

**ALPINE PLANNING BOARD**

Alpine Borough Hall  
100 Church Street  
Alpine, New Jersey 07620

JULY 23, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER/PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Planning Board, Borough of Alpine, convened in regular session on Tuesday, JULY 23, 2024, at 7:34 P.M. 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, July 23, 2024 at 7:30 P.M. has met the requirements of the law by publication in The Record and was posted on the bulletin board of the lobby in the Borough Hall and filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: George Abad, Jr., Carol Cochi, Brandt Cybul, Gayle Gerstein, Sandra Nudelman, Joyce Sonpal, Mayor Paul Tomasko, Catherine Parilla  
Members Absent: Elizabeth Herries, Catherine McGuire, Lorraine Mattes  
Staff Present: Douglas Bern, Esq. Board Attorney; Perry Frenzel, Borough Engineer  
Marti Francis, Board Secretary

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 25, 2024, REGULAR MEETING:**

Upon a motion by Mayor Tomasko, seconded by Ms. Gerstein to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2024, Planning Board Regular Meeting, eligible members voted as follows: Ayes: Mr. Abad, Mr. Cybul, Ms. Gerstein, Ms. Nudelman, Ms. Parilla, Ms. Sonpal, Mayor Tomasko. Ms. Cochi abstain.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** Hearing none, the public portion was closed.

**RESOLUTION:** 46 Tamarack Road Soil Moving Application. Upon a motion by Mayor Tomasko, seconded by Ms. Sonpal, eligible members voted as follows: Ayes: Mr. Abad, Mr. Cybul, Ms. Gerstein, Ms. Nudelman, Ms. Parilla, Ms. Sonpal, Mayor Tomasko.

**REVIEW OF ZONING ORDINANCES FOR CONSISTENCY WITH MASTER PLAN: ORDINANCES #832-837**

Upon a motion by Mayor Tomasko that the ordinances that were introduced at last month’s Mayor and Council meeting are not inconsistent with the Master Plan, seconded by Ms. Sonpal, eligible members voted as follows: Ayes: Mr. Abad, Ms. Cochi, Mr. Cybul, Ms. Gerstein, Ms. Nudelman, Ms. Parilla, Ms. Sonpal, Mayor Tomasko.

**COMMUNICATIONS: LETTER FROM BOROUGH ENGINEER RE: 19 ALLISON ROAD (INCLUDED WITH APPLICATION)**

**BILLS & CLAIMS**

The Record and Herald News	10.12	35 Tamarack Road (De La Cruz)
Azzolina & Feury	96.00	35 Tamarack Road (De La Cruz)
Azzolina & Feury	128.00	46 Tamarack Road (23 Stone Tower)
Douglas Bern	500.00	35 Tamarack Road (De La Cruz)
Douglas Bern	857.50	Legal Services—BER-L-6286-15
Douglas Bern	925.00	General Services June
Douglas Bern	118.75	990-994 Closter Dock Road (Nela)

Upon a motion by Ms. Gerstein, seconded by Ms. Nudelman, eligible members voted as follows: Ayes: Mr. Abad, Ms. Cochi, Mr. Cybul, Ms. Gerstein, Ms. Nudelman, Ms. Parilla, Ms. Sonpal, Mayor Tomasko.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Bergen County League of Municipalities: The next meeting is in September

Board of Health: The next meeting is in September.

Environmental Commission: The next meeting is tomorrow.

Building Department: Report on file.

NJ Transit Update: No update.

COAH Update: No update.

**HEARING: CONTINUATION of NELA, 990-994 CLOSTER DOCK ROAD, BLOCK 43 LOTS 7 & 8, SUBDIVISION AND SITE PLAN WITH VARIANCES**

Matthew Capizzi, representing the applicant, explained that the variances requested have been minimized so that the only setback in need of variances is the front yard setback along DuBois for both lots. The existing home is closer to the road than the proposed dwellings. He also stated that he had met with Mr. Noback (who had previously had concerns about the application) and Mr. Noback's counsel before the meeting. Based on a stipulation, Mr. Noback no longer had an issue with the application. The stipulation is that for lot 7 there be no fenestration in the attic level on the front and southerly elevation and no fenestration on the front or westerly elevation and the north or right elevation of lot 8. Mr. Nela is agreeable to this stipulation. Ms. Parilla asked for clarification on the distance of the proposed dwelling relative to the existing dwelling. The proposed dwellings will have a larger frontyard setback than the existing dwelling has.

Mr. Doolittle, engineer for the applicant, reviewed the revised plat and explained that the sizes of both proposed homes were reduced. He reinforced that the only variances remaining are the two frontyard setbacks. He also explained the conditions that are driving the need for frontyard setback variances. Both homes have four bedrooms. The drainage plans remain the same. With the exception of the size of the homes, the site plans remain the same. The engineer then reviewed exhibit A-2. Ms. Parilla asked for clarification on stormwater retention and was told that the retention on both lots will be larger than it needs to be and larger than on the original plan. The Borough engineer stated that he had had many conversations about this plan and stated that he believes that with the improvements made there will be a substantial overall positive impact.

The meeting was opened to the public for questions. Richard Incontro (36 Schoolhouse Lane) asked for the distance along Closter Dock Road and DuBois identified for these properties and questioned the distances provided by Mr. Doolittle. He asked whether the survey ran with the deed and was told that it does and that a survey done by the applicant's representative agreed with the previous surveys. The Borough engineer stated that the applicant's engineer was required to certify that the survey was accurate and that he was satisfied with that. Mr. Incontro stated that he wanted the Borough to create a new survey and was told that the Borough was not required to do or interested in doing that. Ms. Parilla asked whether the document was signed, and it is. The Borough engineer asked questions of the engineer and was satisfied with the added level of protection afforded by the title search.

Mr. Capizzi stated that the remainder of the testimony dovetailed into what Mr. Doolittle already stated and that if the Board was satisfied, he was fine foregoing the testimony from the remaining witnesses.

Mayor Tomasko noted that the original 8 variances requested had been reduced to 2 over the course of the hearings and on the strength of that, unless he heard something from Mr. Noback or Mr. Incontro that resonated, he was prepared to move forward.

A Board member asked about the height of the houses and was told that the proposed houses were in a recessed area and thus would not be above the old houses.

The Board attorney stated that the motion would be that the Board accepted the revised plans dated 6/19/24, 6/24/24, 6/26/24, and 7/2/24. The Mayor stated that there has been an extensive amount of analysis and that the engineer is satisfied with the stormwater management and that it has been represented by the applicant's attorney that the immediate neighbors' concerns have been satisfied (and the Mayor gave them an opportunity to speak in case this was not accurate; no one spoke), and that the two lots would be reoriented to face DuBois, the two proposed homes had been reduced drastically at the Board's urging, and that the Board feels comfortable moving this forward.

Upon a motion by Mr. Abad to approve the application, seconded by Ms. Gerstein, eligible members voted as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Abad, Ms. Cochi, Ms. Gerstein, Ms. Nudelman, Ms. Parilla, Ms. Sonpal, Mayor Tomasko. Motion carried.

Ms. Sonpal moved to allow Mr. Capizzi to take a five-minute recess before the next hearing, second Ms. Nudelman. All in favor. The meeting went into recess at 8:05 pm. Mr. Abad moved to resume the meeting, second Ms. Gerstein. All in favor. The meeting resumed at 8:16 pm.

**HEARING: 19 ALLISON ROAD, SOIL MOVING APPLICATION** Ms. Sonpal recused herself from the hearing and moved from the dais to the audience.

Matthew Capizzi came forward and introduced the application. He stated that a Zoning Permit had been secured in June and that the application now was a Soil Movement application. He referred to Mr. Frenzel's review letter.

Mr. Doolittle was sworn in as the applicant's engineer. Mr. Doolittle spoke about the site plan for 19 Allison Road and stated that the house has been razed. He stated that the zoning is acceptable and that all setbacks are within the zoning requirements. The proposed dwelling has 6 bedrooms, two stories, and sits pretty much in the middle of the property. Soil is being currently removed for the septic system. Bergen County Soil has approved the plan. A stabilization fence is in place. The drainage design consists of 5 seepage pits. The capacity of the seepage pits are more than 1,000 gallons each. The seepage pits to the back of the property are being moved from where the site plan depicts them, as a result of conversations with neighbors today. Mr. Doolittle marked up the plan to illustrate the new placement. The site plan was marked A1. Discussion about when new plans would be submitted. The Borough engineer stated that he would like to see the plans before a resolution was adopted. Ms. Nudelman asked why the change was made and was told that a neighbor had concerns about the pits being so close to their property. Discussion about slope and why the change was made and not designed that way originally. The Mayor stated that if the pits were better where they were on the original plans, additional pits could be added. He also said that the Board should have final plans before them prior to a vote. Discussion. Board comments included a question about the bury hole (where septic materials are buried per DEP guidelines), the isolated wetland, for which the applicant has secured DEP approval to fill, where specifically the soil is coming from (it is coming from the pool, the foundation, and the driveway).

The Borough engineer stated that he wants to look hard at the corner where the seepage pits originally were planned. Mr. Doolittle suggested creating test pits in all three areas in question.

Ms. Nudelman asked about the brick on the cabana and why it would need a patio or kitchen. There is a bathroom in it. Mr. Doolittle stated it was not intended to be lived in. Mr. Capizzi stated that he was willing to include a clause that it would not be lived in.

Ms. Nudelman asked about tree mitigation. Mr. Doolittle displayed the landscape plan created by Greg Imhoff, Ringwood, NJ. Seventy-nine trees are scheduled to be removed. This plan was marked A2.

The meeting was opened to the public for questions of the engineer.

Rosemary Casagrande (24 and 28 Dogwood Lane) came forward with her engineer, Robert Costa. He stated that she could not get an attorney to represent her. He said that seepage pits were supposed to be added. Mr. Capizzi said that was not his recollection but that test pits would be done and the drainage plan would be revisited. Mr. Costa voiced concern about runoff.

Gregory Pappas (20 Dogwood Lane) asked the elevation of the septic system in back and the house. He also said there would be a lot of runoff when 79 trees were removed. He asked whether moving the pits would be sufficient. Mr. Doolittle explained that it would be. Mr. Pappas asked where the water actually goes. Discussion.

David Kurtz (Block 73/Lot 10) asked for the date of zoning application. It was submitted on 6/26/24 and signed on 6/27/24. He then asked how many trees have been cut down. Mr. Doolittle said he believed 12. He then asked about a tree remediation plan. He asked when Mr. Doolittle was last at the property (6:30 today). He asked about the piles of dirt at the property, about the design of the seepage pits, about the lot coverage, he voiced an objection to the zoning application being approved in a day.

Mr. Capizzi stressed that everyone should feel that they have a chance to ask questions. He said that plans in relation to the drainage will be created.

Mr. Costa asked how much fill is being put into the wetland depression. Mr. Doolittle stated that he had not done that specific calculation yet.

Jonathan Cook (15 Allison Road) asked if the property slopes east to west. It does. There is also runoff north to south on Allison Road. Test pits are being done, but Mr. Cook had concerns that they would be done when the trees were there. Mr. Cook asked

about the number of trees to be removed and who monitored it. The Borough engineer said that he had been there twice. Mr. Cook suggested that more than 79 trees had already been removed and that 30 or 40 large trees had been removed. He suggested that although he wanted a house to be built people were doing whatever they wanted. He asked about the paragraph in the notice that spoke about additional relief and was told that this was a catch-all phrase to cover anything that was discovered during the course of the hearing. He also said that he never received the notice for the wetlands. Mr. Kurtz said that he responded to the state but never heard back from them. Mr. Cook asked whether money notwithstanding would Mr. Doolittle add more seepage pits. Mr. Doolittle said that he wouldn't make that statement before doing test pits.

Mayor Tomasko stated that everyone needed to be assured that Ms. Casagrande did not experience sheet runoff.

Davis Sokolower asked for the placement of the test pits. He was told that the next meeting will be on August 27 and that there will be no additional notice. Mr. Capizzi will come back with his engineer and the results of the test pits. Mr. Capizzi said that the new plans will be available on August 16<sup>th</sup>.

An audience member asked whether there will continue to be work on the property and was told that the work that was already permitted would be allowed to continue.

Mr. Kurtz stated that he and he believes his neighbor want the property to be developed but that they were not consulted about how it affects them. He said that the drainage system in town has been overtaxed. Ms. Parilla explained the process of the Planning Board hearing and the way in which the public was welcome to participate.

A member of the public asked about the cabana and whether it could be another dwelling and was told that it could not.

Mr. Capizzi stated that the drainage design was preliminarily approved by the Borough engineer and that it would be bolstered further.

The Mayor asked how much more the septic fields will be filled, on behalf of a resident. He was told that there would be 18 inches above the white pipe.

Mr. Pappas expressed concern about pitch. A resident asked who creates the test pits. The Borough engineer will witness it.

A Board member asked if this is a spec house and was told that there was a buyer lined up.

Vincent Barbieri, the builder for the project explained the ways in which he cares for the property and keeps it pristine. He said that the dirt is coming out of the septic fields. He also stated that no one is coming in the middle of the night to cut trees. He explained that the trees are monitored and that little twigs are not counted as trees.

The Mayor asked that the engineer visit the site every time he is in town if he isn't doing so already.

The hearing will be carried to the August 27 meeting without further notice, and the applicant will extend the deadline until August 28.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Upon a motion by Mayor Tomasko, seconded by Ms. Gerstein and supported by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marti Francis  
Recording Secretary