

# **FORT LEE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

**July 13, 2021**

**Present:** H. Liapes, J. Nitti, H. Joh, D. Conway, L. Pacheco, E. Hong, D. Sugarman

**Absent:** S. Tropea

**Also Present:** J. Mariniello, Jr., Esq., Diane Testa, Esq., Conflict Attorney, M. Jovishoff, Phillips, Preiss, Grygiel, D. Juzmeski, Neglia Eng.

Chairman Sugarman called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

## **NOTICE OF MEETING:**

Chairman Sugarman stated: Let the minutes reflect that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner: On December 8, 2020 this Body, by Resolution, adopted a Schedule of Regular Public Meetings for 2021. The time, date, and location of said schedule was posted on the Bulletin Board at 309 Main Street. A copy of said schedule was mailed to the RECORD, JERSEY JOURNAL, STAR LEDGER, SPECTRUM, posted on the Borough's Website and was filed with the Borough Clerk. A written notice of the time, place and proposed Agenda was posted on the Bulletin Board at 309 Main Street and mailed to the RECORD, JERSEY JOURNAL, STAR LEDGER, SPECTRUM, posted on the Borough's Website and was filed with the Borough Clerk. On April 19, 2021, an updated notice with the Zoom Information was posted at 309 Main Street and mailed to the RECORD, JERSEY JOURNAL, STAR LEDGER, SPECTRUM, posted on the Borough Web Site and filed with the Borough Clerk. Copies have been mailed to all persons who have prepaid the \$35.00 fee fixed for the year 2021 to cover the cost of mailing.

Chairman Sugarman stated before we get into the meeting, we have a presentation to make. Michael Jovishoff is retiring after 9 years of service and we'd like to present him with this plaque.

Mr. Jovishoff stated it's been great working here, it's been enjoyable, challenging and entertaining. I've been happy to make my comments and I want to thank the Board and the Chairman who have always treated me well. I will miss this and now it's time.

Chairman Sugarman stated Ms. Hong zoomed in from Korea so we could have our required quorum and I thank her for that.

## **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Mr. Conway, seconded by Mr. Pacheco and passed on a vote of 7-0 by members Liapes, Nitti, Joh, Conway, Pacheco, Hong and Sugarman to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 8, 2021.

**Memorializations**

**Docket #10-21 Electrify America, 154 Main Street, Block 4351, Lots 3 & 12, Minor Site Plan – Electric Vehicle Charging Station - DENIED**

It was moved by Mr. Conway, seconded by Mr. Pacheco and denied on a vote of 5-2 by members Nitti, Conway, Pacheco, Hong and Sugarman to deny the applicant Minor Site Plan approval. Mr. Liapes and Mr. Joh voted to approve the application.

**Public Hearing**

**Docket #13-21, 1424 Fourteenth, LLC, 1424 Fourteenth Street, Block 2251, Lot 11, Two-Unit Dwelling**

Chairman Sugarman stated Ms. Hong is recusing herself from this application.

Mr. Macri stated he is here this evening to present an application for a new three-story, two-family dwelling.

Mark Martins, Engineer, 55 Walnut Street, Norwood was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Mr. Martins stated the lot is 65 x 100. There is a one family split level dwelling and a shed on the property now.

Exhibit A1-Colorized site plan.

This plan was presented to the Board but this one colorized. It is dated March 23, 2021. The proposal is for a duplex structure with a two-car garage. There is a slight change in grade, about 5 feet. We are proposing underground detention chambers.

In terms of landscaping, we plan to remove 2 trees in the front yard. The applicant is proposing 2 Eastern Redbud trees each located in the front side planting areas adjoining the driveways.

11 Meyers Yews will be planted in each side yard. In the rear yard, a line of 18 Azaleas are proposed on top of the retaining wall. 4 Arborvitae are proposed on each side of the rear yard.

We will comply with Mr. Jovishoff's request for tree sizes.

Chairman Quinn asked for questions from the Board.

Mr. Juzmeski requested getting written permission from the neighbor if you need to go on their property. We also recommend the driveways be reduced in width.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

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Vassilios Cocoros, Architect, 467 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Exhibit A2-Architectural Plans dated February 11, 2021, last revised March 24, 2021, 2 sheets.

Mr. Cocoros stated the plans on the board are the same as were given to the Board. The driveways can be reduced to 19 feet. Two cars can be accommodated in the driveway and 2 cars in the garage.

The basement of each unit is proposed to consist of a recreation room, a utility room, a powder room, four closets and stairs to the upper level.

The first floor in each unit will have a living room with front bay windows, a dining room, and a powder room at the front of the dwelling. There will be a family room and a kitchen and eating area at the rear of the dwelling.

The second floor will include a total of 4 bedrooms, including a master bedroom with an ensuite master bathroom, a dressing room and walk-in closet.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the Board.

Mr. Jovishoff stated he recommends the paved areas on the sides be eliminated.

Mr. Cocoros stated I'd like to keep bluestone by the staircase.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

David Spatz, Planner, 60 Friend Terrace, Harrington Park was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Exhibit A3-Photo Board of Site and Surrounding Area

Top left-subject property

Top right-to the right, the North

Bottom left-to the left, single and two-family homes

Bottom right-across the street, old and new two-family homes

Mr. Spatz stated we are in the R2 zone. Two-family homes are permitted. The applicant will require a D4 variance for excess FAR and a D6 variance for building height, as well as bulk variances. I think the property can handle the increased FAR. There is a conforming amount of parking on site. The height is consistent with the homes on Fourteenth Street. We are 397 square feet over on building coverage. The side yard setbacks are met, other than the stairs. The rear yard is consistent with the neighborhood. There's nothing that is substantially negative. We are similar in height to the homes in the neighborhood.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the Board.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

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Chairman Sugarman asked if any member of the public would like to come up, be sworn and testify on the application.

It was moved by Mr. Joh, seconded by Mr. Liapes and approved on a vote of 6-0 by members Liapes, Nitti, Joh, Conway, Pacheco, and Sugarman to grant the applicant approval to construct a Two-Unit Dwelling. Ms. Hong was recused from this application.

**Docket #19-21, J&V Developers, LLC, 427 North Avenue, Block 3851, Lot 20, Two Unit Dwelling**

Ms. Hong rejoined the meeting.

Mr. Macri stated we are here seeking approval for a new three-story, two-family home.

Mark Martins, Engineer, 55 Walnut Street, Norwood was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Mr. Martins stated the property is 75 x 100. Currently there is a 1 ½ story two-family dwelling to be removed.

Exhibit A1-colored plan was shown on the board. There are some topographical changes. There will be a wall along North Avenue property line.

We are proposing underground retention systems. Utilities will be underground.

In terms of landscaping, the applicant is proposing to remove 9 trees. In the front yard, they are proposing to plant 10 Azaleas and 12 Juniper plants in the planting areas on the outside of the driveways. 12 Holly plants are proposed in the right planting area on the North Avenue side of the retaining wall. 2 Zelcova trees in the West Street front yard will be planted in the planting areas between the driveways and the entry walkways.

20 Meyers Yews are proposed in the northeast side yard and 7 Yews are proposed in the North Avenue right side yard near the rear of the dwelling.

In the rear yard the applicant is proposing 18 Arborvitae plants and 5 Junipers between the rear lot line and the rear retaining wall. 2 Zelcova trees are proposed in the rear yard between the wood decks and the retaining wall.

The Neglia report has been reviewed.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the Board.

Mr. Jovishoff stated there are very few large trees, can we save any?

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Mr. Martins stated I don't think this is possible.

Mr. Jovishoff stated on the North Avenue side yard, there are no plantings. Can you extend to the steps?

Mr. Martins stated we could add more plantings on that side.

Mr. Jovishoff stated the patios in the rear are below grade, there's no drainage there.

Mr. Martins stated there will be drains connected to the system there.

Mr. Jovishoff stated will the mailbox be relocated.

Mr. Martins stated we will discuss this with the Post Office.

Mr. Juzmeski stated a dedicated easement is required.

Mr. Martins agreed.

Mr. Jovishoff stated you have a drainage line on the North Avenue side.

Mr. Martins stated yes, there's a drainage line.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

Vassilios Cocoros, Architect, 467 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Exhibit A2- Architectural plan dated October 28, 2020, last revised February 26, 2021.

Mr. Cocoros stated the proposal is for a two-family, side-by-side dwelling. This will be a three level configuration.

The basement will consist of a main entrance, entry foyer and hallway at the front of the dwelling, and stairs to the upper levels. A den, recreation room, linen closet, powder room, two walk-in closets and a utility room are proposed at the rear of the dwelling.

The first floor will include a living room, home office and stairs to the other levels at the front of the dwelling. A dining room, a powder room and a pantry are proposed at the center of the dwelling. An open plan kitchen, eating area, and family room are proposed at the rear of the dwelling.

The second floor has two bedrooms with bay windows, one bedroom has an ensuite bathroom, a linen closet, and stairs to the lower levels at the front of the dwelling. The rear of the dwelling is proposed to have a master bedroom with an ensuite master bathroom and three walk-in closets, a standard bedroom, a standard full bathroom, and a laundry room.

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The applicant is proposing 10 light fixtures including one wall-mounted light fixture above each garage door, two in the ceiling of each covered porch, one above each ground level sliding door to the rear yard and one above each sliding door to the deck in the rear yard.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the Board.

Mr. Jovishoff stated the downstairs room labelled den will not be used as a bedroom.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

David Spatz, Planner, 60 Friend Terrace, Harrington Park was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Exhibit A3-Photo Board of Site and Surrounding Area  
Top left-subject property  
Top right-to the right, older two-family home  
Bottom left-to the West  
Bottom right-across the street

Mr. Spatz stated the property is in the R3A zone. The site is well suited for what we are proposing. We meet the purposes of zoning. The site can support the increased FAR. We are installing drainage facilities. We are 83 square feet over in building coverage. The positive criteria is met for the C variances.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the Board.  
Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

Chairman Sugarman asked if any member of the public would like to come up, be sworn and testify on the application.

It was moved by Mr. Conway, seconded by Mr. Liapes and approved on a vote of 7-0 by members Liapes, Nitti, Joh, Conway, Pacheco, Hong and Sugarman to grant the applicant approval to construct a Two-Unit Dwelling.

**Docket #14-21, V&R Investors, LLC, 1514 Eleventh Street, Block 3753, Lot 1, Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan – Three Unit Dwelling**

Mr. Cereste stated the property is located on an oversized lot. The property is in the R3 one and two-family district. Three family dwellings are not permitted in this zone.

Mark Martins, Engineer, 55 Walnut Street, Norwood was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Exhibit A6-colored site plan was shown on the Board.

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Mr. Martins stated the lot is 75 x 100 x 90. There is currently a 1 ½ story dwelling on the lot. The site is flat. We are proposing to remove what is currently on the site and construct a three-family, four-story townhouse type dwelling. Drainage systems will be installed. Utilities will be underground.

In terms of landscaping, there are 4 existing trees that will be removed and replaced with a Zelcova tree and 3 Azaleas. 11 Dwarf Holly plants are proposed in the planting strip between the left and center driveways.

Ten Meyers Yews plants are proposed in the left side yard and 12 Meyers Yew plants are proposed in the right side yard.

The applicant is proposing a total of 6 nine-watt wall sconce light fixtures. One recessed fixture in the ceiling of each covered porch and one above each sliding door to the deck in the rear yard.

The Neglia report has been reviewed and the applicant will comply.

Chairman Quinn asked for questions from the Board.

Mr. Jovishoff stated there is no retaining wall detail on the plan.

Mr. Martins stated we will submit this.

Mr. Juzmeski stated an agreement with the neighbor needs to be obtained if you need to be on their property.

Ms. Hong asked about the location of the fire hydrant in the front.

Mr. Martins stated yes, it will be relocated.

Chairman Quinn asked for questions from the public.

Vassilios Cocoros, Architect, 467 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Mr. Cocoros stated the end units are 19 feet wide and the center unit is 24 feet wide. One car can be accommodated in each driveway on the end units and 2 cars in the center unit.

Exhibit A2-Architectural plans, 3 sheets, dated March 1, 2021, last revised March 28, 2021.

Sheet A2 shows the elevations. Each unit has 3 bedrooms. A one car garage is proposed for each end unit. A two-car garage will be provided for the center unit. We are providing 9 parking spaces.

HVAC units are located at the rear and the corners.

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Sheet A3-shows the first-floor plan. This is proposed to consist of a recreation room, utility room, powder room, closets and stairs to the upper levels.

The second floor will have a living room and a dining room at the front of each unit. An open plan combination kitchen and eating area, a powder room, and stairs at the rear of the dwelling are proposed at the rear of each unit.

The third floor will consist of a master bedroom with ensuite master bathroom, and a laundry room at the front of each unit. Two bedrooms, a linen closet, a hallway and stairs are proposed at the rear of each unit.

The fourth floor labelled attic is proposed to consist of a room labelled roof deck lounge with a kitchenette and a powder room.

Trash will be stored under the staircase, in the garage.

Chairman Quinn asked for questions from the Board.

Mr. Jovishoff stated the driveways are narrow. Can you reduce the width of the driveway and increase the planting strip.

Mr. Cocoros stated this will make it difficult to get in and out.

Mr. Jovishoff stated we have eliminated fire pits and BBQ's on roof decks in the past.

Mr. Cereste stated we can stipulate this.

Chairman Quinn asked for questions from the public.

David Spatz, Planner, 60 Friend Terrace, Harrington Park was sworn in and his credentials accepted by Chairman Sugarman.

Exhibit A3-Photo Board of Site and Surrounding Area

Top left-subject property

Top right-balance of the property

Bottom left-to the left

Bottom right-across the street

Mr. Spatz stated the lot is on a cul-de-sac. The lot is larger than the surrounding area. I believe that the property can support the increased FAR. There is a conforming amount of parking on site. Drainage will be provided on site.

We provide a conforming front yard setback. The proposed building is similar to what is existing. Landscaping is proposed on the site. We are in character with the surrounding uses.

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There will be a loss of 1 parking space. There is nothing substantially negative.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the Board.

Chairman Sugarman asked for questions from the public.

Chairman Sugarman asked if any member of the public would like to come up, be sworn and testify on the application.

It was moved by Mr. Liapes, seconded by Mr. Nitti and approved on a vote of 7-0 by members Liapes, Nitti, Joh, Conway, Pacheco, Hong and Sugarman to grant the applicant approval to construct a Three Unit Dwelling.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Mr. Conway, seconded by Mr. Joh to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda Garofalo*

Linda Garofalo  
Recording Secretary