

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
WORKSESSION/PUBLIC MEETING
APRIL 11, 2013**

APPROVED

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Open Public Meetings Law Statement:

This meeting, which conforms with the Open Public Meetings Law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a Worksession/Public Meeting of the Planning Board.

Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Mayor Birkner (arrived 8:15 pm)
Thomas Constantine
Daniel Olivier
Richard Bonsignore
Councilmember Ray Arroyo
Philip Cerruti, Vice-Chairman
Jaymee Hodges, Chairman
Ann Costello (Alt. #1)
Keith Doell (Alt. #2)

ALSO PRESENT:

Thomas Randall, Esq., Board Attorney
Ed Snieckus, Burgis Associates, Board Planner
Eve Mancuso, appeared on behalf of
Louis Raimondi, Brooker Engineering,
Board Engineer

ABSENT: William Martin (excused absence)

4. MINUTES: The **Minutes of 3/14/13** were approved on motions made, seconded and carried unanimously on roll call vote. **The 3/28/13 meeting was canceled** due to lack of applications to process.

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5. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. **Memo of Burgis Associates, dated 4/11/13, RE: Sign Amendments and Recommendations;**

2. **Memo of Burgis Associates, dated 4/3/13, RE: JTZ Holdings;**

3. **Informational postcard received by Chairman Hodges regarding a flood zone seminar;**

6. RESOLUTIONS: None

7. PENDING NEW BUSINESS: None

8. VOUCHERS: None

9. VARIANCES, SUBDIVISIONS AND/OR SITE PLANS

SWEARING IN OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Board Professionals were sworn in

1. JTZ Holdings, LLC - 313 Broadway, Block 907, Lot 2 - Minor Site Plan Approval - Ed Snieckus reviewed his report dated 4/3/13. Applicant submitted a minor site plan and variance application to renovate the existing structure in the CBD Zone for real estate offices, as well as to remove an existing garage structure in the rear of the property in order to construct a proposed parking area to the rear of the existing structure. The property previously housed the Arrow Stationary store. The real estate offices are a permitted use; the pre-existing second floor apartments are not. An inquiry was made to the Zoning Officer, who arrived at the determination that they have always been used as residential apartments and are not being expanded, and he granted a permit for the renovations.

Site plans prepared by R.L. Engineering, dated 1/13/13, a Survey by Azzolina & Feury dated 5/16/12, Architectural Plans by Peter B. Cooper & Associates dated 12/5/12, and Stormwater Runoff and Soil Movement Calculations prepared by R.L. Engineering, dated 1/24/13 were submitted with the application.

Mr. Snieckus reviewed the variances for minimum front and side yards, maximum impervious coverage, and minimum parking

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spaces, and pre-existing variances of minimum lot area, width, depth, and building coverage.

The application was also supplemented with a parking lot licensing agreement to the applicant from the Westwood Parking Authority. The site plan indicates landscaping and Westwood style lights to be installed.

Mr. Snieckus gave an overview of the application and plans, and aspects of architecture, signs, loading space, trash pickup, landscaping, site lighting, The application was consistent with the Master Plan, Mr. Snieckus continued, citing issues and goals relating to the application. He went on to review the statutory criteria for the variances.

Eve Mancuso prepared a report dated 3/12/12, which she reviewed. Most items were covered in the Burgis Memo; however, certain comments were supplemented with respect to driveway width, sidewalk width, height of fence and stormwater management.

Questions by the Board of Mr. Snieckus followed. There were concerns about water runoff. Mr. Bonsignore commented the drawings needed more analysis, and additional time was needed to review them. Mayor had questions about the seepage pits and stormwater management. The application does call for a pretty substantial variance for impervious coverage. Ms. Costello was concerned about lack of windows in the lower level. Chairman Hodges commented the basement was used by Arrow Stationary for computer repairs.

The matter was scheduled for hearing on 4/25/13.

10. DISCUSSIONS:

1. Cell Tower Ordinance - Chairman Hodges sought to discuss the proposed cell tower ordinance, classifying it as an administrative ordinance, not a land use ordinance, which goes before the Mayor and Council for approval and adoption. Mr. Snieckus commented that although there are land use components within the ordinance, the large bulk of the changes are administrative functions. Councilman Ray Arroyo commented the Board should discuss the issues prior to sending it back to the Mayor and Council. All were in agreement.

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2. HSO Zone - Chairman Hodges commented because the hospital was going to open on 6/1/13, he suggested considering maintaining the HSO into the LM Zone, to maintain medical businesses in the zone. The amendment to the LM implies no residential is permitted, and Chairman Hodges suggested expressly prohibiting residential. Mayor Birkner commented he did not agree, since in the future, the hospital may look towards a teaching hospital with affiliated housing, and down the road as we see growth 10-15 years down the road, this may be needed. He did not deem it necessary to tie their hands with something that is not an issue at the moment. Attorney Randall advised if it is not in the ordinance, it is not permitted. Councilman Arroyo commented we just reviewed the Master Plan and that zone, and did not include residential. If someone were to come in for a use variance, they would face the same challenge in the zone as the 7-Eleven application did. A detailed discussion took place with ideas, suggestions and possibilities for the zone.

3. Sign Regulations - Ordinance Sections 195-198C and H - Color of Signs; 195-198 - Height of Building-Mounted Signs; 195-161 - Awnings - Mr. Snieckus reviewed his Memo dated 4/11/13:

Colors of Signs - Ed Snieckus reviewed the issue of signage, particularly the number of colors and window signs discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Snieckus prepared an outline between the existing and proposed criteria. The existing colors were gold leaf, black or white. It was recommended to expand that to four colors, which he showed in bold. He added window signs shall be painted in gold leaf, blue, cream or white. The typical number of colors permitted in other towns varied from three to eight. He wanted to expand on the prohibition of iridescent colors for the next meeting.

Height of Building Mounted Signs - The existing ordinance states the wall sign must not be located more than 12' from the ground. The proposed is for no more than 15' from the ground. In looking around at existing heights of signage, there is a decorative architectural feature on the building next to theirs on Westwood Avenue which is 15' from the ground; Hartley's is 14'. Mr. Snieckus gave an overview. This was acceptable to the Board.

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Awning Illuminations - The existing ordinance stated no awning or canopy shall be illuminated or made of any material which is not opaque. All awnings shall be made of woven fabric, such as canvas, with a flat, non-glossy finish. The proposed language is to add, "except for the areas of permitted sign text noted herein". Mr. Snieckus gave an overview. He would like to come back to the Board with additional language, capping foot candles and something to that effect.

Mr. Snieckus recalled a discussion about lot coverage and number of garages, and he would come back with further elaboration at the next meeting or worksession. As for the Board's recommendations to the Mayor and Council, the mechanics and intention of certain sections of the ordinance would be expanded upon.

4. Hospital Update - Mayor Birkner gave an update on the hospital opening officially on 6/1/13. Festivities planned included 5/16 Employee Day; 5/17 Black Tie, 5/18 Community Day; with a Ribbon Cutting on 5/23/13.

5. Boy Scouts visited Washington DC, Gravesite of Sergeant Christopher Hrbek - Mayor Birkner spoke proudly about the trip the Boy Scout Troop made to Washington DC representing the Borough of Westwood, visiting the gravesite of Sgt. Christopher Hrbek and participating in the laying of the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They had a very special and meaningful experience, especially embracing the sacrifices that Sgt. Christopher Hrbek made. Chairman Hodges commented it is such a pleasure when young men participate in such a positive fashion. Further, he has passes for anyone who wishes to visit Arlington Cemetery.

Mr. Constantine asked for an excused absence at the next meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT - On motions, made seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned at approx. 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

MARY R. VERDUCCI, Paralegal
Planning Board Secretary