

BOROUGH OF WOODCLIFF LAKE
LAND USE BOARD MEETING
October 28th, 2025
MINUTES

Call to Order:

This meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. at Borough Hall by Vice Chairman Dhawan.

Adequate Notice Statement:

Chairman Belgiovine announced that the Meeting was in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231. Notice of this meeting was posted in two newspapers, The Record and The Ridgewood News. The public was advised of the Land Use Board's rule that the meetings will be concluded by 10:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Corrado Belgiovine: *Present*

Nilufer DeScherer: *Absent*

Nicole Marsh: *Present*

Gerald Barbara: *Present*

Carlos Rendo: *Absent*

Thomas Panso: *Present*

Lynda Picinic: *Absent*

Jane Ann Whitchurch-Carluccio: *Present*

Robert Friedberg: *Present*

Peter Briskin: *Absent*

Sanjeev Dhawan: *Present*

Ariel Mazor: *Present*

Brian DiStefano: *Absent*

Michael Kaufman: *Present*

Sal Princiotto, Attorney

Present

Anthony Kurus, Engineer

Present

David Troast, Planner

Present

Clairese Aquilino, Secretary

Present

Minutes

The minutes from August were approved on a motion from Councilwoman Marsh, seconded by Vice Chairman Dhawan. All were in favor.

Board Discussion

A brief discussion to see if all board members would be available for a special meeting for the application for 300 Chestnut Ridge Rd. was had. All members agreed they could make the meeting except for Mr. Friedberg, who said he would be able to attend the meeting via zoom. The board agreed that a special meeting would be held on Tuesday December 2nd at 7 pm at Borough Hall and the papers would be notified of this meeting.

New Application

Councilwoman Marsh recused herself from listening to the application for 25 Prospect. Mr. Michael Piromalli, Esq., opened the application to the board. He explained to the board the applicant plans to renovate and expand the existing structure while seeking a D-2 use variance for the expansion of pre-existing use, a D-6 use variance for maximum height of a building, six c variances and three design waivers.

Mr. Princiotto, Esq. checked with the board secretary notice of service and publication was in order.

The board secretary ensured the notice was correct.

Mr. Piromalli introduced his first witness, Mr. Matthew Valerio. Mr. Valerio is the Director of Hospitality for the property owner, 805 Hospitality Group. He was sworn in by Mr. Princiotto. Mr. Valerio stated they will be operating as a full restaurant, serving lunch and dinner with an elevated concept. He stated their hours for lunch and dinner would be 11:30am- 10:30pm Sunday through Thursday and 11am-11pm Friday and Saturday. He stated there would be 30 people working during their busiest time. He mentioned they will have valet parking on site and a liquor license. He stated they will stop serving food one hour prior to closing the restaurant. He stated both outdoor spaces will operate the same hours as the kitchen. He stated there will be no outdoor live music or entertainment. There will be bistro lighting on the patios and lighting on the railings. The lighting will be mostly for safety and esthetics. The outdoor spaces will be closed during the winter/colder months. Deliveries would be on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 2pm. Garbage pickup from a private hauler would be on Mondays and Fridays between the hours of 8am-10am. He stated the basement could fit 60 people for private parties and the main level could fit 130 people for private parties while still running normal lunch/dinner services.

Mr. Kaufman asked Mr. Valerio if he would mind giving the board some background information about the owners of the property.

Mr. Valerio stated 802 Hospitality owns five places in total, two are open and operational, two are under construction and the last one is the Manor at 25 Prospect Ave. He stated the company is still young. He stated they started buying local community places. With the manor, they plan to utilize the same spaces as the previous owner and not add any additions to the existing footprint. They only wish to add the two outdoor spaces and the elevator.

The board had asked Mr. Valerio if they could provide the occupancy of the previous restaurant to ensure the proposed occupancy is accurate for the space.

Public Session

A motion to open to the public for Mr. Valerio's testimony came from Ms. Whitchurch-Carluccio, seconded by Mr. Friedberg. All members were in favor.

Mr. Alex Cuoto, Woodcliff Lake, welcomed the new owners. He questioned there would be no live entertainment and no food served on the second-floor deck. He questioned if the garbage hauler would follow the pickup schedule and if the restaurant could hold the occupancy of 343 people.

Mr. Valerio ensured there would be no live entertainment and that food would only be served on the outside patio as far as outdoor dining goes. He stated they would make sure the garbage haulers would follow the pickup schedule and he believed the space could handle the occupancy of 343 people.

Ms. Ann Marie Borrelli, Woodcliff Lake, questioned the garbage pickup location and the lighting that will be on the second-floor deck.

Mr Valerio stated the garbage will be picked up at the northwest of the property near the garage and the lighting on the second- floor deck will be esthetic low voltage lighting that will be on a timer.

Mr. Deepu Jose, Woodcliff Lake, questioned if he would be able to ask questions at a later time.

Chairman Belgiovine stated Mr. Jose will be able to ask questions later on as the application will go to another meeting, but he will not be able to ask questions for the first witness, Mr. Valerio after this meeting.

Mr. Deepu Jose, Woodcliff Lake, questioned if there would be security on site.

Mr. Valerio stated there would be no security but there would always be security cameras. He also stated alcohol will stop being served at 10:30pm on Friday and Saturday and 9:30pm on Sunday- Thursday. He stated no events will be scheduled outside of the normal hours of operation.

Lev Barinsky, Woodcliff Lake, questioned how the cigar lounges will work.

Mr. Valerio stated all guests will be allowed to take part in the cigar lounges. They will be allowed to bring their own cigars.

Drew Losak, Woodcliff Lake, questioned if neighbors of the restaurant will be able to hear music from the restaurant.

Mr. Valerio said the neighbors should not be disturbed by any music.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. stated they will ask for a stipulation in the resolution there will no outside noise.

Gail Losak, Woodcliff Lake, asked if the restaurant will be operating as a bar.

Mr. Valerio stated patrons will be allowed to come in for drinks without getting food.

A motion to close to the public came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Ms. Whitchurch-Carluccio. All members were in favor.

Mr. Princiotto questioned if patrons will be able to be served food at the bar in the library.

Mr. Valerio stated food would be served at the bar, but mainly on the first floor and the basement level.

The second witness, the applicant's architect, Mr. Arthur Michaels, was sworn in by Mr. Princiotto.

Mr. Michaels stated the existing space has four levels, the basement, the main level, the upper level and the top floor. The basement was used as a smaller banquet hall with a bathroom and a kitchen. The main level was used as the larger banquet/ dining space that had the main kitchen, a main bar and the entrance to the restaurant. The upper level had bathrooms, and the top floor was used for office and storage. He stated they are proposing the basement level as a smaller dining area. They will be renovating the kitchen to be a prep kitchen and combining the space downstairs to fit 60 people. Referring to A-2 he stated the slight addition in the back is for the elevator. The building was never handicapped accessible. He stated the original site had a drop off area where they are proposing a patio for outdoor dining. They will be expanding the kitchen and expanding the bathrooms on the basement level and the upper level. They will be adding bathrooms to the main level of the restaurant. They are planning for 136 people for the main level; the previous space allowed 150 people. Mr. Michaels based his capacity off of his memory when he had his own wedding at the Manor. Mr. Michaels stated they will meet all CO requirements. They added a fire stairway to the second level from the main level. They are proposing a valet room with a small bar and a reception area.

Mr. Princiotto questioned where the dance floor would go on the mil level if a wedding was held.

Mr. Michael stated a group setting layout would be up to the operator. He referenced exhibit A-3 stating the second floor showed there used to be a greenhouse but there now be an upper deck on the second floor, an indoor/outdoor cigar lounge and some bar seating. The outdoor rooftop will have a trellis for ambience. The top floor will be for office space. They have proposed the whole building will be changing all the windows, replacing the outside of the building with fiber cement and hardy panels, the roof will be redone with vinyl slate shingles. They wish to respect the existing architecture of the building while revamping it with a modern look. The addition for the elevator requires extra height, which requires the D-6 variance. Exhibit A-6 showed the loading dock, no deliveries will be seen, it will be obstructed as will the garbage. The mechanical systems will be screened on the roof of the building. The locations of the condensers will be well landscaped to hide them. No generator is proposed at this time.

Mr. Troast, board planner, questioned how an existing non-conforming building fits into the architecture in the R-15 zone.

Mr. Michaels stated the building will be renovated with materials such as fiber cement and hardy planks to give the building a similar look to the neighborhood.

Mr. Troast asked the architect to provide an accurate prior occupancy for the board to have all the information.

Mr. Kurus, board engineer, questioned the ventilation or the cigar lounges.

Mr. Michaels stated the filtration system has not been designed yet.

Chairman Belgiovine asked about the noise/ code restriction for mechanics.

Mr. Michaels stated they would follow all state codes for noise.

Mr. Panso questioned why the whole building does not show brick.

Mr. Michaels stated they did not want to overwhelm the first level with too much stone.

** A brief break was taken at 8:53 pm

The meeting resumed at 9:05pm.

Public Session

A motion to open to the public for Mr. Michaels' testimony came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Mr. Barbara. All members were in favor.

Mr. Brent Risendorf, Woodcliff Lake, questioned if there would be any food on the second-floor deck, if there would be seating on the second-floor deck. He asked if the windows to the cigar lounge will be able to open as well.

Mr. Michaels stated there will not be food or seating on the second- floor deck. He stated the windows will be available to open in the cigar lounge on the Prospect side of the building.

Ms. AnnMarie Borrelli, Woodcliff Lake, questioned the occupancy with private events, how far the additions will be to the neighbors. She stated the houses on the west and north side of the building have bedrooms looking out over the parking lot. She questioned if the seating on the second- floor deck would allow patrons to look into neighboring homes. She questioned if there will be parking on the east side of the property, if the condenser noise will be heard all the time and if the cigar smoke will be smelt by the neighbors.

Mr. Michaels stated there will be parking on the east side of the building, the condensers will cycle out so they will not be heard all the time, and the neighbors should smell no smoke from the cigars. He stated the occupancy with events going and regular lunch/dinner service should show no issue. He stated the patio addition in the front will not change the distance from the neighbors or Prospect Avenue, it is the same length as previously.

Mr. Alex Cuoto, Woodcliff Lake, questioned the fencing that will border the property and if Mr. Michaels was aware of the noise ordinance, specifically the second- floor deck.

Mr. Michaels stated he is aware of the noise ordinance, and he does not believe the second-floor deck will create any issues to the neighbors. He stated the fencing will be discussed when the landscape architect gives his testimony.

Mr. Lev Barinsky, Woodcliff Lake, questioned based off of the previous occupancy, will there be an issue with garbage removal and occupancy of the building.

Mr Michaels stated the engineer will discuss the garbage removal and its location when he testifies, but it will be scheduled to be picked up every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The occupancy will be checked by local officials for previous occupancy.

A motion to close to the public came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Ms. Whitchurch-Carluccio. All members were in favor.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. introduced his third witness, the applicant's engineer Matthew Greco. He is sworn in by Mr. Princiotto.

Mr. Greco stated the building will have the same footprint, with two new additions. They will utilize the same parking with some additional parking. They will be removing the garage but keeping the concrete pad it sits on. They are proposing the driveway to the east was used as a two-way entrance/exit but now will be used only as an entrance. The western driveway will be expanded to 24ft wide to be used a two-way ingress and egress. The parking along the east side will maintain the same distance but they will change the size of the spaces to 9 x 18 and angle the spaces. He stated there will be five ADA compliant spaces in front of the building. The valet would work from the east entrance up to the operation of the building. Mr. Greco stated there is no current stormwater management on the property, but they are proposing stormwater management in front of the parking lot. The parking lot will be regraded from 6% to 5%. Two retaining walls are being added to the site, one on the east side of the property towards Cressfield Court and the second one on the southwest side of the property. The first retaining wall on the East side will be 3ft high and 60ft long. The wall will start at the entrance and run northbound. The second wall will be 4ft high made of modular stone.

Mr. Barbara questioned if the fence will be on the retaining wall.

Mr. Greco referred to exhibit LA-1 to explain there will be a 6ft fence, five foot solid with one foot lattice. The trench drains will go to the detention system. They will be adding new LED lights that will be controlled. There will be safety lighting to remain on overnight. There will be fencing on the retaining wall on the east side and the bottom of the west side. There will be gravel walkways and a firepit outside with chairs. He stated the circulation analysis works with three different trucks, a fire truck, a refuse truck and a loading truck. He stated the property is located in the R-15 zone where the lots are 15,000 sq. ft. but the site is 70,000 sq. ft. The addition for the elevator will make the square footage 215 on the third floor. All rooflines will remain the same and so will the side yard setbacks. The rear yard setback will have an eight-foot difference. They were asking for a variance for parking, they were short of 80 parking spaces. The existing parking is 85 spaces.

Mr. Troast questioned if the overall improvements proposed benefit the residential area.

Mr. Greco said the overall improvements proposed do benefit the residential area. He stated he believes the driveways alone will benefit, providing new means of ingress and egress. He stated the site is safer with these improvements.

Mr. Kurus asked about the improvements for Prospect Avenue.

Mr. Greco stated there will be new sidewalks on Prospect Avenue, there will be new ADA compliant ramps, and they will provide a plan with low lighting for the patio.

Chairman Belgiovine questioned what they would do for snow removal. He stated they could lose some parking.

Mr. Greco stated that it is true, but they could place all snow to the slab where the garage is to be removed. He stated it will be easier to maintain when it melts with the help of the stormwater system. He stated they could push the snow towards Prospect. All spots are being changed from a 60-degree angle to a 45-degree angle.

**A motion to extend the meeting to 10:30pm came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Ms. Whitchurch- Carluccio. All members were in favor.

Mr. Friedberg questioned if a restaurant has ever been proposed with 38% less parking than required.

Chairman Belgiovine questioned the number of parking per seats.

Mr. Greco stated the traffic engineer will testify to the number of parking spaces per seat in the restaurant.

Mr. Troast stated a bar/restaurant is three people for each parking spot.

Mr. Greco stated they comply with the EV parking space requirement. They are only required to provide one as they are adding 39 more spaces.

Public Session

A motion to open to the public for Mr. Greco's testimony came from Ms. Whitchurch- Carluccio, seconded by Mr. Barbara. All members were in favor

Mr. Alex Cuoto, Woodcliff Lake, asked if the eastside driveway was being lowered, if there is a lighting requirement for zoning, if there was a height requirement for the light poles, if the height of the fence on the Cressfield Court side could be raised for privacy and if parking would be sufficient so there would be no additional street parking.

Mr. Greco stated the initial entrance will stay the same height; the lighting requirement will meet the zoning requirements. He stated he was not aware of a minimum height requirement for the light poles and the lighting should not affect the neighbors. He stated the parking proposed should not lead to additional street parking.

Mr. Lev Barinsky, Woodcliff Lake, questioned the height of the proposed addition and where the garbage removal will be.

Mr. Greco stated the height was 37.1ft. and they are proposing 45.8ft. He stated the operator will testify to the garbage removal location.

Ms. AnnMarie Borrelli, Woodcliff Lake, asked if they could lower the lighting to 20ft.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. stated they will provide a lighting plan with phono metrics to the board and the police department showing day and nighttime.

Mr. Kurus recommended they look at the lighting at 15ft.

Mr. Greco stated the LED lighting is completely controlled.

Mr. Deepu Jose, Woodcliff Lake, questioned if there would be any fencing in the front of the property on Prospect Avenue side.

Chairman Belgiovine stated he does not believe the patio of front of restaurant will be seen from the neighbors.

Mr. Greco testified there will be extensive landscaping to shield the neighbors.

A motion to close to the public came from Mr. Friedberg, seconded by Ms. Whitchurch-Carluccio. All members were in favor.

Mr. Princiotto made an announcement that the application was to be continued at the December 16th meeting with no further notice.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion from Vice Chairman Dhawan, seconded by Ms. Whitchurch- Carluccio. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Clairesse Aquilino

