

**Borough of Watchung
Board of Adjustment Meeting
October 8th, 2015**

Minutes

Chairman Cronheim called the meeting to order at 7:34pm. Salute to the flag. The Chair called for a roll call. Present at the call of the roll were:

Fechtner (X) Hunsinger (X) Dallas (A) Brown (X) Kita (A) Panzarella (X)
Bell (A) Clemens (X) Cronheim (X)

Board Engineer Mr. Stires and Zoning Officer Mr. Bennett were also present.

Chairman Cronheim indicated there was a quorum to conduct business. The Chair stated that this meeting was being held in compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 of the open public meetings law and proper notification of this meeting has been made.

Chairman Cronheim asked for a motion to approve the minutes as previously published of September 10th, 2015. Motion was made by Mr. Hunsinger, seconded by Mrs. Fechtner and approved by voice vote with the Chair abstaining.

Request- by Watchung 8th grade parents to post signs for Valley View yard sale. Approved by voice vote.

Request- by Watchung P.T.O. to post signs for Holiday Boutique. Approved by voice vote.

Applications

BAI15-15 Escoffea Coffee Shop
60 Stirling Road Block 4001 Lot 2

Interpretation for use in the BB zone

Joel Cohen of the firm Flanzbaum and Cohen, attorney for the applicant was present, as well as applicant Jay Hasson who was sworn in. Mr. Bennett read the list of allowed uses for this zone. The applicant proposes to open a coffee shop in the space next to Chase Bank. It was previously occupied by Weichert. This shop would make coffee, but not be cooking or prepping anything on site other than coffee. They will sell prepackaged goods in addition to coffee. There will be some conference space that customers could use on a first come first serve basis for meeting rooms, as well as a limit of 24 seats. The hours of operation will be 6am until 9pm seven days per week. There will normally be two employees working per shift. There is currently a dumpster in the back of the building, which would suffice for this business. There is currently a bank and a salon in this shopping center which have both been there for over 25 years. The square footage of the space is 1509 sq. ft. Mr. Cohen said that this business would not impair the zoning intent. It is anticipated that no more than 6 parking spaces would be used at a time. Entrance and exits are currently marked to this site. Hearing no questions from the Board, the Chair opened up to the public for questions or comments. Dianna Cannellis of Beechwood Place came to the microphone. She represented the principals of the ownership of this site. She said that the owners are very supportive of this business. Mrs. Cannellis said that the site has more parking spaces than are required. She said the only thing that they would like to see is the mailbox being removed. Hearing no more comments, the Chair closed the public portion. Mr.

Hunsinger made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Brown. The Chair asked for a call of the roll to approve:

Fechtner (X) Hunsinger (X) Brown (X) Panzarella (X) Clemens (X) Cronheim (X)

The motion carried.

BA 15-15 Giancarlo Cirillo

88 Hillcrest Road Block 4301 Lot 8

Variance relief from section 28-502-A1(a) which states that fences can be no more than 50% solid.

Applicants Giancarlo and Iolanda Cirillo came to the microphone. Mrs. Cirillo said that because her house is set very close to the road, and the fact that there are many accidents occurring frequently on Hillcrest road, and the fact that she has small children, they want to put up a portion of solid fence that will be steel reinforced on the driveway side both for privacy and safety. The other portion of fencing will be conforming, and will go behind a line of bushes that currently provides privacy. The fence will be 4' high. Chairman Cronheim stated that he thought this was a modest request, and that the solid portions of the fence would be no longer than 70'. The applicants agreed. Mr. Bennett would approve the drawing of where the fence would be placed on the fence application. Hearing no more questions from the Board or the public, the Chair closed the public portion.

Chairman Cronheim made a motion to approve this application, seconded by Mrs. Fechtner. Hearing no more comments, the Chair called for a roll call to approve:

Fechtner (X) Hunsinger (X) Brown (X) Panzarella (X) Clemens (X) Cronheim (X)

The motion carried.

BA15-18 Ray Brereton

36 Gildersleeve Place Block 1501 Lot 1

Variance relief needed for free standing garage.

Mr. Edward Lopez, architect for the applicant came to the microphone and was sworn in. Mr. Ray Brereton was also present and sworn in.

Mr. Lopez explained that Mr. Brereton had a previous approval for a garage that the time has expired on. Mr. Lopez said that variance relief is needed due to the odd shape of the property. Chairman Cronheim said that the property drops off at the rear of the lot. Mr. Lopez said that the difference between the first approval and the current application is instead of the previous approval for a 1,000 sq. ft. addition and attached garage, this application is a detached garage. The applicant currently has no off street parking. Approval of this application would bring this property more into compliance. The height proposed is 22'6". It will be heated. Variance relief is required for front yard setback, side yard setback and location of driveway to sideline, over 400' as an accessory structure. There will be a studio upstairs for his child to work on photography. There will be a bathroom off the studio. The garage will be built on a concrete slab. Chairman Cronheim said that a garage would add quality to this property. Chairman Cronheim moved to interpret this garage as NOT being an accessory structure. The height would not then be calculated as accessory structure height. Mrs. Fechtner asked if the bathroom would be a full bath. The applicant said yes, but agreed that no kitchen would be installed. The public portion was opened, and hearing no more questions or comments from the public, that portion of the hearing was closed. The Chair made a motion to approve stating that this garage is not an accessory structure, but instead a garage that can only be put on this location. That motion was seconded by Mr. Brown, and hearing no more comments, called for a roll call to approve:

Fechtner (X) Hunsinger (X) Brown (X) Panzarella (X) Clemens (X) Cronheim (X)

The motion carried.

BA15-19 Dina and Joe Giacamo

135 Sunlit Drive Block 301 Lot 9

Variance relief for 27.75% impervious surface coverage where 25% allowed.

Chairman Cronheim recused himself for this application, since he was within 200' of the applicant. Steven Fisk, of Fisk and Fisk, 631 Union Avenue, Middlesex NJ, Planner for the Applicant was present.

Applicants Joe and Dina Giacomo were present and were sworn in. Mr. Fisk was recognized as an expert in the field of planning and was sworn in. Mr. Fisk explained that this property is currently on the market for resale. He said that the property is 2.3% over the 25% impervious surface coverage allowed in the R-R zone. Mr. Giacomo explained that the house was built and over ten years ago installed a pool and a basketball court for their children. He said that he thought at the time that he had extra sq. footage to work with. Mr. Giacomo said that he misread the second plan he had for the house, and ended up with this overage. Mr. Giacomo said that as life got busier with his family, he never finished closing out his permits, and now realizes out that he has gone over. Mr. Fisk said that this property has remained the same for over ten years now. He said that some towns don't count the water in a pool as impervious surface coverage, and that if it wasn't counted, that would be over 1/2 of the % that the applicant is asking for. Mr. Hunsinger acting as Chair opened up questions or comments from the public. Mr. John Bottone, of 127 Sunlit Drive came to the microphone. He said he lives directly to the left of the applicant, and has no problems with this application, and asked the board to approve. Hearing no more comments, the public portion was closed.

Mr. Hunsinger asked for a motion to approve, made by Mr. Clemens and seconded by Mr. Brown. Mr. Hunsinger asked for a call of the roll to approve:

Fechtner (X) Hunsinger (X) Brown (X) Panzarella (X) Clemens (X)

The motion carried.

BA 15-16 Elite Homebuilding

210 Mountain Blvd. Block 2401 Lots 3.01 & 3.02

Preliminary and Final site Plan

Two principal uses, buildings and dwellings on a single lot to include a professional office and two residential apartments. Any and all variances associated with this application as needed.

Mr. Hunsinger announced that the board would take a 5 minute break.
Chairman Cronheim reconvened the board.

Dave Checchio attorney for the applicant and one of the principals came to the microphone. Mr. Checchio said his offices are at 10 Shawnee Drive in Warren, and that he and his father and brother, all principals, all live in Watchung. The other principal in the business, Tom Powers, lives in Warren.

Mr. Checchio said that this application has been approved for use, and now they are here for preliminary and final site plan approval. The property is in the R-R zone. They are expanding a non-forming use. The variances they are requesting are from section 28-404 for area, front yard, 38'6" where 50' is required. The applicant is proposing 17 parking spaces where 20.6 are required. 4 spaces are indoors for the residential swellings, and 13 are outdoors.

Lee Titus was present as the applicant's engineer. He was asked how many sq. ft. the office building would be. He said 2,250 sq. ft. was the footprint. The office building would be 4,156 sq. ft. and 6,142 sq. ft with the basement. He said that the reduction in parking spaces came from the Board's recommendation at the use variance portion of this application. He said there is less impervious surface coverage and more green space with the reduction of parking spaces.

Mr. Titus said there were several trees to be removed and described them.

Mr. Titus stated for the record that the plans were dated as follows:

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Mr. Checchio said that one change from the original plans was the location of the trash enclosure. Mr. Titus said that the riparian buffer was 50' from the top of the bank of the brook. He said they were going to shift the trash enclosure more toward the 4 parking spaces and out of the riparian buffer.

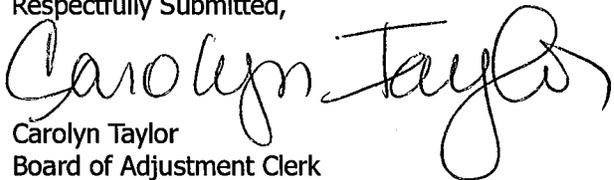
The applicant proposes to do a deed of consolidation and make this property into one lot. Mr. Titus said that at the back of the building, there is to be a cantilever over the sidewalk, which will be perfect for soffit lighting. He said that they would like to have the lighting reflect that of a residential nature. Mr. Titus said that the four spaces closest to the building, would be the spaces most used. He said that residential type lighting could be put over the two garages as well.

Mr. Checchio said that one last variance requested is for signage. They propose a monument sign, 4' high with a masonry base approximately 18". Mr. Checchio said that the office building is designed to look more like a house than an office building, which makes the need for a sign important. Chairman Cronheim asked if there were any questions or comments for or against this application. Hearing none, closed the public portion. Mr. Hunsinger made a motion to approve this application, seconded by Mr. Brown. Hearing no more discussion, the Chair called for the roll call vote to approve:

Fechtner (X) Hunsinger (X) Brown (X) Panzarella (X) Clemens (X) Cronheim (X)
The motion carried.

Chairman Cronheim adjourned the meeting until the next regular meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,


Carolyn Taylor
Board of Adjustment Clerk