

THE BOROUGH OF WILDWOOD CREST
Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – 6 October 2021 5 p.m.

Chairman Patrick 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 was taken by the secretary: Alvarado, present; Cava, present; Daniels, present; Davenport, present; D'Antonio, present; Melchiorre, present; Schiff, present; Hunt, present; Mettler, present; Gould, present; Thompson, absent; Solicitor Belasco, present; Engineer Joseph Mohnack, present; Secretary Rogers, present.

Mrs. Gould moved to dispense with the public reading of the minutes of the meeting of 1 September 2021 and approve as distributed, Ms. Daniels seconded. Roll call: Alvarado, abstain; Hunt, abstain; Melchiorre, abstain; Mettler, yes; Schiff, abstain; D'Antonio, abstain; Cava, yes; Daniels, yes; Davenport, yes; Gould, yes. Minutes approved as distributed.

There was one application to come before the Board:

PB-21-06-01: KH-NJ Ventures, LLC, owner of the property located at 407 E Miami Ave, blk 117.02, lot 9 in the M-1B zoning district; proposing a minor subdivision to create two 34.2555' x 90' lots to construct two single family homes with "c" variance relief. Applicant represented by Andrew D. Catanese, Esq. Mr. Catanese approached the board, described the application and variance relief sought, and introduced professionals Matthew Sprague, Architect, and John Helbig, Engineer. Mr. Catanese described the M-1B zone as a "hodge-podge" permitting hotels, motels, multi-family, duplex, and single family development. He said the subject lot is suitable for duplex development by width and triplex development by lot area, adding relief is being sought under the "c"2 (flexible "c") criteria weighing the benefits and detriments of granting the relief. Matthew Sprague was sworn in and recognized as an expert. He described the process behind arriving at the conclusion subdivision and two single family dwellings would be the best development option for the parcel. He showed the proposed plan, noting there would be 12.1' of space between the buildings with a 6.1' sideyard setback for each providing light, air and open space. Mr. Sprague showed the proposed garage layout saying two stacked vehicles could be accommodated with adequate space for mechanicals in the garage. He said they propose three floors of living space with an "upside down" design. Mr. Sprague noted relief is sought for decks spanning the front of the building which will reduce the visual mass of the structure. A rendering of the proposed structures was entered as exhibit "A-1". Responding to Mr. Catanese, Mr. Sprague showed and explained renderings of the possible height permissible for triplex construction as opposed to the proposed single family construction. Mr. Sprague said the ceiling heights are 9' with 8'8" in the garage. He said the detailing would be similar to the structure at 406 E Miami Ave for which the applicant had received prior variance relief, opining the proposed structures fit the character of the block. Answering a query from board member Cava, Mr. Sprague said the inclusion of 9' ceilings is a matter of preference and is a popular option in higher-end houses, adding it allows the use of more attractive taller windows. Responding to Mrs. Hunt, Mr. Sprague said a "traditional" duplex could be built conforming to setbacks, but the larger width would affect roof pitch; and it is not feasible to design two side-by-side parking spaces in the garage as entry from a 10' curb cut would be difficult. Mr. Sprague said the distance between the curb cuts will be 33'. Exhibit "A-2" showing the structure at 406 E Miami Ave was entered, and Mr. Catanese described the variance relief granted for that project. Responding to board member Daniels, Mr. Sprague opined single family development is a better alternative.

A five minute recess at the request of the board was granted at 5:37 p.m. Meeting reconvened at 5:42 pm.

John Helbig, engineer, was sworn in and recognized as an expert. Answering Mr. Catanese, he said the curb cut as shown is the maximum allowed under ordinance. Mrs. Hunt expressed concern that three stacked parking spaces with two in the garage are "useless". Mr. Helbig entered exhibit A-3 showing an overview of the neighborhood and graphics depicting the M-1B zone as mixed use. He said the proposed lot sizes of 3600 sq ft provide 85% of the area required by ordinance. Mr. Helbig opined that as the proposed structures meet the front yard setback requirements, need only minor relief for sideyard setbacks, and fit the "mixed bag" use of the zone, there is no detriment to the public good or zone plan,

and , therefore, fulfills the negative criteria. Under the positive criteria, he opined the proposal satisfies purposes of the act b., c., e., g., and i. Mssrs. Helbig and Catanese pointed other single family development in the area on the exhibits. Mr. Catanese entered exhibit A-4 showing other single family homes in the neighborhood. Answering board member Alvarado, Kirk Hewitt, property owner, was sworn in and said the next-door lot is 45' x 90'. Answering board member Mettler Mr. Sprague said no wall modulations have been included in the plan as there would be no benefit in including those, adding the proposed buildings are 22' wide and it would be difficult to include modulations and further create difficulty with parking. Answering board member Cava, Mr. Sprague said there are nine windows on each interior side. Discussion ensued as to the feasibility and marketability of a large single family home. As there were no further questions from the board, and Mr. Catanese said their presentation had concluded Vice-chairman Hunt closed that portion of the hearing. Board Engineer Mohnack entered his report (attached hereto and made part hereof) into the record. Solicitor Belasco reminded the applicant the tax lots and addresses must be verified by the tax assessor, and the requisite map filing fee must be paid. No members of the public spoke.

Solicitor Belasco read the findings of fact into the record, identifying the property, professionals, describing the application and identifying the variance relief sought. He listed the purposes of the act fulfilled, the four exhibits, testimony, and conditions of approval: addressing the engineer's report, verifying lot numbers and addresses, and payment of the map filing fee. On motion of Mr. Cava, second by Mr. Schiff and roll call vote, the findings were accepted. Roll call: Alvarado, yes; Hunt, yes; Melchiorre, yes; Mettler, yes; Schiff, yes; D'Antonio, yes; Cava, yes; Daniels, yes; Gould, yes. In deliberation, board members expressed concern about creating undersized lots which create the need for variance, saying duplex construction would also be in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. Vice-chairman Hunt asked to entertain a motion to approve the subdivision, saying a vote on the variance would be taken separately. Mr. Alvarado moved to approve the minor subdivision, Mrs. Gould provided the second; roll call: Alvarado, no (saying he opposed creation of undersized lots); Hunt, no (saying the purposes of zoning would not be advanced); Melchiorre, no (agreeing with Alvarado and Hunt); Mettler, no (saying he favors single family development over duplex, but excess relief is needed); Schiff, no (agreeing with board members' comments); D'Antonio, no (saying the creation of nonconforming lots is not appropriate); Cava, no (agreeing with board members' comments); Daniels, no (saying she opposes the undersized lots); Gould, no (agreeing with other comments and noting there is not sufficient parking for the number of bedrooms). Subdivision denied. Mr. Catanese waived the variance vote as it was now moot. Chairman Davenport re-entered the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

There were no resolutions memorializing Board action.

There were no administrative resolutions.

Under Old Business, Chairman Davenport reported the Master Plan Subcommittee has met and plan to meet again during October.

Mr. Mettler had no report on Sunset Lake; there is an upcoming meeting to discuss dredge spoils. Centers designation participation has concluded.

Under new business, concern about the condition of older motels leading to potential demolition and conversion to residential use and unkempt construction sites was expressed. Board members considered recommending site containment be added to borough ordinance.

No members of the public spoke.

On motion of Mrs. Gould, second by Mr. Alvarado and unanimous voice vote, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Deborah Rogers
Planning Board Secretary