

MINUTES OF THE MAY 22, 2018 PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
BOROUGH HALL, BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE

MEMBERS PRESENT: E. Alter, F. Franco, Mayor J. Ruocco, M. Kates, S. Riordan,  
S. Raymond, D. Burleson, Chairman M. Giancarlo

MEMBERS ABSENT: E. Lichtstein, Councilman F. Pizzella, Vice Chairwoman J. Miano

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: N. Nabbie, Esq., Board Attorney  
L. Neyman, P.E., Acting Board Engineer  
C. Chadwick, Deputy Secretary

Chairman Giancarlo called the meeting to order with a reading of the Open Public Meetings Statement at approximately 7:30pm.

OPEN TO PUBLIC (for matters not on the Agenda):

As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

MINUTES:

The *May 10, 2018 Meeting Minutes* were approved by the Board.

INVOICES:

Invoices from *C.P. Statile, P.A.* and *Gittleman, Muhlstock & Chewcaskie* were approved by the Board for payment.

RESOLUTION:

*Resolution 2018-10; Jason & Vanessa Caldwell; Block 407, Lot 2; 51 Orchard Lane*

*Approval of bulk variance application for addition to a single family dwelling* was approved by the Board.

*Resolution 2018-13; Salvatore Russino; Block 1116, Lot 11; 55 Maple Ave.*

*Approval of bulk variance application for new rear addition over an existing wood deck* was approved by the Board.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

*PZ-14-17; Donna DeGhetto; Block 502, Lot 7.01; 3 Beechnut Street*

*Bulk "c" Variance Application for New Single-Family Dwelling  
Continued from April 12, 2018*

Counsel for the Applicant – Matthew Capizzi, Esq.

Mr. Capizzi, of 11 Hillside Ave, Tenafly was sworn in as the attorney in this matter. Mr. Capizzi stated the applicant had a site plan prepared, as previously requested by the Board.

Architect John Musinski returned to provide witness testimony, and spoke about the architectural plan dated 10/17/17, revised to 5/2/18. It was confirmed the plan is only one sheet long. The revision to the

original architectural plan shows a total footprint which is 135 sq. ft. less than it was previously. Also, the shed has been moved.

Acting Board Engineer Neyman was sworn in before the Board. The applicant's engineer Douglas W. Doolittle of 169 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland, was also sworn in and it was confirmed he holds a P.E., P.P., and L.S. licenses. Mr. Doolittle spoke about the site plan prepared by McNally Engineers dated 4/23/18. An aerial exhibit dated 5/22/18 was presented to the Board; it was a Google Earth image with a Hillsdale tax map superimposed over it, showing the property in question as well as adjacent properties. Mr. Doolittle reviewed the site plan and discussed the properties located on Beechnut Street, confirming three of those five lots front on Beechnut Street. It was also confirmed by Mr. Doolittle that the proposed drainage system will comply with the R.S.I.S. requirements. The grade of the driveway as proposed is 5%. Ms. Neyman asked if the one existing tree is to be removed and Mr. Doolittle confirmed yes, it is. Ms. Neyman reminded Mr. Doolittle of the ordinance requirement for two shade trees to replace the one tree being removed.

The meeting was then opened to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

There was a discussion regarding a 6 ft. fence proposed in the back of the home and it was confirmed that a fence of this height is permitted in the rear yard but prohibited in the front yard. There was also a discussion regarding the neighbor's trees. Applicant Mrs. DeGhetto was sworn in and stated the trees in question are her neighbor's trees which he does not want to remove. According to Mrs. DeGhetto, Board/Borough Engineer Mr. Statile required her neighbor to plant the trees several years ago during a road widening project, and the neighbor does not understand why Mr. Statile would now require them to be removed. Mrs. DeGhetto stated she agrees that the trees are currently very overgrown and she will have them trimmed back and cleaned up. Mr. Raymond stated the trees are "green giant" and pose a problem to the DPW and emergency services during snow plowing, etc. Mr. Raymond also expressed concerns regarding impervious coverage on the property and asked if Mrs. DeGhetto would be willing to consider a paver driveway. Mr. Capizzi stated his client is opposed to a paver driveway due to the high maintenance it would require of her, especially during the winter months when snowfall must be cleared. However, the applicant agrees to install a paver border surrounding the driveway, which would reduce the impervious coverage by 150 sq. ft. Mr. Capizzi further stated that about 150 sq. ft. of the impervious coverage is due to the proposed widening of the driveway because the road way is narrow and doesn't allow for on street parking. The proposed deck will be made of wood.

Ms. Kates asked Ms. Neyman about the driveway pitch which was then discussed. Ms. Neyman stated she does not believe the change in driveway pitch is required by Borough ordinance and is perhaps just Mr. Statile's preference, with the intention for the applicant to lower the floor of the garage, thus bringing the driveway pitch to 2%. However, to be certain, Ms. Neyman stated she will speak with Mr. Statile about the issue. Section 310-55h7 of the Hillsdale ordinance was also read and referenced. It was confirmed the driveway technically has enough space to fit four vehicles.

Mr. Riordan asked if the proposed waterfall pond is located anywhere on the impervious coverage calculations. Ms. Neyman responded no, it is not. The applicant will slide the house over to keep the air conditioning unit and generator within the building envelope. Mr. Franco asked how wide the street is; Mr. Doolittle responded it is 17-20 ft. wide.

The meeting was then opened to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

Board Attorney Nabbie asked Mr. Doolittle what the impervious coverage percentage number is now with the proposed changes. The Board decided to take a brief recess at this time. The Board returned from recess at 8:23pm.

At this time, Mr. Capizzi and Mr. Doolittle confirmed for the Board that the applicant has agreed to change the asphalt driveway to pervious pavement, a material consisting of a coarser blacktop than regular asphalt. There was a discussion regarding dropping the garage floor down to meet the driveway pitch requirements, however Mr. Capizzi stated this would require the addition of another step which the applicant is not willing to do because of her physical condition. The 50% credit for the driveway would eliminate the need for an impervious coverage variance. Mr. Capizzi stated they are happy to meet with the Hillsdale DPW and trim the trees back as necessary. Ms. Kates stated she believes the Board should also confirm with the Fire Department and the DPW that they have no other issues with the trees. Mr. Capizzi agreed, stating if those entities do not respond within 30 days, we will presume they don't have an issue. Chairman Giancarlo agreed.

Ms. Nabbie stated the applicant is now seeking three variances. Chairman Giancarlo confirmed this is correct. The meeting was then opened again to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

Scott Raymond made a motion to approve the application with conditions, which Ms. Nabbie reviewed for the Board. Mr. Franco seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion passed. The application was approved.

***PZ-03-18; Stephen Riordan; Block 1406, Lot 35; 79 Large Avenue  
Bulk variance application for new patio, walkway and driveway addition to single-family dwelling***

Stephen Riordan, of 79 Large Ave, Hillsdale was sworn in before the Board as the applicant and homeowner, representing himself.

Mr. Riordan presented color photos and a color rendering. The color photographs were marked **Exhibit A-1** and depicted the subject property and surrounding homes. A site plan and survey were marked **Exhibit A-2**. Mr. Riordan stated he and his wife purchased the home in 2015 and at the time of the purchase, the impervious coverage was over by 50%, thus making it a preexisting condition of the home. There is also an existing 9 ft. wide driveway with railroad ties. Mr. Riordan proposes a 12 ft. wide driveway, which will still leave a buffer between his and his neighbor's properties, but allow him and his wife to park their vehicles in their driveway. Mr. Riordan stated he also proposes to install a paver patio in the rear yard, with a front apron and walkway leading to the driveway. A detached garage and a wood-burning fire pit are also proposed.

Mr. Raymond asked Mr. Riordan if his property is currently at 50% on impervious coverage and Mr. Riordan confirmed that is correct. Mr. Raymond asked if he would consider constructing the proposed driveway of all pavers as it would bring the impervious coverage down to 49%. Mr. Riordan stated yes, he would consider this as the reason for this endeavor is to have a sufficient place to park his vehicles. It was confirmed that, all around, the lot is existing non-conforming, and Mr. Riordan decreased the F.A.R. previously in 2015, as he opened up an enclosed porch on the property. Mr. Riordan stated he would like to reduce the seepage pits required, if possible. Ms. Neyman stated she will inquire with Board Engineer Statile regarding this matter.

It was confirmed that the rear steps will connect to the garage. Furthermore, the fire pit will consist of brick masonry. The driveway will consist of permeable paver. Mr. Burluson asked if Mr. Riordan parks in his driveway or his garage. Mr. Riordan responded he parks in his driveway, as his garage is currently filled with his children's toys and belongings, and the garage opening is not currently wide enough to accommodate his vehicle; he would need to replace the door with one that is 9 ft. wide in order to be able to park in the garage. Mr. Riordan stated that in the past, he did a full interior and exterior renovation to his home on permit approval and it has been completed, so he is not seeking to do any additional work besides what is currently proposed.

Mr. Raymond stated the fire pit is an issue of concern. Mr. Alter confirmed the applicant is agreeing to lower the impervious coverage amount. Ms. Kates stated the landscaping on site should be reviewed by the Environmental Commission, however the EC has no recommendations at present. It was further confirmed that Mr. Riordan proposes to repair the sidewalks, as shown on his plan. Mr. Franco stated he understands the applicant's need to widen the driveway however he is concerned about the fire pit or outdoor fire place. Mr. Riordan stated there is no ordinance which prevents him from building one. It was confirmed that the Construction Official will decide whether or not Mr. Riordan can build the fire pit when he applies for a construction permit. Mayor Ruocco stated Mr. Riordan's reasons for this applications are legitimate and he has no issues with it, as the impervious coverage is being reduced.

The meeting was again opened to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public. Ms. Neyman had no further questions. Ms. Nabbie stated as a matter of housekeeping that the Board would need more information regarding the photographs provided by Mr. Riordan. Mr. Riordan confirmed he took the photos and submitted them as part of the application; they depict the view of his property and all adjacent properties and are labeled accordingly. They were taken around 2017 and accurately depict all properties as of 2017. It was confirmed the impervious coverage is now reduced to 49.04%. As no one had any additional questions, Ms. Nabbie reviewed the conditions of approval; Mr. Riordan agreed to the conditions.

Mr. Raymond made a motion to approve the application with conditions; the motion was seconded by Mr. Alter. The Board was polled and the motion passed. The application was approved.

#### BOARD BUSINESS:

Mayor Ruocco stated that on June 19<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, the Council is having an open public meeting, during which DMR Architects will be present to discuss the redevelopment process. Mayor Ruocco encouraged all non-professional Board members, as well as the Board Attorney, to attend the meeting.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Chadwick  
Deputy Secretary