefits associated with the Applicant's proposal outweighed any detriments.

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

The Board also agreed that the Applicant was experiencing a hardship.

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. Melchiorre and by Mr. Vogdes for approval:

Patrick Davenport: yes

Brian Melchiorre: yes

Don Cabrera: yes

Joe Franco: yes

Vince Tenaglia: yes

Bradley Vogdes: yes

Joe Viscomi: yes

RESOLUTIONS MEMORIALIZING BOARD ACTIONS:

Resolution PB-25-04 approving **Application PB-24-15** for 125 E Wisteria Road a/k/a blk 39 lots 10 in Zone R-2 owner Peter and Leonora Hutt; seeking "C" Variances.

Mr. Vogdes moved to approve, second by Mr. Tenaglia:

Patrick Davenport: yes

Brian Melchiorre: yes

Don Cabrera: abstain

Joe Franco: abstain

Vince Tenaglia: yes

Bradley Vogdes: yes

Joe Viscomi: yes

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Rob Belasco gives update on Mahalo Appeal – Application was upheld on all fronts. There is a 45 day appeal period to appeal.

Bike Connectivity Path – Michelle Taylor expected to have plan complete and do a presentation for the planning board at the end of the Summer.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michael Gericke, owner of property located at 5501 Pacific Avenue. States that all the cribbing at the Mahalo was removed, questions how long it will remain standing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next regularly scheduled meeting is 2 April, there are three applications scheduled at this time to go before the board on that date.

ADJOURN: On motion of Mr. Vodges, second by Mr. Tenaglia and unanimous voice vote, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:45pm.

Pamela Riper
Planning Board Secretary