

MINUTES

CRESSKILL PLANNING BOARD

March 8, 2011

Mr. Vaccaro called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM and announced the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act had been fulfilled.

Members present at roll call: Mayor Romeo, Councilwoman Tsigounis, Mr. Vaccaro, Ms. Bauer, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Vieni, Mr. Laurita and Mrs. Schultz. Mr. Galdi arrived at 7:55 PM. Also present were Mr. Paul Azzolina, Borough Engineer and Mr. Steven Schuster, Board Attorney.

Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2011, meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Laurita. All present were in favor of the motion. Motion approved.

Correspondence

Notice from Rutgers Continuing Education for Planning and Zoning Administration program. File.

Voucher from Mr. Steven Schuster for services rendered relative to the Planning Board for the month of February 2011 in the amount of \$2,551.75. Mr. Vieni made a motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Schultz. All present were in favor. Motion approved.

Letter of Introduction from Mr. Edward M. Rossi, dated February 22, 2011, sending Mr. Ronnie Haboush, owner, and Mr. Mark Malas, builder, to this Board for approval. They would like to build a new home at 164 Truman Drive. This address has been previously approved for the construction of a new home but has been abandoned. Application #1407 was received on February 24, 2011, and is currently under review. Mr. Malas noted that the previous owners started the home, but abandoned the project. Mr. Haboush and Mr. Malas decided they couldn't use the existing blueprints so they went ahead with a whole new house design. There is an existing foundation there right now, but they are not going to use that.

Subdivision Committee

Councilwoman Tsigounis noted that Application #1407, 164 Truman Drive, Ronald Haboush, was received on February 24, 2011, and is currently under review. Also received and distributed a revised plan for Application #1406, 78 Prospect Avenue, dated March 7, 2011.

Report from the Borough Engineer's Office

Mr. Azzolina noted that he has prepared a report for Application #1406, 76 Prospect Avenue, for tonight's Public Hearing.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Public Hearing – Application #1406 – 78 Prospect Street

Mr. Schuster asked Mr. and Mrs. Corona for the tax list for their application. He received from them the proofs of mailing but he doesn't have the tax list to compare them to. He explained that he doesn't know who the people are if he doesn't have the tax list. Mr. Schuster explained that they are supposed to have the list of property owners within 200 feet from the tax department. They are also supposed to have an affidavit of publication. They submitted the actual ad that was published in The Record. Mrs. Corona noted that she does have the affidavit of publication but doesn't have it with her. She also has the tax list at home. Mr. Schuster asked for the return receipt green cards. Mrs. Corona stated that she didn't have them. Mr. Schuster also explained that they need an affidavit of mailing that somebody actually mailed the notices as well as the notice that was mailed.

Mr. Vaccaro called for a recess at 7:45 PM while Mrs. Corona went home to get the required paperwork.

Mr. Vaccaro re-opened the meeting at 8:04 PM at which time Mrs. Corona returned and submitted the tax list to Mr. Schuster.

Mr. Anthony Corona, 78 Prospect Avenue, Cresskill, and Mrs. Camila Corona, 78 Prospect Avenue, Cresskill, were sworn in by Mr. Schuster. Mr. Corona stated that they are hoping to beautify the neighborhood and make everything much nicer on their street, which only contains four houses. They originally planned to do an addition on their house for which they went in front of the Zoning Board and were approved for six different variances in August 2010. Once they initially started discussing budget and other issues, they decided that doing an addition on a house built in 1928 is not the right thing to do. Their foundation is cracked and it is not really safe to add on to. They researched other construction methods and they decided that for their family it would be best to go with a modular construction, which is basically climate controlled, indoor built 2 x 6 construction, state-of-the-art facility, from a highly respected building company called Simplex in Scranton, PA. They have been in business for at least 40 years. They seem pretty innovative and they liked what they had to offer.

Mr. Corona noted that basically what they did was take the same design that they were approved for in the zoning plan and put it into a modular structure. Mrs. Corona noted that this is built with 30% more wood so it is more solid for transport, which then allows it to be 2" thicker in insulation and there are a lot of positives. What they did was try to keep the same sort of look of their current house. They want to do a front porch like they have now. They don't want a McMansion. They just want more room. Their kids currently share a small room and they have no closets. Mr. Corona noted that the other reason that a modular made so much more sense, besides the value, is that in this construction, they will be getting a brand new basement that is from a company called Superior Walls, which is basically modular basements. They have 8 x 9 concrete slabs that are insulated and are a little bit thicker than normal. It is a much more solid foundation that will allow the house to last significantly longer than what they would have originally gotten.

In designing the house, they really tried to keep the same look. They really love their house and their street. The key thing is they have a great location and they didn't want to move. They have an undersized lot with only 4,900 square feet, which is what the majority of the variances are for. They are not exceeding the FAR. They have side yard variances because they have a small undersize lot.

Mayor Romeo stated that for the minimum lot area you need 10,000 square feet and they have 4,900, which requires a variance. Minimum lot frontage is 100 feet and they have 50 feet, which is the second variance that is existing. Minimum depth required is 100 feet and they have 98 feet. Minimum side yard is 15. They are currently at 7.1 and are going to 10.21. Mr. Corona explained that in the design of the new house, keeping in mind the property next door and that part of their requirement is that they center the house so that there is the same amount of side yards on both sides, that is basically what they did on this one. Minimum frontage is 25 feet and they are losing five feet. Minimum lot coverage is over what is allowable. Mayor Romeo noted that knowing the area and what they are asking for, he has no problem with it.

Mr. Morgan asked about the garage. Mr. Corona noted that the garage is attached. If there is a problem with modular construction it is that it is 2 x 6 so the issue is that the way the boxes work, you have to put them side by side so he can't make that into a bigger or smaller room because of the weight and the load bearing on the whole house. The garage is in the house and is only a one car garage. Mrs. Corona showed a plan of how the house will look. The height of the house is 27.7 feet. There is a balcony on top of part of the garage. The house will be moved back so the porch will line up with the other houses on the block. Councilwoman Tsigounis noted that the primary thing is that they kept below the maximum FAR and that is important.

Mr. Schuster asked if the house is going to be similar to the other houses on the block. Mr. and Mrs. Corona agreed that it was going to be similar. Mr. Schuster commented that the other lots on the block were all similar in size. Mr. Corona agreed. Mr. Schuster noted that it was not going to be an eyesore sticking out on the block. Mr. Corona agreed that it was not going to stick out. Mr. Schuster asked why they had variances for the side yards. Mrs. Corona stated that it was because it is a 50 x 98 foot lot so in order to make a house that is not like a bowling alley, long and narrow, you need a little wiggle room. The house at the end of the block is about a similar size and width. They need the variance to get a reasonable size house. Mrs. Corona stated that it is just under 1,910 square feet. Mr. Azzolina noted that he asked that of the builder and he stated it is 1,881 square feet, excluding the garage and the garage is about 1 ½ feet lower than the first floor so it is not a garage under, it is an at-grade garage. It is a 1 ½ car garage. Mr. Schuster noted that the house will be consistent with the other houses on the block.

Mr. Vaccaro opened the meeting to the public. No public wished to be heard. Mr. Vieni made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion. All present were in favor. Motion approved.

Mr. Azzolina noted that his comments are enumerated in his report to the Board dated March 8, 2011. The primary issue that he had initially was the depiction of the boundaries of the site. Their Surveyor has revised his survey and provided him with satisfactory proof indicating that the property lines are accurate. The storm water management system is satisfactory. The building height is conforming. Other than that, he recommends that the Board look favorably on the application.

Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the application. Mr. Vieni seconded the motion. On Roll Call: Mayor Romeo, Councilwoman Tsigounis, Mr. Vaccaro and Ms. Bauer voted yes. Mr. Galdi abstained. Mr. Morgan, Mr. Vieni and Mr. Laurita voted yes. Motion approved.

Other Business

None.

Mr. Vaccaro opened the meeting to the public. No public wished to be heard.

Motion was made by Mr. Laurita to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 PM, seconded by Mrs. Schultz. All present were in favor. Motion approved.

The next four regular Planning Board meetings are scheduled for March 22, April 12, April 26, and May 10, 2011 at 7:30 PM in the Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn M. Petillo
Recording Secretary