

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 15, 2022~7:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Said Toro, Chairman

STATEMENT

Welcome to the Public Meeting of February 15, 2022 of the Township of Washington Zoning Board. Adequate notice of the meeting was given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by the Board Secretary to at least two (2) newspapers on January 12, 2022 and this meeting has been posted on the Township Bulletin Board, Electronic Message Board, WCTV and on the Township Web Site

SALUTE TO FLAG led by Said Toro, Chairman

NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED BY COUNCIL, FEBRUARY 7, 2022

The following new alternate members and their terms were read into the record;

Stephen J. Tekirian, Alternate #1	Term 02/07/2022-12/31/2023
James Parrino, Alternate #2	Term 02/07/2022-12/31/2022

ROLL CALL

Present: John Callandrillo, Anthony Capasso, Les Hanna, Michael La Gratta, Sean Mahoney, James Parrino (Alt #2), Jeff Roberto, Stephen Tekirian (Alt. #1), Chairman Said Toro. Let the record reflect also in attendance are Attorney Gary Giannantonio and Engineer Paul Azzolina.

Absent: None

PUBLIC PORTION:

Mr. Mahoney makes a motion to open the public portion of the meeting, seconded by Mr. LaGratta, all ayes.

There are no public comments.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Mahoney, all ayes.

NEW BUSINESS

APPLICATION OF DLK PARTNERS, OWNERS OF 647 PASCACK RD., BLOCK 3201, LOT 1, dba BERGEN DENTAL GROUP, SEEKING APPROVAL FOR EXTERIOR SIGNAGE

Applicant Dr. Kevin Ma, Joanne Lent the technical representative from Sign-A-Rama company, and Robert Falkenstern Esq. are all present. Mr. Falkenstern reminds the

Board that DLK partners received a use variance on April 16, 2019 to operate a dental office. He is seeking a d(2) use variance for the signage in what is a residential zone.

Dr. Ma is sworn in and states he is a partner with DLK Partnership, LLC. He notes that the entrance and exit for the property is one way only and if someone passes the building without seeing the sign and misses the entry, entrance into the parking lot becomes difficult. There is only one way into the property which is from the northbound side of Pascack Rd. and one exit onto Washington Ave. There is also no left turn from southbound Pascack Rd. into the property. People can attempt dangerous driving maneuvers to enter the parking lot if they miss the entrance. When Dr. Ma obtained a use variance for the dental office, he indicated he would use the pre-existing illuminated sign for the building, but would apply at a later date if additional signs were needed, he now feels additional signs are necessary. The office is not operational yet as ADA issues with the ramp were delayed for the winter, but it should be completed soon.

He would like to replace the current ground sign with a new sign keeping the same size and location. He plans to re-use the lighting that already exists in the spot, it is ground illumination, not internal lighting which is currently disconnected but can be easily connected by an electrician. The sign will be wood with carved lettering. He is also proposing 2 signs placed on different sides of the building exterior since the main ground sign cannot be seen from Washington Ave. The front sign (Pascack Rd.) will be placed between the upper floor windows, the Washington Ave. sign will be between the upper floor windows as well. The wall signs will not be illuminated. The original sign board was down when he acquired the property, only the posts remain. There will be no LED illumination in the new sign, he will be re-using the currently installed ground lights. The sign lights will be on during business hours only, and will be on a timer to coincide with the business hours. The lights will not be on 24/7 and there are motion lights in the parking lot. The maximum operation hours for the business are 8:30 am to 8:30 pm, but he also has another location so it may not be that many hours. Mr. Azzolina states that he does not know of any ordinance addressing time limits pertaining to this zone but the shopping center commercial zone time limit is 11 pm. There is no ordinance limiting the sign since town code is generally silent to signs that are not within the Washington Town Center business zone. This site is in the PRTD zone which has no sign standards. This sign was an existing installation that existed for many years, and this is a continuation of what had already existed with refacing. He is not aware of any restrictions by the Town or County as to where the sign can be placed relative to the curb. The intersection of Washington and Pascack will be improved soon and he expects the curb line to be moved away from the sign.

Joanne Lent, the technical representative and manager from Sign-A-Rama, 27 North Middletown Rd. in Nanuet is sworn in. The store owner went out to the location, met with Dr. Ma and did a site survey. Exhibit A-1 are the two sheets prepared and submitted by Sign -A-Rama. The sign to be installed will be 60" wide x 45" high x 2"

deep, double sided, painted and carved. The existing posts will be replaced by wood treated posts with white vinyl sleeves and caps. The location and size of the sign will be identical to what has existed previously. The sign is not electronic or have internal illumination, it will be lit by the already existing ground lights. There will be 2 individual carved building signs, posted on the front and side of the building that are 48" x 24" x 1" with no illumination. They will be attached with brackets and anchors to the building. The Pascack Rd. sign will be above the front door between the two windows. The Washington Ave. sign will be between the 4 existing windows. Posts are 4"x4" and will be installed under the frost line and encased in concrete. They do not believe there will be any adverse impact to the area and will improve upon what was there previously. It will provide safety to the patients, and help identify the building and where it is located. The proposed illumination can be reviewed by the town for brightness which comes from each side of the sign so as not to disturb neighbors or interfere with incoming traffic. Mr. Azzolina requests the electrician contact his office once the lighting plan has been established to address any concerns. He has measured the existing sign post remnants and has confirmed the new sign is the same as what was there previously. The new sign is a slightly different shape which makes it approximately 9 inches higher at certain points for a maximum height of 45".

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to open public comments, seconded by Mr. Mahoney, all ayes.

There are no public comments.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to close public comments, seconded by Mr. Mahoney, all ayes.

Mr. Mahoney makes a motion to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Capasso.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Callandrillo, Capasso, Hanna, LaGratta, Mahoney, Roberto, Toro

Nays: None

APPLICATION OF FLP2 LLC, OWNERS OF 247 FERN ST., BLOCK 4413, LOT 13, SEEKING APPROVAL FOR ADDITIONS AND RENOVATIONS WHICH REQUIRE VARIANCES FOR LOT COVERAGE, BUILDING HEIGHT AND MINIMUM GARAGE FLOOR AREA.

Applicant Joe Prezgia, architect Francois Nicolas and Karen Baker Esq. are present. Mr. Prezgia is sworn in. He is 50 % owner of FJP2. He is seeking 3 variances, lot coverage, building height and minimum garage area. They are seeking 22.3% coverage over the 20% allowed. The application states they are seeking 21.49% which will be corrected to 22.3% to include a decorative skirt roof over the garage. They are seeking 27.49 ft. roof height versus 25 ft. allowed. Since the building and foundation is already existing and the lot slopes down in the front, it would not be possible to meet the 25 ft. maximum according to Mr. Prezgia. The average elevation

is skewed by the slope of the front portion of the lot so the height variance is needed to keep an adequate roof pitch. Lowering the pitch any more would create a flat roof vulnerable to poor runoff conditions, snow and ice damming, low valleys, and gutter problems. Mr. Prezzia states the 25 ft. height ordinance is very tight when you are working off of pre-existing conditions, particularly a foundation that sticks far up out of the ground.

They are seeking 339 sq. ft. of garage space, which is an oversize 1 car garage. A two-car garage will not fit on the property and there is currently no garage on the property. A two-car garage (500 sq. ft.) would require requesting an additional side yard (4th) variance.

Francois Nicolas of S.J. Kufel Architects at 347 Demarest Ave. in Oradell, NJ is sworn in and accepted as an expert. The house, an existing cape cod, will have a 4 ½" pitch roof, it is the lowest they can go since any lower than that is basically a flat roof, and will compromise function and aesthetics. A two-car garage to meet code would necessitate a side yard variance as well as a combined side yard variance, so an oversize one car garage was chosen, which played into the lot coverage variance. The height of each floor of the house is 8 ft., the only other thing that can be adjusted for height is the roof pitch, which is as low as it can go, at 2.5 ft. over what is allowed.

Mr. Azzolina reviews his report. He mentions that the driveway will be widened to 20 ft. which will require a tree to be removed from the northwest corner of the property and the applicant proposes to replace that tree with 2 others as depicted on the zoning survey. 27% of the structure will be demolished according to application documents. Any issues which arise during construction that would increase the destruction as described need to be discussed with the construction official prior to the destruction. The first floor will be expanded by 446 ft. and a second floor will be added. The architect needs to calculate and confirm the number for building coverage. He agrees with the submitted building height of 27.49 ft. but since it is 1/100th below what would be permitted without requiring a height variance under the use variance section of the MLUL, he recommends a survey in site to certify the actual height is proper before the roof is put on the structure so there are no unpleasant surprises at the end of the job. An As Built survey at the end of the job which shows a higher than approved height would be a major problem. Board attorney Giannantonio will make this a condition of approval. The garage floor code section is in the process of being amended, but the law currently will require a variance. The storm water management plan is adequate and will result in less flow to the neighbors and municipal storm drain. The concrete sidewalk will be partially replaced at the driveway widening, any further damage would need to be repaired by the applicant and a video inspection of the 50 yr. old sewer line is recommended.

Mr. Prezzia adds a master suite is above the garage, an entry way, powder room and mudroom are behind the garage. The whole foot print of the house will have a second level. The existing ridge height of the house is 21.9 ft., the proposed ridge height is

27.49 ft., an increase of only 5.59 ft. which will include an entire second level. The property is owned by FJP2 and will be sold when completed. The total square footage when completed will be 1,933 sq. ft., 3833 sq. ft. incl. basement and garage. Mr. Prezzia will have the ridge height measured in the field as the ridge beam is going in during framing as requested, if it is possible to have it adjusted down a few inches for a buffer at that time he will do so. The house was designed to fit the style of the neighborhood, the town, and be aesthetically pleasing to the owner and neighbors. This roof height is the highest seen on applications lately but not the highest overall, which was about 28 ft.. Approved heights lately have been lower but it is very property dependent and the basement wall on this property is very high, which Chairman Toro has visually confirmed. The Board appreciated the changes that have been made to the plan to bring down the height. Mr. LaGratta states this roof height is higher than what has been approved lately in that area and he has concerns. Mr. Prezzia points out that by dropping off steeply in the front, the topography of the land is skewing the average calculation used by the Town resulting in the need for a variance since the average height of the ridge is used. Any two 8-foot stories in that zone (Zone B) will need a variance because the height requirement is so tight. The house will be higher than the neighbors but not overwhelmingly so. According to Mr. Azzolina The livable floor of the home will be 2802 sq ft.. Digging down deeper to lower the roof line is not an option because there are currently 6 or 7 stair risers to get into the house currently.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to open public comments, seconded by Ms. Hanna, all ayes.

Mr. George Kuzma, 530 Ridgewood Rd. - He is the neighbor to the right, his property slopes down from the applicants and he feels the height difference will be obtrusive. Mrs. Kuzma joins the call and states that part of their yard is a vital living area and a hedge or fence would be helpful. She feels their property will be ruined. Neither one recalls speaking with Mr. Prezzia. Mr. Kuzma believes the property has been dug out and sloped already. Mr. Prezzia believes they are referring to a different neighbor who is also doing construction at 241 Fern St.. Board review was not required for 241 Fern St., the resident was advised to address his concerns with the Zoning official.

Joanne Conway, 241 Fern St. - They are only doing a small addition to the back of their house and the side on 247 Fern. They are not going up or doing anything with the garage. Their project was approved by the town and did not require Board review. The applicants' other houses are attractive and fit the neighborhood well.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to close public comments, seconded by Mr. Mahoney.

Ms. Hanna makes a motion to approve the application with conditions, seconded by Mr. Callandrillo. Conditions are a before and after survey of the roof ridge elevation by a licensed NJ surveyor, the two replacement trees which much have a 2 ½"

minimum trunk circumference, and the seepage pit as recommended by the engineering report.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Callandrillo, Capasso, Hanna, LaGratta, Mahoney, Roberto, Toro

Nays: None

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution No. ZB 22-06 Application of KBE Building Corp., tenant of 590 Pascack Rd., Block 2201, Lot 12, seeking approval for a non-conforming use change to utilize pre-existing bank space as a temporary office and construction parking.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Capasso.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Callandrillo, Capasso, Hanna, LaGratta, Mahoney, Roberto, Toro

Nays: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 11, 2022

January 18, 2022

Mr. Mahoney makes a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Roberto, all ayes.

CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION REGARDING THE RETURN TO IN-PERSON MEETINGS AND UTILIZING A YOUTUBE LIVE STREAM

This discussion is not about returning to in-person meetings or a YouTube livestream, it is about posting the meetings currently livestreamed on Zoom to YouTube afterwards, there will not be a live stream on YouTube. The livestream is on zoom and can be uploaded to YouTube to be watched at a later time. There is no fee for that. It can be added to the existing channel or put on a separate channel but a separate channel may make it more difficult to find. There is currently a separate Council meeting channel under the Township YouTube account which may necessitate a separate Zoning Board channel. A link and instructions or something else on the Zoning Board page can be added to the website to direct residents to the channel. Every meeting can be posted on YouTube, they will be available to anyone in

the public arena to access for an indefinite time period, the meetings would most likely not be taken down.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to open public comments, seconded by Mr. Mahoney, all ayes.

Stephen Kalish, 197 Honeysuckle Dr. – Mr. Kalish states he suggested this idea to the Board based on his experiences in other parts of the Town. Both the Town Council and the Board of Ed have been uploading meetings for quite a while. This function is built into the current zoom license. It's a nice way to make a public meeting available to the public and he encourages the Board to consider doing this. The link can easily be shared with neighbors and friends who may be interested in a particular discussion.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to close public comments, seconded by Mr. Mahoney, all ayes.

Mr. LaGratta makes a motion to approve uploading a previously recorded meeting to YouTube, seconded by Chairman Toro.

Roll Call Vote:

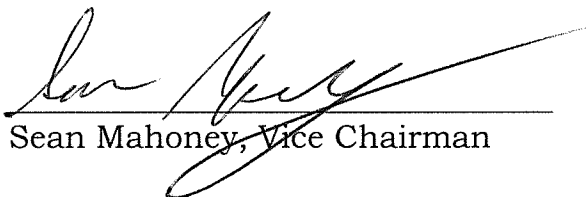
Ayes: LaGratta


Nays: Callandrillo, Capasso, Hanna, Mahoney, Roberto, Toro

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Mahoney makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 pm, seconded by Mr. Callandrillo, all ayes.

Approved:


Sean Mahoney, Vice Chairman


Grace Kalish, Secretary