

WYCKOFF PLANNING BOARD
APRIL 20, 2022 PUBLIC BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Public Work Session: 7:30 p.m. Second Floor Court Room, Memorial Town Hall
Public Business Meeting: 8:00 p.m. Second Floor Court Room, Memorial Town Hall

The meeting commenced with the reading of the Open Public Meeting Statement by Chairman Fortunato.

“The regular April 20, 2022 Public Work Session Meeting of the Wyckoff Planning Board is now in Session. In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, notice of this meeting appears on our Annual Schedule of Meetings. A copy of said Annual Schedule has been posted on the bulletin board in Memorial Town Hall; a copy has been filed with the Township Clerk, The Record, The Ridgewood News and the North Jersey Herald and News – all newspapers having general circulation throughout the Township of Wyckoff. At least 48 hours prior to this meeting the agenda thereof was similarly posted, filed and mailed to said newspapers.” Formal action may be taken.

“All applicants are hereby reminded that your application, if approved, may be subject to the terms, conditions and payment of the Affordable Housing Development Fee requirements of the Township. Information can be obtained from the Code of the Township of Wyckoff, Chapter 113-8 on the Township’s website, www.wyckoff-nj.com”

“This meeting is a judicial proceeding. Any questions or comments must be limited to issues that are relevant to what the board may legally consider in reaching a decision and decorum appropriate to a judicial hearing must be maintained at all times.”

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Board Members in attendance: Rudy Boonstra, Mayor; Rob Fortunato, Chairman; Kelly Conlon, Frank Sedita, Mike Homaychak, Glenn Sietsma, and Sarah Caprio.
Absent: Kevin Purvin, Pete Melchionne, Scott Fisher, and Mae Bogdansky.
Staff in attendance: David Becker, Substitute Board Attorney; Mark DiGennaro, Township Engineer; and Maureen Mitchell, Board Secretary.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of the March 9, 2022 Work Session and Regular Business Meeting minutes

The March 9, 2022 Work Session and Regular Business Meeting minutes were approved during the Work Session.

PAYMENT RESOLUTION #22-04

Payment Resolution #22-04 was approved during the Work Session.

FOR REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

Guided by the Historic Preservation goal of the Master Plan, the Historic Preservation Commission is presenting an inventory of the fourteen homes, currently listed on the State and National Registries of Historic Structures, for incorporation into the Historic Element of the Master Plan.

The matter was voted on during the Work Session.

T-Mobile Northeast, LLC 340 Franklin Ave. Blk 258 Lot 1.01

(The applicant proposes to install a natural gas emergency backup generator within the fenced in equipment area for the existing cell tower on the Wyckoff Town Hall campus)

500 W. Main, LLC 500 West Main St. Block 222 Lot 1.01

(The applicant proposes to construct a loading dock and two overhead doors to the existing Building. A parking variance relief is requested for minimum number of parking spaces whereby 278 spaces are required, 255 are existing and 244 spaces are proposed)

The two (2) applications were deemed complete during the work session meeting and will be placed on the May 11, 2022 meeting agenda for public hearing.

REQUEST TO AMEND RESOLUTION OF MINOR SUBDIVISION

Sokoly, Robert 370 Sicomac Rd. Block 379 Lot 25.04

Bruce Whitaker, the applicant's Attorney provided the following details of the matter: The minor subdivision was approved by the Board in November of 2020 and the Resolution was approved on December 9, 2020. After the Resolution was memorialized, Kevin Hanly, the Planning Board Attorney, noticed that the square footage of the two (2) lots were recorded incorrectly in the Resolution. The square footage numbers cited in the Resolution were from the original submission instead of the revised submission. The Bergen County Planning Board took an inordinate amount of time to go through the approval process, and we have now received preliminary County approval. The approval of the subdivision has gone beyond the 190 day time frame for perfecting a subdivision therefore I am requesting that the subdivision be reapproved. Deed have already been prepared and I am requesting that the Board approve the amended Resolution and also have the deeds signed so the applicant can finalize the subdivision.

Chairman Fortunato asked for clarification on the changes were made to the square footage numbers.

Robert Weissman, the applicant's Engineer, was sworn in. His professional address is 686 Godwin Avenue in Midland Park. He has appeared before this Board many times. The Chairman recognized Mr. Weissman as an expert in his field.

Mr. Weissman stated that the original subdivision plan was dated 9/2/2020. Upon review of the plans, Peter Ten Kate of Boswell Engineering, reported that there were some deficiencies. The plans were subsequently revised on 10/22/2020 and the revised plans were submitted to the Board for the public hearing. The subdivision was approved by the Board based on the plans dated 10/22/2020 however the Resolution cited the square footage of the lots from the 9/2/2020 plan. Mr. Weissman stated that the correct numbers are 35,863.2 square feet for lot 25.03 and 58,892.4 square feet for lot 25.04 which are the numbers that were testified to at the public hearing when the Board approved the subdivision.

Mayor Boonstra made a motion to approve the amended Resolution based on the testimony of Bruce Whitaker, the applicant's Attorney and Robert Weissman, the applicant's Engineer. Second, Mr. Homaychak. Voting in favor: Ms. Conlon, Mr. Sedita, Mr. Homaychak, Mr. Sietsma, Ms. Caprio, Mayor Boonstra, and Chairman Fortunato.

APPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING**Gonzalez, Patricia 488 Eugene Way Block 379 Lot 16 Corner lot**

(The applicant proposes to install a 6' privacy fence in the front yard along William Way)

Patricia Gonzalez, the applicant, was sworn in. Michael Soltis was also sworn in. Ms. Gonzalez stated that she wishes to replace the existing 4' chain link fence with a 6' solid vinyl fence to block out some of the noise from the increased traffic on Route 208 which is directly across the street from her home. Ms. Gonzalez mentioned that approximately two weeks ago, a moving vehicle on 208 rolled over and crashed through the fence along the highway right near the corner of her property. She went on to say that there are large pine trees that provide a lot of coverage along the side of her property where she is planning to install the fence and referred to the photos that she submitted with her application. Ms. Gonzalez stated that if the pine trees die or ever have to be removed, she will replace them with green giant arborvitaes.

Chairman Fortunato inquired about the color of the proposed fence. Ms. Gonzalez said she is proposing a tan fence with white posts.

Mayor Boonstra stated that the existing white pines do provide a good amount of screening. He added that no neighbors will be affected by the fence because the house abuts Route 208.

Mr. Sietsma stated that there is an old hedge row of white pines along the property which are a little sparse at the bottom however they will provide a good sound barrier and he believes the existing trees provide sufficient screening.

Mr. Becker stated that a variance is required for the 6' solid fence in a front yard and asked if the required sight distance of 25' as per the Township Code has been satisfied. Mr. DiGennaro stated that the requirement has been met based on the submitted survey.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
NO ONE APPEARED
CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Chairman Fortunato reiterated that there are no neighbors across the street from where the fence is proposed to be installed, and the solid fence will act as a buffer for the noise of the traffic on Route 208. He then asked for a motion on the application.

Mr. Boonstra made a motion to approve the application for a 6' tan and white vinyl privacy fence as proposed in the second front yard on William Way. Second, Mr. Homaychak. Voting in favor: Ms. Conlon, Mr. Sedita, Mr. Homaychak, Mr. Sietsma, Ms. Caprio, Mayor Boonstra, and Chairman Fortunato.

Karaaslan, Bahri 311 Evers St. Block 354 Lot 9.02

(The applicant proposes to move soil on the property in excess of 100 cubic yards and to construct retaining walls of a height greater than 2')

Bahri Karaaslan, the applicant, was sworn in. Angelo Onello, the applicant's Engineer was sworn in. Mr. Onello stated that he is a licensed Engineer in the State of New Jersey, and he has appeared before many Land Use Boards including the Wyckoff Planning Board. The Chairman recognized Mr. Onello as an expert in Engineering.

Mr. Karaaslan stated that his property is on a slope at the end of a cul-de-sac. His plan is to level some of the property to create a backyard space for his family to utilize. He is proposing to construct tiered retaining walls and drainage pits to collect the water that runs downhill onto his property.

Mr. Onello asked the Board members to refer to his submitted report titled Application Submittal and Summary Report dated January 7, 2022 and drawing 3 and 4 of the submitted Engineering Site Plan. Mr. Becker marked the entire application submittal exhibit A-1.

Mr. Onello provided the following details of the application:

The existing house, which is to remain, is a 1½ story, split level home with a front loading garage. The driveway is fairly narrow with a width of approximately 13' at the curb cut. The property is wooded. Some of the trees will need to be removed for safety issues and also to allow for the grading of the property and construction of the retaining walls. The requested variance is for the proposed tiered, 5'8" retaining walls on the southwest side of the property which is steeply sloped. The tiered walls will allow us to create a 9' wide corridor along the left side of the home for access to the backyard. There is a significant amount of drainage which runs off the upland properties onto the Karaaslan property, across the driveway and onto the backyard area and also into the garage wall. The plan of action is to significantly improve the drainage issues by installing six stormwater catch basins atop the highest retaining wall. All of the gutter spouts and driveway runoff will be directed to two, 1000 gallon stormwater drywells which will be interconnected. The proposed pool patio will also be surrounded by a series of stormwater catch basins. The existing pool equipment is located on the northeast side of the house and is proposed to remain there.

Chairman Fortunato inquired about the proposed amount of soil to be moved. Mr. Onello stated that the total movement will be 420 cubic yards to be cut and 215 cubic yards consisting of clean crushed stone and clean DGA sub-base materials to be imported for a total soils and materials movement of 635 cubic yards.

The Chairman asked for an explanation of the proposed retaining wall in the right of way. Mr. Onello stated they are proposing to widen the driveway at the curb cut to approximately 20'. The issue is that the slope on the left is so significant that extending the retaining wall to the right of way is the only way, in his opinion, to stabilize the embankment. He added that he believes the homeowners would take no exception with signing an agreement with the Township to maintain the portion of the retaining wall in the right of way.

Ms. Caprio asked if the proposed 9' wide corridor along the left side of the home was made narrower, could the retaining walls be constructed at a height of 4' instead of 5'8". Mr. Onello stated that reducing the height of the retaining walls to 4' would require three sets of walls instead of two and the distance between each of the walls would have to be 4'. He said that in his opinion, it would be very tough to build in that space.

Mr. DiGennaro stated that the drainage would not function as well with three 4' walls as it will with the proposed 5'8" walls.

Chairman Fortunato asked what landscaping is being proposed for the top of the retaining wall. Mr. Onello said a fence is proposed for the top of the highest retaining wall and the homeowners will agree to any plantings the Board may suggest.

Mr. DiGennaro said he would recommend green giant arborvitae or something deer resistant.

Mr. Sietsma said if the proposed fence is solid, the backs of the arborvitaes will die however with an open fence the arborvitaes will thrive.

Mr. Karaaslan stated that he would definitely consider an open aluminum pool code fence along the top of the retaining wall with 4' tall arborvitaes at time of planting.

Mr. Becker stated that if the Board wishes to move forward with a motion on the application this evening, they can make it a condition of approval that the applicant is to submit a landscape plan with proposed fence and plantings to the Township Engineer and/or the Shade Tree Commission for approval prior to the issuance of permits.

Chairman Fortunato voiced concerns about the retaining wall in the right of way. Mr. DiGennaro stated that in similar situations the past, we have set up easement agreements with property owners whereby the owner acknowledges that the retaining wall in the right of way is theirs and it is their responsibility to maintain it. The agreement remains with the property as long as the wall exists.

Mr. DiGennaro expressed concerns about the safety of the DPW employees plowing snow with the retaining wall in the right of way ending at the curb. He suggested removing the existing pine tree in the right of way and curving the wall to push it back approximately 4' from the curb line to run parallel to the curb. Mr. Onello said the change will be made to the plans.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Brian Cronk, who resides at 214 Oak Avenue, was sworn in. Mr. Cronk stated that he lives to the left of the applicant. He inquired about the drainage plan for the retaining wall and asked if the cistern would hold still water. Mr. Onello stated that there will be no sitting water in the proposed catch basins. Mr. Cronk asked about the proposed fence and landscaping. Chairman Fortunato said that as discussed, the applicant will submit a plan showing a pool code fence and evergreen screening to the Township Engineer for review and approval.

CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Chairman Fortunato stated that any approval will be subject to the changes to the retaining wall in the right of way which will be set back 4' from the curb, and a landscape plan is to be submitted subject to approval by Mr. Sietsma and Mr. DiGennaro prior to the issuance of permits.

Mr. Sietsma made a motion to approve the application. Second, Mr. Homyachak. Voting in favor: Ms. Conlon, Mr. Sedita, Mr. Homyachak, Mr. Sietsma, Ms. Caprio, Mayor Boonstra, and Chairman Fortunato.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the Public Business Meeting was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. The meeting concluded at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maureen Mitchell, Secretary

Wyckoff Planning Board