

Borough of Wood-Ridge Land Use Board

Minutes of the April 6, 2021

Wood-Ridge Municipal Building Council Chamber

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Chairman Finke. Chairman Finke read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Attendance was as follows:

Class IV Members:	Chairman Frank Finke – present
	Vice Chair Kevin Trotter – present via Zoom
	Dominick Azzolini – excused
	Jeffrey Magnusson – present via Zoom
	Robert Ruhle – present via Zoom
	Michael Donato - present via Zoom
Class I Member (Mayor’s Alternate):	Borough Administrator Christopher Eilert – present
Class II Member:	Zoning Officer Richard Pronti – present
Class III Member:	Councilman Joseph DiMarco – present via Zoom
Class IV Alternate Members:	Anthony Iacovino (Alt. #1) – zoom
	Christopher J. Inserra (Alt #2)-present
	Vacant (Alternate #3)
Secretary:	Cathleen Calabro – present
Attorney:	Gerald Salerno, Esq. – present via Zoom
Engineer/Planner	Brian Intindola, PE – present
	Dave Juzmeski – present via Zoom

The minutes of the **March 2, 2021** meeting were approved on a motion by Eilert second by Inserra and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

Chairman Finke announced that Application 2021-38A would be carried to the Land Use Board’s meeting of May 4, 2021.

Under New Business the following Applications were presented:

**Member Pronti recused himself from Application 2021-37A.**

**2021-37A** Magic Lantern  
dba – Gus’ Last Word  
191 Valley Blvd Blk 292/14  
Change of Use – Site Plan Review Required

**Angelo Cifelli, Jr.**, Esq. advised the board that there was a change in the application. The applicant would have outdoor tables only, and not the wooden structures. The exhibits were marked in.

**Joseph Haines** the applicant’s architect was sworn in. He advised the applicant is proposing to update the rear courtyard with outdoor seating.

The current restaurant is under construction. The fence in the rear would be replaced, enhance the landscape and put up string lights. The new fence would be a decorative solid cedar 6-foot-high fence. There would be about 40 seats outdoors. The elevated terrace area will remain and replaced with gravel. There are residential homes butting the backyards. The applicant would comply with all points in Neglia's report.

**Brian Intindola**, the boards engineer stated that this application is an outdoor dining permit review. The applicant would still have to apply for the outdoor dining permit through the town.

**Chairman Finke** declared the hearing of citizens to be open.

**Margaret Schweitzer** resides at 207 Valley Blvd. She is concerned with the noise levels, parking, trash, music playing, and the string lights. She is also concerned with the fire exits. She lives on the corner of Valley and Columbia Blvd.

**Member Eilert** explained that many of the concerns pertain to Borough Ordinance that sets the standards on how the business is to operate. The lighting for outdoor dining would not be allowed to spill past the property line. The business will have to have an inspection to assure they are following all the borough's standards which would address all your concerns.

With no further citizens wishing to be heard, Chairman Finke declared the Hearing of Citizens closed.

**Application 2021-37A** was approved as presented on a motion with the condition that the applicant must apply for an outdoor dining permit through the town and comply with all the conditions by Eilert second by Inserra, and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

**Member Iacovino recused himself from application 2021-34A**

**2021-34A** Borough of Wood-Ridge  
Corner of 4<sup>th</sup> & Fritch, Block 203/12  
Minor Subdivision

**Chris Eilert** the Borough's Administrator was sworn in and presented the application. Member Eilert advised the board that there are two applications this evening involving Borough property. This property is currently vacant and serves as a buffer between 4<sup>th</sup> Street and the rear yards of three homes fronting Rose Street. The property exceeds 10,000 sq. feet and because it is an irregular shape it does not provide the ability to be a buildable lot. The borough was approached by an adjacent property owner whose backyard abuts the vacant lot and asked to purchase the buffer property. The tax accessor determined that the 30x50 piece of property is a de minimis piece and will not in any way impact the remainder of the buffer property on 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The value of the lot to be auction off is \$15,000. The Borough is seeking subdivision approval by the Land Use Board to auction off the property. The subdivision portion would be 1500 square feet and lot 12.01.

**Chairman Finke** declared the hearing of citizens to be open. With no one wishing to be heard, Chairman declared the Hearing of Citizens closed.

**Application 2021-34A** was approved on a motion by Trotter to recommend to Mayor & Council to subdivide the property second by DiMarco, and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

**2021-35A** Borough of Wood-Ridge  
140 Park Place East Blk 249/3  
Minor Subdivision

**Member Eilert** was still under oath from the previous application. He stated to the board that this application is to acquire a piece of property known as 140 Park Place East owned by Char-Rode, Inc. The Borough is the contract purchaser of this property Block 249 Lot 3 it is in a R-2 zone. The property was previously an autobody shop located on the corner of 140 Park Place East and Blum Blvd. There was a significant fire a few years ago which caused the business to close. The Borough currently has an underground pump station about 200ft away that pumps the Borough's sanitary sewer located at the intersection of Anderson Ave and Park Place East. The purchase of the property would allow the borough to build an above ground station which will be much easier to access and avoid any traffic or obstacles from where the current underground pump station is. The agreement for purchase and sale are between Char-Rhode, Inc., the seller, Meadowlands Transportation d/b/a EZ Ride, purchaser and The Borough of Wood-Ridge, purchaser. EZ Ride would have to come before the board if they should expand their facility.

**Chairman Finke** declared the hearing of citizens to be open. With no one wishing to be heard, Chairman declared the Hearing of Citizens closed.

**Application 2021-35A** was approved on a motion by Inserra to recommend to Mayor & Council to subdivide the property second by Donato, and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

**2021-36A** Sicilian Builders  
379 Columbia Blvd Blk 296/19  
Subdivision

**James Novello, Esq.** the applicant's attorney presented the application. He stated the application is for a minor subdivision with variances for undersized lot, lot area and lot width. The exhibits were marked in.

**Bryon Parisi** the owner of Sicilian Builders was sworn in. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing home and construct two new single-family homes that will be compliant to all setbacks. Mr. Parisi was in contact with the Wood-Ridge Fire Department to do an exhibition drill on the existing house. No other variances would be requested. The applicant would comply with Neglia's report. There are several new homes in the area. The percentage of undersized lot in the area is 41%.

**Lisa Phillips** the applicant's planner was sworn in on zoom. Exhibit A-10 was reviewed. Ms. Phillips looked at the neighborhood and concluded that it is a mixed size lot area. The proposed subdivision lot size is 94 square feet which creates two variances, lot size and lot width. The applicant is proposing to reduce the size of the house in order to be in compliance.

If the property was not subdivided someone could purchase that property and build one house over 5000 sq ft and that would be more of a detriment than the subdivision. She is in favor of the application and stated the benefits would outweigh any detriment.

Ms. Phillips did a study of 32 surrounding residential properties and of them 13 were undersized.

**Dave Juzmeski** the boards planner's also stated that there are undersized properties in the neighborhood. It's the boards decision whether to agree or not with Ms. Phillips testimony.

**Chairman Finke** declared the hearing of citizens to be open.

**Jackie Blo** who resides at 392 Highland Ave. She lives behind and to the right of the property. She has lived here for over 30 years and feels we have enough subdivided properties. Ms. Blo is not in favor of the subdivision. She is concerned with stormwater drainage. The town is losing its integrity.

**Margaret Zampardi** who resides at 400 Columbia Blvd. Ms. Zampardi agrees with the previous resident. She has also lived here a long time and is against the subdivision. She stated the town is going to look like Jersey City. She asked the board to please do not change the complexion of Wood-Ridge any further.

With no further citizens wishing to be heard, Chairman Finke declared the Hearing of Citizens closed.

**Member Eilert** asked the borough engineer to give a brief explanation on storm water and when did the DEP become stricter with regulations. There are many new regulations that need to be followed with new construction.

**Application 2021-36A** was approved on a motion by Eilert with all the stipulations required by Neglia Engineering and with the stipulation that the home will not require any further variances second Magnusson, and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

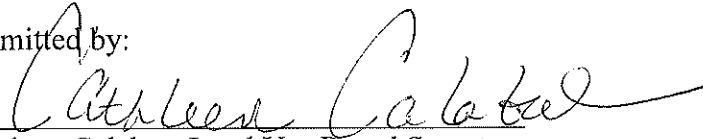
Also under new business, the following resolution was approved.

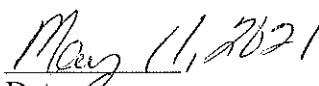
**Resolution 2021-33AR** was approved on a motion by Eilert second by Trotter and a roll call of everyone who voted in favor of the application except for Trotter who abstained.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2021.

With no other business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 pm.

Submitted by:

  
Cathleen Calabro, Land Use Board Secretary

  
Date