

BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE

Planning/ Zoning Board

MINUTES

March 14, 2024

7:30 PM

Chairwoman Kates called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 pm. Deputy Secretary Janeiro recited the Open Public Meeting Statement and Pledge of Allegiance.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairwoman M. Kates, Vice Chairman S. Riordan, Secretary S. Raymond, Mr. E. Alter, Mr. S. Griep, Ms. G. Guzman, Dr. Weinberg and Mayor Sheinfield

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. D. Friedman, Mr. J. MacEwen and Council Liason Trochimiuk

**EMPLOYEES PRESENT:** Ms. M. Stinely, Board Attorney  
Mr. C. Statile, Board Engineer  
Mr. T. Behrens, Board Planner  
Ms. T. Janeiro, Deputy Secretary

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

The meeting was then opened to the public for matters not on the agenda. There being none, the meeting was closed to the public.

<b><u>INVOICES</u></b>				
<b><u>Professional - Christopher P. Statile</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Motion</u></b>	<b><u>Second</u></b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>
2024-7	\$295.00	S. Raymond	E. Alter	Passed
2024-8	\$350.00			
<b>Total -</b>	<b>\$645.00</b>			

**MEETING MINUTES**

**OPEN – February 27, 2024**

<b><u>Motion</u></b>	<b><u>Second</u></b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>
S. Raymond	E. Alter	Passed

**CLOSED – February 27, 2024**

<b><u>Motion</u></b>	<b><u>Second</u></b>	<b><u>Outcome</u></b>
S. Raymond	S. Griep	Passed

**RESOLUTION**

Resolution #2024-09

PZ-03-23

Block 105 Lot 7; 38 Glen Hook Road

Ricardo Arnt

Pool Patio

Patio Setback

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A motion was made by Secretary Raymond to approve the memorialization resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alter, and carried by a roll call vote. The motion passed.

**CONTINUED HEARING**

PZ-05-23

Block 1622 Lot 4; 307 Evergreen Street

Irene Davis Revocable Trust

Single Family Home Addition

Front Yard Setback, Side Yard Setback, Rear Yard Setback, Building Coverage, Impervious Coverage and Floor Area Ratio.

Mayor Sheinfield left the meeting as he is not eligible to vote on a D variance application.

The following people were previously sworn in by the Board Attorney to offer testimony:

Architect:

Joseph Bruno

29 Pascack Road

Park Ridge, NJ 07656

Board Engineer:

Chris Statile

The applicant is Irene Davis Revocable Trust. Representing the trust is Irene Davis's son Attorney, Mr. Eric Davis.

Mr. Bruno commented that the board had concerns with the design presented at the February 8, 2024 hearing. The design was resubmitted with the following reductions:

Building Coverage was reduced from 31.9% to 28.1%.

Impervious Coverage was reduced from 38.9% to 37.7%. This is less than the 38.9% as existing.

Floor Area Ratio was reduced from 43.96% to 40.4%

The original ramp that was proposed in the garage was eliminated.

Currently, there is no stormwater management system on the property. The applicant is proposing installing a storm water management system on the property.

Mr. Davis said the previously proposed one-story addition on the north side of the property was eliminated. Proposed now is a covered deck off the north side of the property. He said this would allow a sun shaded space for his mother to sit outside with company if she wishes. The only other outside space is a patio off the private bedroom.

Mr. Davis said besides the deck, the only other change made to this application was scaling down and reducing some variances.

Mr. Bruno asked the board to look at the previous seven submitted photos of surrounding properties. He went over the photographs of house numbers 303, 315, 304, 308, and 312 Evergreen Street. Mr. Bruno stated that all homes are center-hall colonials that all appear larger than the home he is proposing. He went on to describe the lot size and home dimensions of all the surrounding homes. Commenting that 40.10% is the average FAR in surrounding homes.

Mr. Bruno stated that the existing home is tired in appearance and he believes the proposed changes to the home are in scale with the neighborhood.

Mr. Statile asked if four trees would be replanted. Mr. Bruno replied yes. Mr. Statile asked Ms. Stinely if she could make sure four trees being replanted was noted in the resolution.

Mr. Statile commented that the stormwater management plan is already on the submitted plans.

Board Planner, Mr. Tom Behrens, was sworn in by Ms. Stinely. Mr. Behrens asked if there would any other screening or landscape on site. Mr. Bruno commented that although not on the plans, all site landscaping will be updated.

Mr. Behrens asked about the proposed lighting. Mr. Bruno said the proposed lighting will be standard residential coach lights and shielded and downward pointed flood lights. The second-floor deck lights will be low level lights.

Mr. Behrens asked how close to the neighbor's yard will be to the deck. Mr. Bruno replied he is not sure exactly sure, but they can install appropriate evergreen screening.

Mr. Behrens spoke about a C2 variances.

Mr. Bruno said the house appears much larger from the street than it is. The design is keeping up with the neighborhood.

The impervious coverage has been kept to a minimum and the home has been reduced to the extent it can be to still fit the homeowners needs. Mr. Bruno went over the location of each room on the plans.

Mr. Statile asked if the home will have a generator. Mr. Davis said no. Mr. Statile commented if one was to be installed it must be installed with the setback requirements of the zone.

Mr. Behrens explained what pre-existing non-conforming means.

Board Questions of Mr. Bruno / Mr. Davis:

Mr. Weinberg:

- Do any of the neighbors have issues with this application.
- Mr. Davis went on to explain the close relationship his mother has with the neighbors.

Chairwoman Kates commented that all neighbors within 200 ft. are noticed. Ms. Stinely said the applicant's notification obligations have been met.

Vice Chairman Riordan:

- You have used photograph number four, 315 Evergreen Street, as an example. However, that lot is significantly larger.

A conversation took place regarding the surrounding lots. Mr. Bruno said he used the average of all the surrounding lots.

- How many feet over on FAR?
- 628 Sq. ft. over. They are at 3,029 sq. ft. The patio is 202 sq. ft. and open on all sides.

Ms. Guzman:

- Is the garage and oversized one car garage, or a two-car garage?
- Two-car garage

Mr. Griep:

- How does the proposed deck on the north side of the property compare to the previous proposed one-story addition?
- The deck is a little shorter and not nearly as intrusive.

Mr. Bruno said the first-floor deck goes into the kitchen.

- Is there still a lift in the garage area?
- Mr. Davis said they will wait and address the lift at the time it will be needed.

Secretary Raymond

Said thank you for listening to the boards concerns.

- What was reduced?
- Building coverage was reduced from 31.9% to 28.1%, impervious coverage was reduced from 38.9% to 37.7%, Floor Area Ratio was reduced from 43.96% to 40.4% and one variance was eliminated on the south side.
- What are the variances you are still seeking?

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- Front yard, side yard, rear yard, building coverage, impervious coverage, and FAR. The front yard, rear yard building coverage, impervious coverage and FAR are currently pre-existing non-conforming conditions. The proposed FAR is now less at 37.7%, where 38.9% is the current.

Mr. Bruno commented that he took Vice Chairman Riordan's suggestion and changed the roof line.

Mr. Bruno said the existing shed is being removed.

- Any hardships?
- None. However, the home is still properly scaled for the neighborhood. The home will now have stormwater management on site.

Although no neighbors today have an issue with this application. It is important to consider the neighbors of tomorrow.

Mr. Alter:

He appreciated the changes made to the application.

- Please describe the stormwater management system.
- Mr. Bruno described the system in detail.
- Has the property ever flooded?
- Mr. Davis said not since the 50 years his parents have been in the home.

Mr. Alter asked Mr. Statile if he reviewed the stormwater management plan. Mr. Statile replied the property previously had no management system as this is a great improvement.

- Will there be landscaping around the HVAC units?
- Yes.

Mr. Griep:

Do you need a variance for the set-back of the deck?

No, 10 ft. is required and 10.2 ft. is proposed.

Mr. Bruno commented the home on the north side is only one story.

Chairwoman Kates asked if the stormwater system could be looked at as a positive. Ms. Stinely replied that is up to the board if they wish to view that as a positive.

Vice Chairman Riordan asked if the flagpole was existing. Mr. Davis replied it is part of an old basketball pole, but can be removed.

Mr. Bruno said the stormwater improvements are positive to neighbors.

Secretary Raymond asked Ms. Stinely if the entire application had to be voted on, or if you could vote on different the variances. Ms. Stinely explained the different ways an application could be voted on. Mr. Bruno commented that his client is not seeking different votes, only one vote on the entire application.

Ms. Stinely went over the conditions. They are as follows:

- Plant four trees.
- The board would retain jurisdiction for six months over the lighting.
- Tall arborvitaes planted as patio buffering.
- Dry well in yard.
- Landscape HVAC.
- Flag pole removed.

The meeting was then opened to the public. There being none, the meeting was closed to the public.

Ms. Stinely spoke about the pre-existing non-conforming conditions and the existing variances for front yard, side yard, rear yard, building coverage, impervious coverage, and FAR. She spoke about the balancing test and if the benefits outweighing the detriments.

Mr. Bruno summarized the application and spoke about how he believes the improvements will be an asset to the neighborhood.

Mr. Weinberg asked Mr. Behrens to describe the D variance requirements. Mr. Behrens explained.

A motion was made by Mr. Alter to approve the application with conditions. The motion was seconded by Ms. Guzman, and carried by a roll vote as follows:

Vice Chairman Riordan	Yes
Secretary Raymond	No
Mr. Alter	Yes
Mr. Griep	Yes
Ms. Guzman	Yes
Dr. Weinberg	Yes
Chairwoman Kates	Yes

**OPEN SESSION**

Annual Report 2023

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Chairwoman Kates asked if the board agreed that the only change recommended to the Mayor and Council was that they should consider a change to the fence regulations to only permit 50% open fences in the front yard. The board agreed. A motion was made by Mr. Griep to accept the 2023 annual report with fence conditions. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Riordan, and carried by a roll vote as follows:

Vice Chairman Riordan	Yes
Secretary Raymond	Yes
Mr. Alter	Yes
Mr. Griep	Yes
Ms. Guzman	Abstained
Dr. Weinberg	Yes
Chairwoman Kates	Yes

**DISUCSSION**

Chairwoman Kates announced the passing of former board member Mr. Fred Franco. The board sends their sympathies to his family.

Chairwoman Kates spoke about board members obtaining Hillsdale Planning Board badges. Several suggestions on where to obtain a badge was spoken about. Chairwoman Kates said she would investigate this matter and forward the information to Ms. Janeiro to pass along to the board.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Next Public Hearing – Special Meeting on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 to hire a Planning Board Attorney. The following Public Hearing would then be on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 7:30 pm; Borough Hall Council Chambers.