

Borough of Wood-Ridge Land Use Board

Minutes of April 5, 2022

Wood-Ridge Municipal Building Council Chamber

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm 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
	Dominick Azzolini – excused
	Jeffrey Magnusson – excused
	Robert Ruhle – present
	Michael Donato - present
Class I Member (Mayor’s Alternate):	Borough Administrator Christopher Eilert–excused
Class II Member:	Zoning Officer Richard Pronti – excused
Class III Member:	Councilman Joseph DiMarco – excused
Class IV Alternate Members:	Anthony Iacovino (Alt. #1) – present
	Christopher J. Inserra (Alt #2)-present
	Vacant (Alternate #3)
Secretary:	Cathleen Calabro – present
Attorney:	Gerald Salerno, Esq. – present
Engineer/Planner	Brian Intindola, PE – present

The minutes of the **February 1, 2022** meeting were approved on a motion by Donato second by Trotter and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

Under new business the following applications were presented:

2022-44A Elvis Brajac
151 11th Street 259/2.01
Deck height

Elvis Brajac the owner of the property was sworn in. He is proposing to construct a 12’x24’ wooden rear deck off their main level on the 2nd floor. The height of the new deck would be 10 ft from the ground, exceeding the 4ft. requirement. The applicant’s rear yard is on a slope causing the height variance. The deck would be off the kitchen on the 2nd level. The house rests on a concrete slab, there is no basement. The exhibits were marked in.

Brian Intindola, the board’s engineer stated this application is a C variance. He suggested to be mindful of the fire codes when cooking outside. The concrete slab will remain. The drainage is sufficient.

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 2022-44A was approved on a motion by Trotter second by Donato, and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

2022-43A Transformation Life Church
190 Valley Blvd 293/16
Expansion of Non-Conforming Use

James Dalia Esq. the applicant's attorney presented the application stating they need approval for an Expansion of a Non-Conforming Use. Mr. Dalia gave a brief background on the property. Transformation Life Church has an accessory daycare component to it. In 2015 the church was before the board for an addition. The applicant is proposing to further expand the student population for the daycare center. The church is in a residential zone, and daycares are permitted in a commercial zone not residential.

Gerald Salerno the boards attorney advised the applicant that they are seeking a D variance and there are 6 members present. The applicant will proceed with his application. The exhibits were marked in.

Jeff Morris the applicant's engineer was sworn in. He appeared before the board in 2015 for Transformation Life Church. Mr. Morris testified that the applicant is seeking approval to expand the student daycare function from 44 students to a maximum of 120 students. This will require several variances. The church does have a license to increase the students. Mr. Morris testified off of Exhibit A-7, Boswell Engineering Site Plan. The property sits on 3 streets, Valley Boulevard, Columbia Blvd and Wood-Ridge Ave. The primary drop-off area would be on Columbia Blvd. The daycare opens at 6:30 am. The bulk of the students arrive between 8:15 and 9:15 am. 11:30 to 11:45 am would be the half day student pick-up, then the afternoon bulk pick-up would be from 2:30 to 6:15 pm. Mr. Morris stated the times of drop-off and pick-up and number of students in 15 minute intervals currently: the applicant is proposing to triple these numbers. 25% of these students are carpoled or with siblings. Within a 15 minute period it is allocated to 4 minutes per car.

8:15-8:30 12 students
8:30-8:45 11 students
8:45-9:00 9 students
9:00-9:15 4 students
11:30-11:45 15 students
2:30-3:00 5 students
3:00-3:15 11 students
3:15-4:15 0 students
4:15-5:15 5 students
5:15-6:15 5 students

Brian Intindola, the board's engineer stated his concerns. He suggests the applicant submit a traffic memorandum for the board to review and put on the record. He suggested the applicant submit a clear record from a traffic expert.

Brian Intindola was sworn in.
He presented testimony regarding the traffic engineering figures.

The daycare is opened to the general public.

Chairman Finke declared the hearing of citizens to be open.

Gary Kane resides at 431 Wood-Ridge Ave. He is concerned with the parking on Valley Blvd. where is the staff going to park?

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

Victoria Gracian was sworn in. She has been the Daycares Preschool Director since 2018. She stated since C.E. Doyle school no longer offered preschool, their center met the needs of the town. TLC met with Doyle staff to show them what programs they had to offer. Doyle referred preschool children to TLC. Currently 65% of their students are from Wood-Ridge. They are able willing to meet the towns need for a daycare center. Before care is offered from 6:15-8:15 am. TLC offers 1/2 day care, full day care and after care until 6:30 pm. Ms. Gracian discussed the daily activities in a given day at the center, including drop off and pick up. She stated most of the parent's park on Columbia Blvd and some on Valley. Hours of operation are 6:30 am to 6:30 pm offering before and after care. The daycare has a bio metric scanning system to sign in and out. The daycare does currently have a license to allow the increase of students from 40 to 120. Trash is thrown in the dumpster daily and the dumpster is emptied once a week. We recycle with the town. There is no school on the weekends. TLC does offer summer camp. The staff has business parking stickers.

Mr. Intindola the borough's engineer suggested the applicant submit a traffic report. A discussion ensued regarding the cell tower and their 2018 approval of that.

Gerald Salerno, the board's attorney clarified that the application is for up to 120 students. Testimony is stating the classrooms can accommodate up to 126 and the license can accommodate up to 132.

C. Joseph Smith, the applicant's planner was sworn in. Exhibit A-6 were reviewed. Mr. Smith stated the building is 2 floors, first floor is at the main street level and the lower level is the basement. It has a capacity of 195 seats. After the recent hurricane that flooded the basement they were forced to bring the kids upstairs. The playground is within NJAC code. There is will be no exterior changes to the building except for the possibility of creating a second point of entry if needed for the intake between the hours of 8:15 and 8:45 am. Mr. Smith does not anticipate any problems with the increase. All the partitions for the classrooms will be moveable in order to still use the room as a sanctuary. Mr. Smith stated that the facility is serving the community as an inherently beneficial use. He would support this application, pending the receipt and review of the traffic report. He does not see any detriment to the public good and does not see any impediment to the zoning ordinance as long as the traffic can be properly managed.

In Mr. Smith's opinion things will adjust and it will all work with the way the daycare has it figured out.

Mr. Salerno, the board's attorney stated to Mr. Smith that as a professional planner, the issue of parking would go to whether or not the application has a detrimental effect upon the neighborhood. Mr. Smith does agree, but will hold his decision to wait for the receipt of the traffic report.

Mr. Smith stated there are two elements to the traffic report, one is the availability of spaces to serve the use and the other is the management of traffic. There are no required spaces for daycare.

Member Ruhle, was asking about parking guards outside. He stated things work well with 30-40 students, but once you get to a certain point you may hit a tipping point.

Another discussion ensued regarding parking, traffic, parking guards.

Member Trotter suggested to possibly do the increase in 2 phases and see how the first one works out.

Chairman Finke stated the board needs to see the traffic report before any decisions could be made. This application will be carried to May 3, 2022. Anyone who wishes to speak can do so next month.

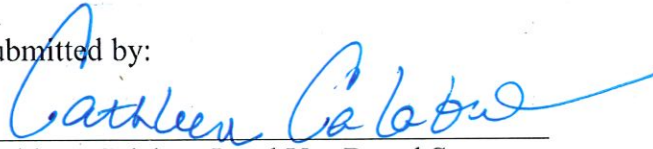
Gerald Salerno stated to the applicant to submit the traffic report 10 days in advance of the meeting so the board has the opportunity to review it.


Also Under New Business the following Resolution was approved:

Resolution 2022-42AR was approved to deny the application on a motion by Inserra by second by Donato and a roll call of all members present voting yes.

With no other business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Submitted by:


Cathleen Calabro, Land Use Board Secretary


Date