

**BOROUGH OF WILDWOOD CREST
Planning Board
Meeting Minutes –1 May 2024 5 p.m.**

The following are the minutes of the Wildwood Crest Planning Board as held on Wednesday May 1, 2024, 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: present	Joe Franco: present	Angela Daniels: present
Gerry D’Antonio: present	Fred Mettler: present	Pete Cava: present
Brian Stuart: present	Vince Tenaglia: present	Bradley Vogdes: absent
Jane Reynolds: absent		
Board Secretary Pamela Ripper: present		
Solicitor 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 April 2024 and approve as distributed, Mr. Stuart second, minutes approved as distributed.

Patrick Davenport: abstain	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: abstain	Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: yes
Gerry D’Antonio: abstain	Fred Mettler: abstain	Pete Cava: yes
Brian Stuart: yes	Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: absent

APPLICATIONS:

Brian Stuart Recuses himself.
Jane Reynolds enters meeting at 5:17pm.

Application PB-24-03 for 7201 Ocean Avenue a/k/a blk 94.03 lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.01, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 & 16 in Zone M-1A owner Madison Wildwood Crest RE, LLC; seeking “C” Variance & Final & Amended Final Site Plan Approval.

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 an irregularly shaped lot containing 56,837SF located in the Borough’s M-1-A zone between Rambler Road, Orchid Road, and Ocean Avenue.

On February 1, 2023, the Applicant received approval from the Board to renovate and rehabilitate an existing hotel resulting in a total of 104-units and a 120-seat restaurant. Said approvals were memorialized in Board Resolution PB-23-20.

Mr. Barnes advised the Board that the Applicant is back before the Board seeking amended preliminary and final site plan approval in connection with the installation of various signs which necessitate additional variance relief.

The Applicant is proposing to relocate the existing freestanding sign to the corner of Rambler and Ocean Avenues, to be located within an existing planter, requiring a setback variance.

Mr. Barnes indicated that additional signage is proposed in the area of the pool deck which increases the number of wall mounted signs from 2 to 3, and which results in the total building mounted sign area exceeding that which is permitted.

The Applicant is also requesting the elimination of a condition requiring the Applicant to pursue an encroachment agreement from the Board of Commissioners in order to maintain the existing deck and railings that encroach into the Borough’s right-of-way.

Mr. Barnes informed the Board that the Applicant attempted to obtain an encroachment agreement from the governing body; however, it was determined that the land upon which the stairs and railing are encroaching is owned by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program and not the Borough.

Mr. Barnes indicated that the Applicant believes that the encroachments existed prior to the adjacent property coming into Green Acres' ownership. Accordingly, the Applicant is requesting that the requirement that it pursue an encroachment agreement be eliminated.

The Board determined that it was appropriate to modify the condition, but did not believe that the condition should be eliminated entirely given the fact that portions of the deck and railing encroach onto a neighboring property. As condition of approval, the Applicant will investigate the encroachment and purpose an encroachment agreement to legalize the encroaching deck and railing, if determined to be necessary and/or required.

Morris Clark, RA of DAS Architecture appeared on behalf of the Applicant, and he was recognized as an expert in the field of architecture. Mr. Clark was placed under oath, and he testified from the proposed architectural plans, consisting of two (2) sheets, dated October 24, 2022, and last revised January 3, 2024, which were received by the Board and which are incorporated herein as fact.

Mr. Clark confirmed that the modifications to the previously approved site plan that are before the Board are tied to the relocation of the freestanding sign, and the installation of a third building mounted sign in the area of the pool deck.

Mr. Clark testified that the freestanding sign is proposed to be relocated to the corner of Rambler Road and Ocean Avenues.

Mr. Clark further testified that the freestanding sign is being relocated closer to the corner for wayfinding purposes.

He indicated that the sign itself has not increased in size in comparison to what was previously approved in February of 2023.

Mr. Morris advised the Board that the layout of the site and parking impacted the visibility of the sign in its previously approved location.

He indicated that the proposed location of the sign will improve vehicle and pedestrian safety as the public will be able to identify the site easier and earlier while travelling down the public right-of-way.

In response to a question posed by the Board, Mr. Clark testified that the sign will be installed on an angle to ensure that there is no negative impact to vehicle traffic and to improve its visibility.

With respect to the building mounted sign, Mr. Clark testified that two prior building mounted signs were approved in February 2023, one of which is visible from Rambler Road and the other from Ocean Avenue.

The combined area of these two signs is 48SF whereas 50SF is permitted.

Mr. Clark advised the Board that the Applicant is now proposing a third sign in the area of the pool deck which is approximately 7.7SF in size. The pool deck sign will only be visible to guests of the hotel, and will have no impact on the general public or neighboring properties.

In response to a question posed by the Board, Mr. Clark testified that all of the proposed signs will be backlit and are constructed using dye cut letters.

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 field of engineering and land planning and he was placed under oath and testified from the proposed site plan, consisting of three (3) sheets, dated October 24, 2022, and last revised January 3, 2024, which was received by the Board and which is incorporated herein as fact.

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

He confirmed the variance relief sought in connection with the proposed sign package.

Mr. Orlando testified that the site has been significantly improved compared to what previously existed on site.

He indicated that the freestanding sign is akin to a monument sign which is appropriate to be located at the corner of Rambler Road and Ocean Avenue as it will be located in an existing planter.

In response to a question posed by the Board, Mr. Orlando testified that the existing planter is 30 inches tall, and the proposed freestanding sign is approximately 4ft. tall.

Mr. Orlando opined that the sign itself will have no impact on the required site triangle and it provides an aesthetic enhancement to the site and business itself.

Moreover, he testified that the relocation of the sign will have no impact on the total number of off-street parking spaces provided.

With respect to the building mounted signs, Mr. Orlando confirmed that no modifications are proposed to the two previously approved building mounted signs.

He indicated that the third proposed sign within the area of the pool deck has no impact on the site, the structure, or the surrounding neighborhood as it will only be visible internally by guests of the hotel.

In addition, Mr. Orlando 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; and Encourages coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land. 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 reiterated that, with the exception of the signs, there are no other modifications proposed to the site. A question arose in relation to the installation of Juliet balconies which the Applicant indicated would be installed on site.

Mr. Orlando advised the Board that the Applicant has indicated that the balconies are currently on backorder and they are not anticipated to be received until Fall 2024. As a condition of approval, the Applicant must install the Juliet balconies as soon as they are received.

He informed the Board that the doors leading to the balconies have been secured and there is no ability for guests to access the area where the balconies will be installed.

Borough Engineer Marc DeBlasio, P.E., P.P., C.M.E., prepared an Engineer's Report dated April 24, 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. As a condition of approval, the Applicant will comply with any and all comments/conditions set forth within the Engineer's Report.

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. Cava and 2nd by Ms. Hunt:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: yes	Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: yes
Gerry D'Antonio: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Pete Cava: yes
Brian Stuart: abstain	Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: abstain

During deliberations, the Board agreed that that the Applicant's proposed sign package will have minimal, if any impact on the general public or neighboring properties.

A majority of the Board agreed that relocating the freestanding sign to the corner of Rambler Road and Ocean Avenue will improve overall site safety and improve wayfinding.

The Board took no issue with the sign proposed in the area of the pool deck or the increase in total building mounted sign area given the fact that the third sign is only visible internally to guests of the hotel. The Board agreed that the benefits associated with the Applicant's proposal outweighed any detriments associated with a lack of off-street parking.

Board Members agreed that the Applicant's proposal advances several goals and objectives outlined within the Borough's Master Plan.

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 finds that granting the proposed variance relief presents no substantial detriment the public good nor will it impair the intent or purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance.

On Motion of Ms. Hunt and 2nd by Ms. Daniels to approve:

Patrick Davenport: yes	Barbara Hunt: yes	Brian Melchiorre: yes
Don Cabrera: yes	Joe Franco: yes	Angela Daniels: yes
Gerry D'Antonio: yes	Fred Mettler: yes	Pete Cava: yes
Brian Stuart: abstain	Vince Tenaglia: abstain	Jane Reynolds: abstain

REDEVELOPMENT REFERRAL:

Presentation for Proposed Redevelopment Plan for North New Jersey Avenue

Planning Board's professional planner, Michelle M. Taylor, P.P., A.I.C.P., appeared, she reviewed the proposed Redevelopment Plan for the benefit of the Board, she provided testimony in relation to the regulations to be established for the New Jersey Avenue North Area in Need of Rehabilitation, and she

opined that the Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the Borough's Master Plan and most recent Reexamination Report as they specifically reference and identify a need to advance the rehabilitation and/or redevelopment of this portion of the New Jersey Avenue corridor. The meeting was opened to the public for comment, and, after a discussion amongst the members of the Board, the Board found the proposed Redevelopment Plan to be consistent with the Borough's Master Plan and unanimously agreed to recommend that the Board of Commissioners formally adopt same, subject one minor revision set forth below; and

RESOLUTIONS MEMORIALIZING BOARD ACTIONS:

None

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Bike Connectivity Path
Fence Ordinance

NEW BUSINESS:

None

OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT:

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next regularly scheduled meeting is 5 June, there are no applications scheduled at this time to go before the board on that date.

ADJOURN: On motion of Mr. Cava, second by Mr. Stuart and unanimous voice vote, the Chairman adjourned the meeting 6:37pm.

Pamela Riper
Planning Board Secretary