

## **MINUTES**

### **CRESSKILL PLANNING BOARD**

**JUNE 27, 2023**

Mr. Ulshoefer opened the meeting at 7:29 PM and announced the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act had been fulfilled.

Members present at roll call:

Mayor Romeo, Councilwoman Schultz-Rummel, Mr. Ulshoefer, Ms. Bauer, Mr. Berger, Mr. Malone, Mr. Rummel, Ms. Tsigounis and Mr. Peleg. Also present were Mr. Paul Azzolina, Borough Engineer, and Mr. Dean Stamos, Board Attorney.

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Mr. Rummel made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2023, meeting, seconded by Mr. Peleg. All present were in favor of the motion. Motion approved.

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### **Correspondence**

No correspondence.

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### **Subdivision Committee**

Ms. Tsigounis distributed Application #1592, 347 Concord Street, SMP ENT LLC, which was received on June 16, 2016.

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### **Report from the Borough Engineer's Office**

Mr. Azzolina reported that the professionals for Application #1592 were present to make a presentation. No variances are required. Mr. Stamos noted that he spoke with the applicant's engineer. This is a fully compliant development, so we don't need a Public Hearing. We asked, however, that they present it to us. Mr. Azzolina confirmed that there are no variances required, but there are some revisions to the plan that are required that the applicants will have enough time between this meeting and the next meeting to iron out those issues. If that happens, we can give a formal approval at the next meeting.

Ms. Priscilla Triolo introduced herself. She is the attorney representing SMP ENT LLC. The principal and managing member, Sedat Kukal, who signed the application, is here to identify the experts. Ms. Kirsten Osterkorn is the engineer. and the architect is Ms. Stephanie Pantale. The engineer is going to explain the site and what is necessary for the soil movement permit and the fact that there are no variances. Mr. Kukal is going to confirm the experts and that the house is the one that is on the plans. Mr. Kukal stated that the plans that were handed in are the plans that they are using.

Ms. Kirsten Osterkorn is a Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor in the State of New Jersey. Her licenses are current. She was sworn in by Mr. Stamos. She has had her license since 2011. The house is at 347 Concord Street. The house is being knocked down. The asphalt drive, the walk in front, the patio in the back, some of the trees in the rear and along the side to be removed for the construction and clean up some of the trees in the rear of the property. Currently, the property slopes from the west to the east towards the street. Mr. Azzolina noted that her north arrow was backwards and that is one of his comments

in his report. Ms. Osterkorn noted that she got the survey from somebody else. Mr. Azzolina stated that that is another one of his comments is that the survey needs to be submitted as part of the original application, signed and sealed.

Ms. Osterkorn noted that there is currently no drainage on the property. Everything goes to roof leaders comes out to splash boxes and discharges to grade and comes down to Concord Street. Under the proposed conditions, they are looking to knock down and build a new structure. They are proposing the driveway on the left side of the property. Previously, the driveway was an ascending driveway. The proposal is a garage under. They are taking the driveway and the house and are collecting that into a drainage system. They have walls on both sides of the driveway, so visually from the street, this was a one-and-a-half story dwelling existing, and under proposed, they are proposing a two-story. So, visually from the street it still will look the same. They have the architecturals submitted as well. But being able to put the garage under, they get more usable space. They have window wells on the right side. They have a little patio out the back. They are proposing a drainage system in the front yard. All existing utilities are to be maintained.

From the driveway, you will walk up a couple of steps and walk up to the front door. As noted in the Zoning Table and coverages, they have a non-conforming lot in terms of lot area and existing frontage and some of the existing conditions of the house, but the proposed conditions are all conforming in terms of setbacks and coverages. They are increasing the coverage by only 375 square feet, but giving that it is new construction, they are collecting the entire roof area. She is seeing that they have to add a trench drain at the bottom of the driveway. That is another comment of Mr. Azzolina. They are going to collect the driveway as well. So, they will be collecting the house and the driveway to pipe it to the chamber system for stormwater. As a whole, currently there is no stormwater management on the property. Everything kind of drains out. They are going to be collecting everything into a drainage system on the property. Ms. Osterkorn stated that it is still going to maintain the pattern of the property from west to east so impact to the street will be less even though they will be increasing coverage slightly because they will be collecting everything. She can go through the architectural plans as well.

Ms. Tsigounis noted that the issue is we are trying to keep driveways from being underground in the basement when there are certain conditions on the site that really are not dictating it to be put underneath. She thinks this is a prime example of when it shouldn't be. The driveway currently slopes up. She asked how much they were excavating to get that driveway below the natural grade. Ms. Osterkorn agreed that they were moving dirt to get to the garage. The area would be about six feet, but ultimately it would be just basement. The slight pitch change that they are talking about from the street to the garage is only a foot. It is not a garage under like you are looking like you are going down. Mr. Azzolina noted that it is about a 3% grade on the driveway. It is not substantial like some of the other ones. Ms. Osterkorn noted that they flipped it. The driveway was on the right and now it will be on the left, to gain more area in the house and make more usable space. From the street at the point of 99.7, the garage door is at 98.7, so it is just only a foot lower. It is not a visual drop.

Ms. Triolo stated that by doing that you have better livable area in the house. Ms. Osterkorn agreed. Councilwoman Schultz-Rummel asked what the current incline up the driveway was. Ms. Osterkorn noted that the garage is currently about six feet higher than the street. The first floor is approximately at the same elevation as the proposed house will be. The existing house is at 108.2 and the proposed house will be at 108. By flipping the driveway to the lower side, they only have a one-foot difference from the street down. The first floor is still maintaining the same, but the garage, under existing conditions, there is more of a significant slope coming from the street. Technically on the road side, they are coming in on the higher side of the street, but it is still going to be less than under the existing conditions. From the street view it will look the same.

Councilwoman Schultz-Rummel noted that all the drainage will be captured as opposed to rushing down the driveway into the house. That is the concern that everybody has is that when you start putting driveways and garages below grade, that if the streets flood and water comes rushing down, you are going to wind up with a foot of water in your garage, which could penetrate the garage. Ms. Tsigounis stated that based on what was said, this is not as big an issue as some of the other driveways, especially with the proper

drainage. Ms. Osterkorn stated that with the crest of the street and the swale along side the edge of the pavement and the idea is that when you have your initial curb apron, it's not that you have any sidewalk, is that initial part is pitched towards the street and you go over a crest and then come down the driveway. Mr. Azzolina noted that that is one of his comments is that they show a defined bermable curb at the entrances to the driveway so that would keep the roadway water out of the driveway. Anything that falls out of the sky between that bermable curb, which is an asphalt berm, would elevate it six inches above the adjacent road go back about eight or ten feet, provide that transition, then the drainage system would capture whatever is between that area and the drain. Another comment would be to show the drainage system, provide the calculations, calculate the driveway area that we are talking about, and assumably this would go to the sump pump in the garage, this trench drain, and his recommendation would be a standby emergency generator.

Ms. Osterkorn showed the architectural. The house will have a stone veneer, Anderson windows, vinyl, Hardie board siding. As you walk out the rear of the house, you are at grade. There is a small patio. She showed that all the grading flows towards to the street. There is a two-car garage going in. There is a mudroom, bedroom, mechanical room and open area in the basement. The first floor has a dining room to the right and a living room to the left. It goes into a family room with a dinette and kitchen to the rear to the sliders that go to the patio with a pantry between the kitchen and the dining room. Everything is to code. The second floor has three bedrooms with a bathroom on the right side of the house. One bedroom in the rear has its own bathroom. The master bedroom has its own bathroom and walk-in closet. This makes it a five-bedroom house. There is an areaway in the basement for the bedroom.

Mr. Azzolina asked what size the patio was because they are approaching the impervious coverage limit. He noted it cannot be a very big patio. That is something that is going to be verified at the time of the CO. He stated that a lot of the impervious coverage is eaten up by the walkway in the front of the house. Ms. Triolo asked if Cresskill had any provisions for pervious pavers. Mr. Azzolina stated that we do not.

Mr. Azzolina noted that he will send a memo outlining everything that needs to be done to the plan but stated that the major points are being talked about now. The corrections are relatively minor in scope. Ms. Triolo asked if the plans need a seal so when he goes for a soil permit and a building permit the code officer knows that the plans have been approved.

Mr. Kukal asked about the swale and drainage. Ms. Osterkorn noted that there are going to be swales in the backyard on the right and the left so anything that's up the hill in the grass or landscaped area will still follow the same drainage patterns. They are just collecting the impervious areas. Councilwoman Schultz-Rummel noted that at the beginning they said they were taking down a lot of trees for the construction. Ms. Osterkorn said they were taking down five in the back to open up the grass area. They are keeping the perimeter trees. The trees on the side are being taken down because of the construction. They are taking down nine trees altogether out of 17. Mr. Azzolina stated that numerically and definitionwise, trees that count toward our code are defined as being 10" in diameter and up. Many of the trees that are being described are less than that, 4" and 6", so they are not technically counted. If you visit the site, there are trees along the westerly side that they are saying they are keeping. That adds to the character of the property, and he would strongly recommend that they do maintain those. As far as trees greater than 10", they came up with two. Typically, the Board asks that replacements be made one-to-one or two-to-one. He is assuming that there is a landscape component to this development. He recommends that at least two deciduous trees two-and-a-half-inch caliber be added as a finishing product of construction.

On Roll Call: Subject to revisions made per Mr. Azzolina's memo: Mayor Romeo, Councilwoman Schultz-Rummel, Mr. Ulshoefer, Ms. Bauer voted yes. Mr. Berger voted no. Mr. Malone, Mr. Rummel, Ms. Tsigounis and Mr. Peleg voted yes. Motion approved.

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### **Old Business**

None.

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**New Business**

None.

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**Other Business**

There was some discussion about the dumpsters and a shed at Samdan. He is asking for a shed, but there are already five dumpsters. Some discussion referred to sheds around the rest of the downtown area and what a possible solution could be.

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Mr. Ulshoefer opened the meeting to the public. No public wished to be heard. Mr. Ulshoefer closed the meeting to the public.

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Motion was made by Ms. Berger to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 PM, seconded by Mr. Malone. All present were in favor. Motion approved.

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The next four regular Planning Board meetings are scheduled for July 11, July 25, August 8, and August 22, 2023, at 7:30 PM in the Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn M. Petillo  
Recording Secretary