

## **ALPINE PLANNING BOARD**

Alpine Borough Hall  
100 Church Street  
Alpine, New Jersey 07620

### **MINUTES**

May 24, 2016

**CALL TO ORDER/PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Planning Board, Borough of Alpine, convened in regular session on Tuesday, May 24, 2016 at 7:30 P.M. Chairperson Catherine Parilla read the announcement in accordance with the requirements of the Sunshine Law:

In accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, the notice of this regular meeting held Tuesday, May 24, 2016 at 7:30 P.M. has met the requirements of the law by publication in The Record and posted on the bulletin board of the lobby in the Borough Hall and filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

**SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBER:** Carol Cochi was sworn in by Attorney Phillips as Class IV member.

### **ROLL CALL:**

Members Present:	Carol Cochi	Catherine McGuire
	Gayle Gerstein	Catherine Parilla
	Elizabeth Herries	Joyce Sonpal
	David Kupferschmid	Mayor Paul Tomasko
	Lorraine Mattes	

Members Absent: Jeff Fromm

Staff Present: John Phillips, Board Attorney  
Gary Vander Veer, Borough Engineer  
Marilyn Hayward, Recording Secretary

Mayor Tomasko welcomed Carol Cochi to the Planning Board and thanked her for her continued service to our town.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 22, 2016 REGULAR MEETING:** A motion to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2016 Regular Planning Board meeting was made by Elizabeth Herries, seconded by Mayor Tomasko and carried by those eligible to vote.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):** There were no comments from members of the public.

### **NEW APPLICATIONS:**

**Soil Moving Permit Application: Low, Russell & Melinda; Block 73 Lot 10; 6 Birch Road** (Carried from April 26, 2016). Mayor Tomasko recused due to a business relationship with one of the objectors; Joyce Sonpal recused as a property owner within 200 feet of the subject property. Both stepped down from the dais.

The applicants were represented by their attorney, Matthew Capizzi, 11 Hillside Ave., Tenafly, NJ. Mr. Capizzi stated that this is a soil moving application for a property at the corner of Birch and Allison Roads which has quite a bit of change in grade from Allison to the westward side of the property, necessitating some of the waivers requested this evening.

Attorney Phillips noted for the record that he received a letter dated May 24, 2016 from Jaclyn D'Arminio, Esq., who represents objectors to this application. Ms. D'Arminio is in attendance this evening along with the objectors' engineer, Robert Costa. The letter raised a jurisdictional question as to whether the Planning Board has the ability to grant a variance from the steep slope ordinance. Mr. Phillips stated that in the fifteen years he's been here, this board routinely requests waivers from provisions of the soil moving ordinance. Soil moving is not a development application; it is a

matter referred to the board by the Governing Body under the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law to offer an opinion and advice. This board does not approve the application; they recommend to the governing body that the permit be granted. Therefore, he feels that this application is properly before this board for presentation.

Mr. Capizzi stated that they met with the objectors and their professionals and have discussed revisions to the plan which will resolve their issues. Ms. D'Arminio confirmed that as long as the revisions discussed are implemented into the plan they have no further objections, and withdraws the jurisdictional objection in this matter. Mr. Phillips suggested that at the conclusion of this hearing, Ms. D'Arminio should state that all the conditions agreed to have been adopted if the application is approved.

Mr. Capizzi called the applicants engineer, Michael Hubschman, who was sworn by Attorney Phillips and accepted as an expert. For the record, the plan being reviewed this evening is the Site Plan/Septic System Plan prepared by Hubschman Engineering, P.A., dated 9-15-15 and last revised 5-10-16. A rendered copy of Sheet 1 was marked as Exhibit A-1 dated 5-24-16. Mr. Hubschman stated that the lot is approximately 45,000 sq. feet containing some steep slopes, with an existing single-family house. An attached garage was demolished in order to install the two septic systems. The steep slopes are identified on the sheet, on the southerly corner and on the corner of Birch Road. The property drains toward the southwesterly corner presently. About 46% of the lot is taken up by steep sloped areas and septic areas. They had to design around those two conditions, so the house is tucked toward the center of the property. The driveway comes off of Birch Road, and there is another driveway proposed to Allison Road. A waiver is requested for the retaining wall for the driveway, which would create less disturbance into the steep slope area than transitional grading. A five-foot grade change is permitted in that zone, and they are proposing a six-foot cut.

Mr. Capizzi asked Mr. Hubschman to discuss the drainage design. Mr. Hubschman stated that they met with the neighbors, their engineer and attorney, who were concerned with water runoff. Originally they had designed a wall along the property line; after meeting with the neighbors they are proposing to move it in five feet to eliminate any runoff. At present the plan shows twelve cultec chambers; at the request of the neighbors' engineer they have agreed to add six more. Instead of coming out into an existing manhole they are proposing to come straight down to a new manhole and have a french drain on top. The draining shown on the plan of the fully enclosed PVC pipe is straddling the tree buffer line. Additional pipe will be added about one foot toward the wall, which will require a waiver in the tree buffer. Overall soil movement is as follows:

Cut	1,623 cubic yards
Fill	1,930 cubic yards
Import	307 cubic yards

Mr. Capizzi had no further questions. Attorney Phillips asked if the present plan includes the swimming pool fence in the tree buffer on the south. Mr. Hubschman replied that it does, and will require relief as well. Mr. Phillips asked if it could be moved in. Mr. Capizzi stated that they will bring it forward ten feet to comply. Ms. Mattes noted that there are several lovely trees on the property that should be preserved.

Mr. Kupferschmid asked Mr. Hubschman if the cultec chambers are catching only the driveway runoff and the back gutters. Mr. Hubschman replied that they were designed to catch about half of the house and the driveway.

Mr. Phillips asked if the cultec chambers have an access catch. Mr. Hubschman replied that they have a clean-out on top. Mr. Phillips commented that it is not shown, and it is impervious.

Mr. Phillips asked for a specific list of changes to the plan presented as agreed to by the neighbors. Mr. Hubschman listed them as follows:

- 1) Continue the drainage on the westerly property line straight into the drain in Birch Road.
- 2) Add a new manhole in Birch Road at a lower elevation than the corner drain.
- 3) Add six additional cultec chambers, for a total of eighteen.
- 4) Provide a french drain along the top of the wall to capture any additional service runoff.

Mr. Kupferschmid questioned the need for additional cultecs in the same spot. Mr. Hubschman replied that it is overdesigned but will capture runoff during very heavy rainstorms. Mr. Kupferschmid suggested relocating one further

downstream. Mr. Hubschman responded that they had initially proposed them in that location but a neighbor requested that they be moved back to prevent overflow from the wall. Additionally, they have to be fifty feet from the septic system.

Engineer Vander Veer commented that he received the most recent plan on May 18<sup>th</sup> and has not had an opportunity to complete his review, but he has some serious issues. The drain line has been moved five feet closer to the septic; State code requires a 50 foot setback; borough code requires 75 feet. They will be less than 15 feet in some areas, so he is concerned about providing adequate protection. Now they are proposing adding a curtain drain in that same area, and he questioned how that will be protected. Mr. Hubschman replied that the curtain drain will be about a foot deep. Mr. Vander Veer commented that the drain line is now about five feet lower than the surface of the field, so it's not as if you're building the drain line up high where you won't have leaching. He is concerned that there will be some leaching into the drainage system, so that will have to be addressed. Mr. Hubschman commented that they were going to use a glue-on pipe with a pond liner. Mr. Vander Veer commented that it is now fifteen feet from the septic and with an open curtain drain. They will need to submit a revised drainage report documenting that they will satisfy the reduction in the rate of runoff from the site. The soil moving calculations will have to be revised. Additionally, he has a soil moving application that was received after the most recent report he wrote, with different soil moving activity than what was shown on the plan. He is not sure which one is correct, so that will have to be revised. He also has questions regarding the landscape plan. The trees being proposed do not satisfy the minimum size requirements in the ordinance. The revised plans must be submitted in a timely fashion so that he has ample time to review them and prepare his report for the next meeting.

Mr. Capizzi asked Ms. D'Arminio if their agreement would still stay in place once they have modified the plans as per Mr. Vander Veer's recommendations. Ms. D'Arminio stated that they would want the opportunity to look at it and have their engineer review it to be sure that the concerns of her clients as far as drainage are still being addressed before any final decision is made. Mr. Capizzi stated that Mr. Costa clearly will be involved in the conversations with Mr. Vander Veer and Mr. Hubschman. Mr. Capizzi asked Ms. D'Arminio to confirm for the record that they have an agreement which will address her clients concerns if they install the improvements as discussed. Ms. D'Arminio replied yes. Mr. Capizzi continued that if the borough engineer requires a modification of those improvements the agreement will still stay in place since the municipality is requesting the modification.

Robert L. Costa, P.E. of Costa Engineering, 325 S River St., Hackensack, NJ was sworn by Attorney Phillips and accepted. Mr. Costa suggested that the three engineers get together and work it out. There is plastic piping material with very little infiltration that is only slightly more expensive than what is proposed. He feels that the additional drainage is necessary based on the two year storm. Mr. Kupferschmid commented that he is all for adding drainage, but if it is running uphill it won't work. Mr. Hubschman stated that there is an overflow pipe. Mr. Kupferschmid suggested that if they had drainage to the west of the pool, further downstream, it would work better.

Mr. Vander Veer remarked that they have forty feet of retaining wall on the rear property line, within the tree buffer. Ms. Mattes asked if they are leaving any trees existing other than the northeastern corner. Mr. Capizzi initially stated that they are removing sixteen trees. Mr. Phillips referred to the plan and stated correctly that a total of forty-five trees are to be removed, sixteen of which require mitigation.

Ms. Parilla asked if the swimming pool location is the problem, because it seems that is where the culvert should be. Mr. Capizzi responded that the culvert was there originally, but they moved it because there were concerns about where any overflow would go.

Chairperson Parilla opened the hearing to the public for questions for Engineer Hubschman. Walter Roura, 5 Birch Road, stated that he resides across the street from the subject property. He asked why drainage was now coming down towards Birch Road. Mr. Hubschman stated that they are trying to make the drainage situation better and trying to control the runoff to the two neighbors to the west. They are now diverting some of it to Birch Road. Mr. Roura asked the height of the retaining wall when it reaches Birch Road. Mr. Hubschman stated that it goes down to nothing at Birch. Mr. Roura asked if the height of the present septic systems will be the final height. Mr. Hubschman replied yes, except for topsoil. Mr. Roura asked how the grade will be from the septic system to Birch Road. Mr. Hubschman replied that they are proposing a swale, and overflow would flow out towards Birch Road.

Susan Roura, 5 Birch Road, stated that if you've ever driven up Birch Road on a snowy night it is very slippery due to the slight grade. She asked what they are going to do about the runoff, what is happening with the septic system, and why there is a need for two driveways on two roads. Mr. Hubschman replied that it's good for access for snow plowing, and it is easier to exit to Allison and enter on Birch. There are two new fields installed for the septic. For drainage, everything is collected on site. Any runoff to Birch would be in a small area in the front. Mr. Roura asked what the elevation is of the proposed new home. Mr. Hubschman stated that the floor of the existing home is 426.4; the new home is proposed at 428.

Mr. Triantafillou, 19 Allison Road, to the west of the subject property, expressed concern about the trees being removed and asked if that will create issues with drainage, erosion, etc. Mr. Hubschman replied that the borough engineer ensures that the design mitigates any effects of the new development. They have an extensive drainage system and are enhancing it even more to guaranty no future runoff problems.

Joyce Sonpal, 33 Allison Road, expressed concern over safety issues. There is a stop sign on the corner of Allison and it is almost a blind corner. With a new driveway she feels that it will be congested and unsafe, and asked how they plan to guaranty safety on that corner. Mr. Hubschman stated that they designed the driveway far enough away from the corner with good sight distance that it shouldn't be an issue.

Mr. Roura asked if vehicles will enter and exit from both driveways. Mr. Hubschman replied that they will most likely enter on Allison Road.

Rosemary Casagrande, 28 Dogwood Lane, asked if the drainage will be addressed, because it is already a problem. Mr. Hubschman responded that most of the runoff goes towards Mrs. Casagrande's property, which is why the design is geared towards getting it away from that corner. Ms. Gerstein asked if the pool can be moved to the back, where the cultecs chambers are. Mr. Capizzi commented that it is designed so that you walk out from the basement to the pool area. Ms. Parilla remarked that they have many people in the audience who are concerned about the drainage, and suggested moving the pool if possible and making the cultecs more effective by putting them in that corner. Mr. Capizzi stated that they will carry from this evening and revise the plan, which will be circulated to Mr. Vander Veer and Mr. Costa. If the cultec chambers function in their location, everything can stay as is. If Mr. Vander Veer is not satisfied, they will have to manipulate the location of some of the improvements.

Ms. Parilla closed the public session. Mr. Capizzi suggested we wait until the changes are finalized before reviewing the landscape plan.

Mr. Kupferschmid asked why the cultecs were moved. Mr. Hubschman replied that it was at the request of the neighbor. Mr. Kupferschmid asked if they could pull the westerly drain in closer to the pool and put a cultec much closer to the pool. Mr. Hubschman said they will look at that.

The matter was carried to June 28, 2016. No further notice required.

**Preliminary & Final Site Plan Application: Montammy Golf Club; Block 11 Lot 2:** Elizabeth Herries recused as she was previously represented by the applicant's attorney in a zoning matter; Gayle Gerstein recused as a member of Montammy Golf Club. Both stepped down from the dais.

The applicant was represented by Alan Bell, Esq., Jacobs & Bell, 19 Engle Street, Tenafly, NJ. Proof of publication and notices pursuant to statute were found to be adequate and in compliance with the requirements of the law. Mr. Bell stated that the applicant is seeking to redevelop the subject property with the renovation and expansion of the existing club house and the construction of a new golf building. The existing golf building will be razed. It is very important for the club to do this in order to remain competitive and attract new members. It is part of the club's master plan to remain successful in the future. Three variances are requested; number of parking spaces, size of parking spaces and height of accessory building.

Mr. Bell called his first witness, Scott Tesser, President of Montammy Golf Club, who was sworn by Attorney Phillips. Mr. Tesser stated that the club presently has 240 golf members with a total of 430 members. The club is in its 50<sup>th</sup> year and is in need of some upgrades in order to remain competitive. He has been on the membership committee for six years. The club is healthy now but the facility is a bit tired and has lost potential members to some of the competing clubs that

have upgraded. The intent of the upgrade is to enhance the experience for the current members, not to add new members. Mr. Bell questioned if the existing number of parking spaces is sufficient on any given weekend day during golf season. Mr. Tesser replied that they have never had a problem with parking. The club holds catered affairs, but they are held at a time when the club is closed to members, so they have not had any issues with parking.

Mr. Bell called his next witness, Michael McGowan, P.E. of McGowan Engineering, 645 Westwood Ave., River Vale, NJ. Mr. McGowan stated his credentials and was accepted as an expert witness. Mr. McGowan stated that his office prepared the site plan presented this evening, entitled Preliminary & Final Site Plan, pages C-1 through C-6, dated 3-24-16, last revised 5-4-16. The property is 135.5 acres, bordering Tenafly to the south, Cresskill to the west and Route 9W to the east. They are disturbing less than two acres on the southern end of the property. Mr. McGowan referred to the Site & Landscaping Plan, Sheet C-3 and stated that there will be an addition to the club house with an outdoor patio and a new golf club, pro shop and training facility, with an open breezeway. They will reconfigure some of the parking. Vehicle circulation will remain basically the same. There will be a drop-off area for golf bags. Three variances are requested; they are proposing 261 parking spaces where 540 are required, building height is proposed at 20.1 feet where 15 feet is permitted, parking space size is proposed at 9' x 18' where 10' x 20' is required. They have designed the drainage so that all the runoff from the new building roof will be directed to a below grade retention system. Soil movement is as follows:

Cut	748 cubic yards
Fill	1,097 cubic yards
Imported	349 cubic yards
Exported	0 cubic yards
Total volume	1,097 cubic yards

Mr. McGowan stated that he has reviewed the recommendations of Gary Vander Veer's review letter dated May 17, 2016 and is able to comply with all of them. Mr. McGowan testified that the improvements will be located well over 800 feet away from Route 9W.

Mr. Bell called Christopher McCagg of James G. Rogers Architects, 44 North Main Street, South Norwalk, CT, the project architects of the proposed development plan. Mr. McCagg stated his credentials, was sworn by Attorney Phillips and accepted as an expert. His firm has worked with about 60 private golf clubs in the tri-state area. Mr. McCagg testified that there has been a demographic shift to younger members over the last five to ten years, who come in with new demands. Private clubs are being impacted and are reacting. If you don't keep up you lose members. They also see clubs competing with local restaurants as higher end eating establishments are becoming more prevalent. They are attempting to create a destination and an experience for the membership that they deserve. The intent architecturally is to combine the existing with the new. They are matching materials, rooflines and proportions so that it feels like it's always been there. Mr. McCagg distributed a visual of the existing and proposed facility, marked as Exhibit A-1, dated 5-24-16. Currently there are no windows facing the golf course. The new facility will add a casual dining venue with a 270 degree view of the course, which will become the new social hub. They have met with fire officials to ensure that fire truck access around the building and portal area will comply. They have a pitched roof which is tied in with the pitch of the existing clubhouse. Architecturally, their main objective is to make this facility feel like it is coherent, tied together visually and makes sense proportionally and functionally. There were no further questions.

Mr. Bell called Peter G. Steck, PP, Community Planning Consultant, Maplewood, NJ. Mr. Steck was sworn by Attorney Phillips and accepted as an expert. Mr. Bell asked Mr. Steck if he investigated the application from a planning perspective. Mr. Steck replied yes, and he distributed a handout marked as Exhibit A-2, which he prepared and described as an aerial photograph of the subject property from 2014 on page 1, an aerial view with proposed improvements superimposed on page 2 and four photographs of existing conditions, taken by him on May 20, 2016, on which he added some notations. Page 4 contains the zoning schedule from the site plan, front & rear yard analysis and portion of zoning map. Mr. Steck testified that variances were granted in 1995 and more recently for the maintenance structure for parking space size and number of spaces. The area to be disturbed is remote from residential areas; adequate open space is provided. Anything that the club does to maintain membership benefits everyone by assuring that this open space will continue in the future. Relief is requested for building height; number of parking spaces and size of parking spaces. In support of this, as indicated earlier they have been operating with 247 spaces successfully. On Mother's Day, the peak day of the entire year, people can park on the driveway which is more than adequate in width. They don't wish to create

stormwater drainage issues by paving more area for parking unnecessarily. Parking stalls of 9 x 18 have been approved in a previous application. The height limit of the building matches the slope of the others, which provides an aesthetic benefit. In his opinion, granting the proposed relief would substantially outweigh any detriment. There were no further questions.

Ms. Parilla questioned if they had to come up with a plan for additional parking, what it would be. Mr. Steck replied that with 135 acres there is ample area, but they are not interested in increasing membership, just preserving what they have.

Attorney Phillips stated that a motion to approve would be subject to the conditions in Mr. Vander Veer's May 17, 2016 letter. A motion to approve was made by Ms. McGuire, seconded by Mayor Tomasko and carried by those eligible to vote.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor Tomasko invited everyone to the borough's Memorial Day parade and celebration on Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Mayor noted a letter received from Hubschman Engineering regarding an application with the NJDEP for a transition area waiver at the former Frick Estate in Demarest, and asked if the board wished to take a position on this. Engineer Vander Veer has not yet seen a copy of the plan, which is on file at the Borough of Demarest. Mr. Vander Veer will look at the plan and if warranted, the board secretary will prepare a letter to the DEP stating our position that we are opposed to any additional disturbance of the transition area.

**BILLS:**

John C. Phillips, Esq.	\$ 420.00	Steinberg - 30/4 (escrow)
Burgis Associates, Inc.	\$ 422.50	2015 Housing Plan

A motion to approve the above referenced bills was made by Gayle Gerstein and seconded by Mayor Tomasko. All were in favor.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Northern Valley Mayors & Planners Assoc.: The Mayor announced that a meeting will be held this Thursday. The presentation will be on affordable housing.

Board of Health: No meeting.

Environmental Commission: Ms. Mattes reported that they will meet on Thursday and have four properties to inspect; two for tree removal and two for bond return.

Building Department: The reports were distributed. There were no comments.

NJ Transit Update: No report.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion to enter into Executive Session at 9:35 PM providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq. for the purpose of discussing a COAH related matter as permitted under N.J.S.A. 10:4-12.b.7. was made by Gayle Gerstein and seconded by Joyce Sonpal. An Executive Session closed to the public shall be held for the discussion of matters relating to the specific item designated above. It is further noted deliberations conducted in closed session may be disclosed to the public upon the determination of the Borough Council that the public interest will no longer be served by such confidentiality. All were in favor.

The Planning Board reconvened in regular session at 9:38 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion to adjourn the regular Planning Board meeting was made by Ms. Gerstein and seconded by Ms. McGuire. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Hayward  
Recording Secretary