

Regular Public Meeting of the Englewood Cliffs
Planning Board Minutes
February 13, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Englewood Cliffs Planning Board was called to order by Chairman Porrino at 8:08 pm.

Roll Call:

Present:

Chairman Porrino
Vice Chairwoman Mrs. O'Shea
Ms. Correa
Ms. Kim
Mr. O'Shea
Mrs. Villari
Mrs. Rizvi – 1st Alternate
Ms. Zamecki – 2nd Alternate
Mr. Lee – Borough Representative
Mr. You – Mayor Designee
Councilwoman Biegacz

Absent:

Present:

Mr. Tim Wiss Esq., of Randall & Randall, LLP, the planning board's attorney.
Mr. Craig Zimmerman of Colliers Engineering, the planning board's engineer.

Flag Salute

Public notice of this regular meeting has been given in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Law by advertisement in The Record, notification to The Press Journal, and posting of notice on the municipal website at www.EnglewoodCliffsNJ.org and posting on the entrance of the borough hall building at 482 Hudson Terrace, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Chairman Porrino requested a motion for the November 14, 2024, minutes. Motion was made by Ms. Correa and seconded by Mrs. O'Shea with a roll call vote. (8) Ayes, Mrs. O'Shea, Ms. Correa, Mr. Kim, Mr. O'Shea, Ms. Zamecki, Mr. Lee, Councilwoman Biegacz and Chairman Porrino. No Nays, (2) Abstentions, Mrs. Villari and Mr. You.

Chairman Porrino requested a motion for the December 12, 2024, minutes. Motion was made by Ms. Correa and seconded by Chairman Porrino with a roll call vote. (7) Ayes, Ms. Correa, Mr. Kim, Mr. O'Shea, Ms. Zamecki, Mr. Lee, Councilwoman Biegacz and Chairman Porrino. No Nays, (3) Abstentions, Mrs. O'Shea, Mrs. Villari and Mr. You.

Old Business:

Application #325K - Residential Impervious Coverage Variance
Dr. & Dr. Goldenberg – 20 Lynn Dr. – Block 1003 Lot 16
Resolution – Approved.

Chairman Porrino asked if we received any revised plans for this which has been on going. Mrs. Scancarella stated that she had spoken with Mr. Randall about this, and he stated he

has reached out to the attorney for the applicant but was not aware if they had responded to him. Chairman Porrino asked Mr. Wiss to have Mr. Randall reach out again to them about this matter.

Application #335K - Extension of Prior Approval
45 Laurie Dr. & 28 Geraldine Ct. – Block 1009 – Lots 16 & 17

Chairman Porrino recused himself from this matter at 8:11 pm and left the meeting but will come back later. He requested Vice Chairwoman O'Shea to take over the meeting at this time.

Mr. Wiss board attorney explained the reason for the extension of time of an additional 9 months. They are not asking for any changes the owner has since passed away and the estate needs time to finalize all the information.

Vice Chairwoman O'Shea requested a motion to approve the extension resolution. Motion was made by Ms. Correa and seconded by Mr. Lee with a roll call vote. (6) Ayes Mrs. O'Shea, Ms. Correa, Mr. Kim, Mr. O'Shea, Mrs. Zimecki, Mr. Lee (2) Abstentions Mrs. Villari and Councilwoman Biegacz

New Business:

Application #340K – Minor Subdivision w/Site Plan Approval & Variances
Dara Ye – 18 Seventh St. – Block 204 – Lot 10

Mr. Mark Sokolich attorney for the applicant gave an overview of the property at 18 Seventh St. They are seeking a subdivision of a 200' long lot into two separate lots with both lots being nonconforming, but the applicant seeks such subdivision with variances.

Mr. Mark Martins engineer for the applicant used the exhibits which were marked in as follows:

- "A-1" – Site Plan Cover Sheet dated June 18, 2024
- "A-2" – Site Plan Sheet 2 Minor Subdivision Plat dated June 18, 2024
- "A-3" – Site Plan Sheet 3 Site Plan dated June 18, 2024

Mr. Martins gave a description of the site using exhibit "A-1" 18 Seventh St. Block 502 Lot 10. This property has frontage on Seventh St. as well as Eighth St overall lot frontage is 50' on both streets and lot depth of 200' from street to street. The property is in the Zone RB which is a single-family home zone. The minimum lot width in this zone is 70' with 7000 sq. ft. lot size. Mr. Martins went over exhibit A-2 of what exists on the lot today, which shows the minor subdivision as well. We are proposing to subdivide the lot into two equal lots one to front on Seventh St. the other to front on Eighth St. Mr. Martins stated there is a two-story home facing Seventh St. and the backyard goes out to Eighth St. and a driveway with access off Seventh St. There is a drop off in elevation from Seventh St. to Eighth St. of approx. 9'. Seventh St. is higher than Eighth St. They are proposing to demolish the existing home as to subdivide the lot and construct two new homes on each lot. We have an existing nonconformity of the lot width due to it being 49.79' not 50' as required. Both lots will have nonconforming lot widths starting with proposed lot 10.01 fronting on Seventh St, will have frontage of 50' and depth of 100' due to the lot not being squared the lot width really is 49.79' were 70' is required so that is the one variance required which is an existing nonconforming

issue. By subdividing the lot in the middle, the lot depth will be 100'. So, with the lot not being squared it will be 4979 sq. ft where 7000 sq. ft. is required. So, we have a variance for the lot width. Mr. Martins stated that most of the variances being requested are due to the nonconforming lot size. There are some existing nonconforming side yard setbacks as well. The total side yard requirement is 15.7' were as they have 14.5' so these are existing nonconforming. Lot 10.02 is basically the exact same size as Lot 10.01. This is all about the subdivision request information.

Mr. Martins gave a description of exhibit A-3 proposed site plan of the two new homes. Mr. Martins started with the setbacks for the two homes that will be similar to each other. Lot 10.01 will have a frontage of 25' and 20.9' to the covered porch. Side yard setbacks of each side to be 7' and rear yard setback of 14.2 to the deck and 25' to the main structure. Lot 10.02 fronting on Eighth St. will have similar setbacks as the home on Seventh St. The front yard will be 25.64' and 20.95' to the covered porch. The side yards will each be 7' and the rear yard to the deck will be 20.2' and to the structure will be 25'. In terms of the grading of the property there is the difference from Seventh St. to Eighth St. of about 9'. We are going to be terracing that out a bit with some small retaining walls with maximum heights of about 2 ½'. We will have a driveway on Seventh St. to access the home slightly pitched down from the street with french drains to capture the runoff with additional retention chambers in the driveway area. There will also be a retention chamber in the rear area that will capture all of the leaders water. Mr. Martins stated that the applicant will comply with any recommendations regarding stormwater from the board and the board's engineer as requested. The Eighth St. lot is similar to the Seventh St. lot the driveway is pitched down towards Eighth St. We will be putting retention chambers in the driveway and one at the back of the property.

Mr. Martins went over the zoning for each property and schedules. Lot 10.01 which is the Seventh St. lot which we discussed the lot area previously and the setbacks. These are the requirements front yard minimum is 25' and the average of all homes on the street which is 28.7'. We are proposing 25' and 20.9' to covered porch so that is a variance. The rear yard setback requirement is 25' we have 25' to the structure the deck setback is 20' we have 14.2' so that is a variance. The side yard setback each side will have a setback of 7' so that conforms with the requirements but the total setback requirement of 31 ½% of the lot width which is 15.75' we are at 14' so that is another variance. We meet the minimum but not the total combined. Building coverage requirement of 32% of the lot area we are proposing 41.37% of the lot which requires a variance. The building height requirement is 30' from grade and 32' from curb level we are proposing 33.97' from grade and 33.17' from curb so that too is a variance. The Impervious coverage requirement is 51% we are proposing 58.74% which is another variance. The rear yard coverage is 60% were as we are proposing 26.51%. The minimum driveway setback is 2' we are porposing 6.7' which conforms. Mr. Martins stated that lot 10.02 has similar variance requests which all are listed on exhibit A-3. Mr. Martins stated that there will be some retaining wall on each site no higher than 2 ½'. The pitch of the driveway on Seventh St. is 1% and the one on Eighth St. will be approx. 5%.

Mr. Martins stated he reviewed Collier Engineering letter and feels that we can comply with any requests on the letter.

Chairwoman O'Shea asked to repeat the drop in the driveway to the garage. Mr. Martins stated the driveway on Seventh St. is pitched slightly down from the curb line about 10". The

driveway on Eighth St. is pitched up about 2'. Vice Chairwoman O'Shea stated with this whole application counted that there are 9 variances being requested which is an awful lot.

Mr. Zimmerman board's engineer sated that it is 18 variances over the two lots. Vice Chairwoman O'Shea stated she was just talking about one house. Vice Chairwoman O'Shea requested Mr. Zimmerman to go over the drainage situation with the impervious coverage.

Mr. Zimmerman stated we reviewed this with the drainage calculations that were provided, and the lots do not trigger major stormwater standards with that said the applicant is making an effort to capture the drainage as would happen in a normal building application. The property on Seventh St. will have one in the front and one on the rear as the Eighth St. house will have one in the driveway. All calculations work but also the soil testing would have to be submitted to make sure it works. Mr. Zimmerman stated stormwater is not an issue for this application.

Councilwoman Biegacz stated she has two issues one is did you do any oil tank sweeps on this lot. Mr. Martins stated he does not personally do that. Mr. Sokolich stated that when the applicant purchased the property, they had done the oil tank sweep and there were none on the lot. Councilwoman Biegacz questioned the town is doing a survey about the drainage system we suffer from flooding issues in the town, and I think before we do anything we should prepare to be testing that the town did and to see if there are any issues by this site and to check before anything is completed. She directed them to contact Jerry Barberio to get the information.

Vice Chairwoman O'Shea questioned if there are storm drains in the street on Seventh St. Mr. Martins stated he did not believe there any on either street. Vice Chairwoman O'Shea stated so when you are looking for an increase in the impervious coverage from 51% to almost 59% with no storm drains you are eliminating the ground water to seep into the ground because there is so much coverage of the property. Mr. Martins stated we are compensating with the drainage and stormwater management that is on the plan. Vice Chairwoman O'Shea questioned if all the house leaders will be going into the system. Mr. Martins stated yes.

Mrs. Villari questioned the side yard dimensions from the house to the property line. Mr. Martins stated that they will be 7' on each side.

Ms. Correa questioned both homes will be at 33.9' in height. Mr. Martins stated we have a height of 33.97' for the Seventh St. measured on grade and the Eighth St. house will be at 33.67' from grade and 35.89' from the curb level since curb level is lower on Eighth St.

Mr. Zimmerman went over all the variances for the board members to understand and stated that he sees all variances as a bulk "C" variance. Mr. Martins agreed with the statement even though he is not the planner. Mr. Zimmerman stated that the board should it approve this application a time matter maybe added since they will have to demolish the existing home before they can submit the plan for subdivision deed codification. Mr. Sokolich stated he thinks it is approx. 190 days by statute to complete the subdivision which the board attorney stated it will be noted in the resolution if approved.

Mr. Zimmerman stated he is a little concerned about the lack of inlets he feels there is a need for overflow pipes going somewhere but to where? Mr. Martins stated we oversized the

systems by 2 ½ times which is more than what we need. Mr. Zimmerman stated I am aware of that, but I still feel there is a need for an overflow pipe in case of a major rain event that exceeds the design it will back up and destroy the home. We typically have had some go into the storm pipes in the road but we don't see any for these properties so we would have to look into it. Mr. Zimmerman questioned the retaining walls that are really a gravity wall since they are only 2 ½'. I am a little concerned since they run up against the property line. What will be the material of the wall. Mr. Martins stated it will be a keystone modular block wall. Will there be a fence on top. Mr. Martins stated no unless necessary by code for fall protection.

Mr. Zimmerman questioned the number of trees for removal. Mr. Martins stated there will be 9 to be removed and will obtain permits from the borough for removal and what will have to be replaced.

Mr. Sokolich stated that the applicant will try to go back and sharpen the plan after hearing all these comments. Vice Chairwoman O'Shea requested the next witness to be heard at this time and them changes can be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Bill Cocoros architect for the applicant marked into exhibit the architectural plans as;

A-4 – Elevation with Site Plan revised date May 13, 2024

A-5 – Floor Plans revised date May 13, 2024

Mr. Cocoros stated that the house depicted on exhibit A-4 is the home that will face on Seventh St. Mr. Cocoros gave an overview of the plan for a 3-story configuration. The structure will be 35' 9 ½" wide by 40'1" wide home. Mr. Cocoros described exhibit A-5 showing the basement plan, first floor plan and the second-floor plan. The basement is 1709 sq. ft. the first floor will be 1750 sq. ft., and the second floor will be 1745 sq. ft. with the total square footage of approx. 5204 sq. ft. This plan is the same for the home on Eighth St. Mr. Cocoros stated the configuration of the home is the same just the elevations are different because of the site.

Mr. Lee questioned the site plan you have it marked as a 3 story 2 family dwelling. Mr. Cocoros stated it was incorrect that it should be a 1 family dwelling which will be corrected on both. Mr. Lee stated we do not allow 3 story homes, so you mean 3 levels or stories. Mr. Cocoros stated it is 3 stories on Seventh St. due to the topography of the incline where are the one on Eighth St. can be a 2 ½ story due to the topography on that lot. The home on Seventh topography could be a hardship. Mr. Lee stated if you trigger a 3rd story that will be another variance for that lot. Mr. Cocoros stated he will look into that and height for changes we will come back with.

Vice Chairwoman O'Shea questioned the ceiling height of the basement. Mr. Cocoros stated on Seventh St. it will be 8' and will be a step down into 9'4". The first floor will be 9' and the second floor will be 8' with some portion that will have a tray ceiling in the main bedroom which will take it to 9'6".

Mr. You stated his concerns about all the variances and coverage. He questioned if they would take these concerns into play for the revisions you are stating that will be completed and submitted to the board.

There was a 5-minute break at 9:42 pm meeting resumed at 9:50 pm.

Vice Chairwoman O'Shea requested a motion to open the meeting to the public for this matter only. Motion was made by Ms. Correa and seconded by Mr. O'Shea carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. James McLaughlin of 13 Seventh St. stated this is a small community block that holds block parties and would like to keep it at that. I feel that they are not just asking for variances they are asking to rezone the town which I feel is completely out of bounds. For one house I would understand, and it would work well. The backyard of this lot is a water retention. In the rear yard the water doesn't drain to street it drains to neighbor's lot. I am worried about our neighbors. Are they planning drainage which will help those lots. This is a massive ask for this lot and we must have standards.

Mr. Rodriguez of 14 Seventh St. stated all I kept hearing was nonconforming as asking for all these variances. These houses are going to be big monsters with no land. I don't agree with this at all. I would love to have a new home next to me but not to look like Fort Lee. It is not going to be good if approved.

Mr. Kevin Kyle of 19 Seventh St. stated we are all looking to monetarize our properties that is happening here which I have no problem with, but this is just too much to ask for. Please don't do it.

Ms. Jean Luppino of 14 Seventh St. stated I don't object of the site plan division I am against the number of variances and cutting down of the trees for a monetary gain for the developer. This is my next-door neighbor and if approved it will set a precedence for all future development in our town.

Mr. Peter Liaskos of 10 Eighth St. stated when the house I have was built 35 years ago the height permitted was 35' and 3 stories with no basements. Shortly after that the town changed the height restriction. The lot on Eighth St. is on the curve I can't understand how two lots can be opened there and at 4 pm that curve is busy. When it rains, we have no sewers and our backyards flood. With a 9' pitch and additional building to be done on Sylvan and Fifth St. we have no storm drains having a 9' pitch 2 new homes on the lot where is all the water going to go. This is not a hardship the buyer is a real estate person with a pump and dump for profit project. If they want a new house knock it down and build one new larger home not two. I reject this application.

Mr. Malles Waran of 15 Eighth St. stated that he lives next door to this property and every time it rains, I can see the water running down all the time. The water flows down to Eighth St. we have a major concern for this development. This is not the right thing to build there. I am concerned my house will flood. I already have sump pumps.

Mr. David DiGregorio of 165 Charlotte Pl. addressed Mayor Sokolich the applicant's attorney saying that we are not Fort Lee even though it is beautiful. I can't believe that we would be considering this and I commend the members on their comments/concerns being raised. We have a horrible water situation in our town. I would like to know in detail why the Chairman is not in his seat. Our town needs to look at the land and design something for that property. We have ugly houses we have turned into a charmless community due to the greed of the developers. I appeal to the lawyer, mayor, planning board members to make the right decision not only on this but all that come before you.

Vice Chairwoman O'Shea requested a motion to close the public portion for this matter. Motion was made by Mr. O'Shea and seconded by Ms. Correa carried unanimously by voice vote.

Vice Chairwoman O'Shea stated that we will carry the application to the March 13, 2024, meeting to give the applicant time to make changes and submit to the board to continue. No further notice is required.

Board members took a break at 10:08 pm.

Board members and Chairman Porrino rejoined the meeting at 10:10 pm

Application #342K – Use Variance

See Saw, LLC – 650 Palisade Ave. – Block 502 – Lot 10

Mr. Gregory Pastor attorney for the applicant gave an overview of the application for See Saw, LLC the clothing store at 650 Palisade Ave. They are requesting a use variance for the store which is in the building at 650 Palisade Ave. We are just tenants who received approval for an apothecary type store. The owner was unaware that clothing is not allowed at that location. She sells high end ladies clothing. We are not making it a department store and we know it is not zoned for retail. We know we are asking for the use variance for an operation that is already there. The owner already has a website selling these items. We are asking for less than 29.06% of the 732 sq. ft. of retail space to be appropriated for clothing and the rest will be sunglasses, jewelry, lotion, perfume etc.

Chairman Porrino stated this is a use variance so we should reconstitute as the zoning board and the Class I and Class II members can be excused. Councilwoman Biegacz and Mr. You both left the meeting at 10:16 pm as well as Ms. Rivzi asked to be excused as well.

Mr. Joseph Donato architect for the applicant gave an overview of the exhibit marked as A-1 Site Plan with Parking which is 2 pages dated January 13, 2025. The parking is on the front and around the back of the building. Nothing is changing outside of the building. It is in the "B1" zone. There is a UPS Store and Post Office there which has been there for years. The space is a corner space with glass windows. It is 17.2' wide by 49' deep, totally 856 sq. ft. which includes storage space in the back, there is an exit door in the rear to a hallway area. Of the retail space minus the storage/utility space and bathroom is 732 sq. ft., which we are now selling perfume, jewelry, sunglasses we are proposing to add clothing with mannequins and some table areas. If we break up the area of the 732 sq. ft., we have clothing area which is clothing racks, mannequins and table area will be 85 sq. ft. of space. There is a dressing room, no new walls being proposed, just curtains which are 45 sq. ft. So, the total clothing area will be 130 sq. ft. Clothing display will be about 17.4% of the space. So, the main space will still be jewelry, handbags and clothing are just accessories to the space. The number of customers is 1-2 per hour when open Monday – Saturday. Parking would need 4 spaces in which there are plenty around the site.

Mr. Lee questioned the number of parking spaces for the site. Mr. Donato stated there are 29 spaces. Mr. Lee questioned what about the other tenants in the building, how you see that fitting into your client's use of 4 spaces because whenever I pass by around 4-5 pm that place is packed and it gets dangerous for cars coming and going. Did you look at the tenants upstairs, the UPS Store and Post Office are the spaces being utilized having any issues at

this point. Do you know for a fact how many spots are being used. Mr. Donato stated he doesn't as far as the other tenants but in regard to my client we know, and they have never had a problem. Mr. Lee stated that being a clothing store the customer will stay longer so the spots will be used for a longer period of time. Mr. Pastor stated he would have to dispute that since it is not a department store where you are browsing. Mr. Lee stated there is a dressing room you will have to change instead of you just going in and picking up the items that are being sold and leave. With clothing you would go into the dressing room and try on and off clothing that will take some time. Mr. Pastor stated he doesn't see someone there for more than ½ an hour.

Mr. Zimmerman stated the parking space is based on retail not on the longevity of the use. I don't see an issue just think it should be proven that the number of spaces is what is needed.

Mrs. O'Shea stated she doesn't feel there will be an issue with parking since it is a small store and will not have a lot of inventory for people to spend time looking through before purchasing or leave the store.

Chairman Porrino questioned if any signage is being proposed. Mr. Donato stated no there is an existing signage already.

Mr. Kim questioned what the business hours are. Mr. Pastor stated Monday – Friday from 10 am – 6 pm, Saturday 10 am – 5 pm.

Ms. Correa stated that she has been in the store several times and the service at the store is very attentive and they move you to go in and out.

Chairman Porrino requested a motion to open the meeting to the public for this matter only. Motion was made by Mrs. O'Shea and seconded by Mr. Lee carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. David DiGregorio of 165 Charlotte Pl. stated that the post office building and the shop is what we need more of in the town. The town should paint a crosswalk on Palisade Ave.

Chairman Porrino requested a motion to close the public portion for this matter. Motion was made by Mr. O'Shea and seconded by Ms. Correa carried unanimously by voice vote.

Chairman Porrino requested a motion to approve the application. Motion was made by Mrs. O'Shea seconded by Ms. Correa with a roll call vote. (6) Ayes Mrs. O'Shea, Ms. Correa, Mr. Kim, Mr. O'Shea, Mrs. Villari, Chairman Porrino (1) Nay Mr. Lee, No Abstentions

Chairman Porrino asked for a motion to open to the public for any matter. The motion was made by Ms. Correa and seconded by Mrs. Villari and carried unanimously by voice vote.

No Comments

Chairman Porrino asked for a motion to close the public portion and adjourn the meeting at 10:40 pm. Motion was made by Ms. Correa seconded by Mr. O'Shea and carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Caterina Scancarella

Planning Board Administrative Secretary



ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING – February 13, 2025 7:30 PM

10 Kahn Terrace, Englewood Cliffs, NJ

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Englewood Cliffs Planning Board will come to order this (date). The time is (time).

FLAG SALUTE:

"OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT" STATEMENT

This meeting which conforms with the Open Public Meetings law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting by advertisement in The Record, notification to the Northern Valley Press Journal, the Suburbanite, posting of notice on the municipal website at www.EnglewoodCliffsNJ.org, and at Borough Hall, 482 Hudson Terrace, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 14, 2024 – Regular Meeting
December 12, 2024 – Regular Meeting

OLD BUSINESS:

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45 Laurie Dr. & 28 Geraldine Ct. Block 1009 – Lots 16 &17

Application #325K - Residential Impervious Coverage Variance
Mr. & Mrs. Goldenberg – 20 Lynn Dr. – Block 1003 - Lot 16
Resolution – Approved

NEW BUSINESS:

Application #340K Minor Subdivision w/Site Plan Approval & Variances
Dara Ye – 18 Seventh St. – Block 204 – Lot 10

Application #342K - Use Variance
See Saw, LLC – 650 Palisade Ave. – Block 502 – Lot 10

COMMUNICATIONS:

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLIC COMMENTS OTHER THAN HEARING ON THIS AGENDA

ADJOURNMENT