

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
December 15, 2011**

**APPROVED 2/23/12**

**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 Regular 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 John Birkner  
Jaymee Hodges, Chairman  
William Martin  
Daniel Olivier  
Richard Bonsignore  
Philip Cerruti  
Councilwoman Cynthia Waneck  
Ann Costello (Alt. #1)  
Keith Doell (Alt. #2)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Thomas Randall, Esq., Board Attorney  
By Steven Paul, Esq.  
Ed Snieckus, Burgis Associates, Board Planner  
By Sean Moronski  
Louis Raimondi, Brooker Engineering,  
Board Engineer

**ABSENT:** Thomas Constantine (excused absence)  
James Schluter, Vice-Chairman (excused absence)

Mayor Birkner stated he listened to the tape of the 10/27/11 meeting and signed a Certification. Dan Olivier stated

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he listened to the tape of the 12/1/11 meeting and signed a Certification.

**4. MINUTES:** The Minutes of 10/27/11 and 12/1/11 were approved on motion of Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Doell and carried. The Minutes of 11/17/11 were approved on motion of Mr. Doell, seconded by Mr. Martin and carried.

**5. CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. Letter from Joseph L. Basralian, Esq., dated 12/1/11  
**RE: Pascack Valley Health System, LLC, 250 Old Hook Road, requesting adjournment;**

**6. RESOLUTIONS:**

1. **Master Plan Periodic Re-Examination Report** - The Board noted the Master Plan Re-examination was now complete and good for ten years. A motion for approval was made by Ann Costello and seconded by Keith Doll. There were no further questions, comments or discussions. On roll call vote, Mayor Birkner, William Martin, Councilwoman Waneck, Ann Costello, Keith Doell and Jaymee Hodges voted yes. Phillip Cerruti, Dan Olivier and Richard Bonsignore were not eligible to vote.

**7. PENDING NEW BUSINESS: None**

**8. VOUCHERS:** A motion to approve vouchers totaling \$5,877.50 was made by Ann Costello, seconded by Richard Bonsignore and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

**9. VARIANCES, SUBDIVISIONS AND/OR SITE PLANS:**

SWEARING IN OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Board Professionals were sworn in

1. **Pascack Valley Health Systems - 250, Old Hook Road - Site Plan Application** - Scheduled for 1/12/12;

2. **Lipkin Properties, LLC - 345 Old Hook Rd, Block 2103, Lot 2** - (James Schluter recused) Andrew Kohut, Esq., of Wells Jaworski & Liebman, represented the applicant. Michael A. Austin, Esq. of Rubenstein, Meyerson, Fox, Mancinelli & Conte, P.A., appeared as attorney for the objector, 333 Professional Plaza Condo Association, located adjacent to the subject property.

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Richard Eichenlaub, P.E. continued under oath and distributed an illustration, entitled "Side Street Parking Spaces", in conjunction with questions of how many spaces were available on Bergenline Avenue. This was a former upholstery company. Mr. Martin commented they are proposing a three parking space variance, since 30 spaces are required and 27 are proposed, and demonstrating those three spaces are available. Sean Moronski, Acting Board Planner, initiated some questions.

Objecting attorney Austin asked how far the spaces were from their site. Mr. Eichenlaub responded 180'. He then asked if patients would walk that distance or park in his client's lot. The response said they would walk if there was no parking available.

Steven Brossock, Licensed Architect, Partner in Studio 5 Partnership, was sworn in and testified they are removing a small portion of the building, resulting in interior walls being outside walls. The building is structurally sound, with no deficiencies. However, there are some signs of deterioration. They intend to reduce the overall footprint. He displayed the plan and showed the walls being removed. Inside there will be a large medical office, to be occupied by Dr. Lipkin, an orthodontist, who is relocating from Emerson. The smaller space would be leased to another medical professional, preferably a dentist. The entrance would be covered, with two exits - a main exit and an emergency exit. The building would be stucco, and the signs would be conforming, at 75 sq. ft. and 51 sq. ft. The loading and deliveries would take place through the main entrance and take about one to two minutes. He staggers patients, having four treatment rooms, with three to four patients as scheduled. There would be a small reception area and a waiting area. On rare occasions there would be three patients waiting.

Mr. Martin asked if there would be any aesthetic improvements made. The response was they were only resurfacing with no exterior improvements. They would replace the existing mechanical equipment, and if they run out of space, they would place it on the roof. Mr. Martin was looking for some type of aesthetic improvement and was concerned about putting any mechanicals on the roof. In that event he would like to see screening. Mr. Brossock indicated there would be insulation

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added from the interior, and possibly at the exterior. They are replacing the entire roof and possibly the roof insulation.

Mr. Martin commented he would like to hear the details of the improvements in advance. Mr. Martin suggested moving the wall over on the West side to widen the driveway. Mr. Doell had concerns about the size of the building. Mr. Olivier had questions about the roof, commenting it would be nice to put something on the roof to improve its appearance. Councilwoman Waneck commented coming to the building is not very appealing, and it is disappointing to hear it is just getting a fresh coat of paint.

Richard Bonsignore asked if he was aware of the recommendations in the Master Plan to encourage professional occupancy in this area, which was once mostly industrial. This is the first application as such in this area. Accordingly, we would like to see enhancements, visually as well as functionally, as these buildings are transformed. As a brother architect, we hear the words but do not see the details. Architects convey by pictures. There are many details and questions. Attorney Kohut responded they heard the Board's concerns about aesthetics and would come back with additional designs to put the members at ease. Mr. Bonsignore commented he would like to make recommendations on details, such as for the roof. If given the opportunity, they would provide the next step with some aesthetic improvements, the architect said.

Mr. Raimondi expressed concern about the sanitary sewer, drainage and positive pitch. If they take the next step, they would address those concerns, Mr. Brossock responded. Mr. Eichenlaub had comments to address this concern, pointing out the sanitary line and possibilities. Mr. Raimondi also had concerns about parking, the narrow walk from the lot and encroaching into traffic aisle. Mr. Martin commented about moving the West wall over.

Mr. Austin asked if they could move the northern wall back towards the South, eliminating some impervious coverage. Mr. Brossock said it was possible. He asked if it were possible for the building to be made smaller. Mr. Brossock responded he needs 5,000 sq. ft., it is more expensive to build a new building vs. improving this building, and the existing building is in good structural condition.

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C. Joseph Smith, PP, applicant's planner was sworn in, qualified and accepted. Mr. Smith testified he reviewed the Master Plan and Re-examination. Impervious coverage of 70% is almost impossible to achieve with the parking for a medical office building. The number of spaces required is 30, and they are proposing 27. He gave details of all the variances and waivers with justification. The use was discussed as something Westwood wants, and he agrees about the comments with respect to aesthetics, which can certainly be spruced up. The doctor applicant explained there is a possibility of having six patients in the office at any one time. The proposal is modest, and the building is structurally sound. As for sustainability, they are taking buildings and putting them to better use and hopefully will be enhancing this building as a recycled building and allow it to be used for medical use for the benefit of the Borough and district in general.

Mr. Smith continued, stating they are providing an awful lot of parking and paving over a lot of space, on a small lot with a small building, reduced 41% by the owner. Also, they are providing more parking than is needed to service a 4,400 sq. ft. office building. There are unused parking spaces, and they are increasing the impervious area. The building at #333 Old Hook consists of 18,616 sq. ft. on two floors, accommodating 10 doctors on the first floor and nine on the second floor, with five office suites on the first floor and two on the second. He visited the site at random times, at 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm on two occasions and observed that a third of parking spots were not used. Basically it is under parked by ordinance. The proposal would preserve green space and enhance the building. This small building will probably not even utilize all the parking spaces in this parking lot. He feels the suggestions are valid and good, and he is certain Mr. Brossock will make sure they are taken care of. If the Board is looking for a research center, the parking that has been asked for is probably excessive.

Mr. Smith stated he believes the Board can consider this application under the "C" variances, under two counts for this presentation. Under C1, based on the ordinance and narrowness of the site, this is the only thing they could do. He does not feel the removal of the wall would meet design standards, and a two story space is not the direction of the master plan. Asking the doctor to reduce when he is already reducing 40% is not a

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reasonable request. Allowing UPS and Federal Express trucks to park for 10 minutes is not against the ordinance. Under C2, they are eliminating an industrial use and providing an approved use on the site. This project will eliminate a dangerous situation. They will provide a sustainable design. It meets the goals of Master Plan and Re-examination. They are replacing a defunct industrial building.

In his professional opinion, Mr. Smith testified the variances can be approved under C1, hardship, and C2 and be granted without substantial detriment. He would urge the Board to consider approving this application.

Mr. Austin commented as for any concerns with parking on the street 100' away, he feels it is a reasonable distance. Also, there was a suggestion for speed bumps, but it is not practical since it is not a shortcut.

The Board Planner cross-examined Mr. Smith's testimony regarding C1 and C2 justification for variances at length.

Questions by the Board and Professionals followed. Mr. Raimondi asked Mr. Smith if he calculated the size of building based on coverage. Then he would have to reduce the building another 1,200 sq. ft. Mr. Smith responded in his professional opinion, based on what he has seen and in conversation with the doctor, a 1,100 sq. ft. office does not need 15 spaces.

Ms. Costello had questions regarding impervious coverage and commented she would also like to see enhancements.

Mr. Martin commented he thought about moving the westerly wall down and moving it over. Also, removing three parallel spaces in front of the building would make it more aesthetically pleasing and would allow for safety. The Board Planner commented.

Mayor Birkner inquired about parking and Keith Doell inquired about removal of trees. Attorney Kohut responded they will provide two shade trees, in front on Old Hook Road and in the right-of-way. Councilwoman Waneck said she does agree to reduce parking for more green area. Mr. Bonsignore agreed with eliminating the three spots.

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Jaymee Hodges commented it was a very thorough presentation. Mr. Austin had questions for Mr. Smith regarding testimony about his visits to other office buildings and deliveries.

Jaymee Hodges anticipated Mr. Brossock would return with a more detailed plan of the interior and exterior. Mr. Kohut stated they will come back with a more detailed plan and will also analyze the three spaces on the westerly side.

The matter was carried to 1/12/12. Attorney Kohut thanked the Board and extended holiday wishes.

**10. DISCUSSIONS:**

Mayor Birkner expressed gratitude to Councilwoman Waneck for her dedicated service as Land Use Liaison to the Planning Board, noting she has accepted a new liaison assignment. The Mayor stated we will welcome Councilwoman Quinn as Land Use Liaison. We appreciate all the great and hard work Ms. Waneck has put in, he added. Mr. Bonsignore commented she is the best liaison this Board has ever had. Chairman Hodges commented she has done a wonderful job. Councilwoman Waneck thanked the Board and commented the past six years have been very rewarding and she had two great Chairmen to lead the Board.

Chairman Hodges extended wishes for a Blessed Christmas and holiday season and thanked everyone for another wonderful year as Chairman. He was glad that Mr. Bonsignore has returned.

**11. ADJOURNMENT** - On motions, made seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned at approx. 10:37 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**MARY R. VERDUCCI, Paralegal  
Planning Board Secretary**