

**BOROUGH OF WOODCLIFF LAKE  
LAND USE BOARD MEETING  
December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order:**

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

**Adequate Notice Statement:**

Chairman Friedberg 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: <i>Present</i>	Jane Ann Whitchurch-Carluccio: <i>Absent</i>
Nilufer DeScherer: <i>Absent</i>	Robert Friedberg: <i>Absent</i>
Nicole Marsh: <i>Present</i>	Peter Briskin: <i>Absent</i>
Gerald Barbara: <i>Present</i>	Sanjeev Dhawan: <i>Present</i>
Carlos Rendo: <i>Absent</i>	Ariel Mazor: <i>Present</i>
Thomas Panso: <i>Present</i>	Brian DiStefano: <i>Absent</i>
Lynda Picinic: <i>Absent</i>	Michael Kaufman: <i>Present</i>

Sal Princiotto, Attorney	Present
Anthony Kurus, Engineer	Present
David Troast, Planner	Present
Brian Intindola, Traffic Engineer	Present
Clairese Aquilino, Secretary	Present

**Minutes**

**The minutes from November 13<sup>th</sup>, and December 2<sup>nd</sup>, were approved** as on a motion from Councilwoman Marsh, seconded by Mr. Kaufman. All were in favor.

**25 Prospect Avenue- Continued**

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. introduced his applicant's application back to the board. He stated he would have five witnesses testify that night. They would be the Director of Hospitality Operations, the engineer, landscape architect, traffic engineer, and planner. He introduced his first witness, Mr. Matthew Valerio, the Director of Hospitality Operations.

Mr. Valerio stated they took the board's professionals, the board members' and the public's comments into consideration after the first meeting on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025. He stated they changed the light pole heights; they are proposing the lights will be turned off one hour after closing and they are willing to work with the Police department and submit a plan to them,

should they require one. They proposed additional landscaping on the Cressfield Court side of the property. He stated they had increased the parking, but it should support the building.

Mr. Panso questioned the occupancy with the new use.

Mr. Valerio stated the new occupancy will be 325 with 56 outside.

Chairman Belgiovine questioned if there would be dimmers for all lighting.

Mr. Valerio stated all lighting would be dimmers.

Mr. Princiotto, Esq. questioned the hours of operation.

Mr. Valerio stated the hours of operation would be 11-10pm from Sunday to Thursday and 11am-11pm on Friday and Saturday.

Mr. Troast recommended to the board after 6 months of operation, the lighting be reviewed by the borough engineer.

Mr. Barbara questioned if they would be continuing the signage on Broadway.

Mr. Valerio stated they would like to keep it, they will change it for new restaurant.

### **Public Session**

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

Ms. Ann Marie Borrelli, Cressfield Court, asked if the lighting will be turned off on the weekends at 12pm and if the proposed lot will be adequate for the new restaurant.

Mr. Valerio stated the lighting will be turned off at midnight on the weekends unless the Police Department asks differently. He stated the parking will be adequate for the new use.

Mr. Drew Losak, Cressfield Court, asked Mr. Valerio if they plan to have a relationship with the neighbors, as the previous owner had a relationship with all the neighbors.

Mr. Valerio stated they plan to be very good neighbors, and they look forward to working with all the residents around the restaurant to have a good relationship with them.

**A motion to close** to the public for Mr. Valerio's testimony came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Mr. Barbara. All were in favor.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. introduced his second witness, Mr. Matthew Greco, the applicant's engineer. He was sworn in by Mr. Princiotto, Esq. and accepted by the board.

He stated they revised the lighting plan; the light poles went from 20ft to 16 and 14ft. There is no longer a light pole on the western side of the property, it was moved to the front of the building. They lowered the light poles in the parking lot to 16ft. He stated they reduced visibility from the neighbors without problems for safety. They changed the lighting fixtures to fit more to the neighborhood and reduced the foot candles from 1.5 to 0.9ft. The property line foot candles were reduced to 0.2ft. He stated shielding will be provided and the lights will be 3000 kelvins.

Vice Chairman Dhawan questioned if there would be any bollard lights.

Mr. Greco stated there would be no bollard lights.

Mr. Troast asked Mr. Greco to list how many light poles will be on site and their heights.

Mr. Greco stated there would be 5 light poles at 16ft high, and 9 light poles at 14ft high and some wall mounted lights at 12ft high that will point downward.

### **Public Session**

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

Mr. Alec Cuoto, 18 Cressfield Court, asked Mr. Greco to point out where each light pole location would be.

Mr. Greco stated there are two 16ft pole sin the rear of the property and three in the lot closer to the building. The remaining nine, 14ft poles are scattered around the property.

Ms. Ann Marie Borrelli, 18 Cressfield Court, questioned the radius of the lighting. She questioned if there would be lighting on the fence.

Mr. Greco stated there will be shielding on the foot candles and the engineer will be reviewing as well as the police. He stated there would be no lighting on the fence. There will not be any lighting withing the landscaping within the right of way.

**A motion to close** to the public for Mr. Greco's testimony came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Mr. Barbara. All were in favor.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. introduced his third witness to the board, Mr. Willam Boyce, the applicant's landscape architect. He was sworn in by Mr. Princiotto, Esq. and accepted by the board.

Mr. Boyce stated the plans had been revised since the last meeting on October 28<sup>th</sup>. He stated the landscaping plan is very robust, and some trees will need to be removed to allow for parking. He stated they are removing (4) 6–12-inch trees, (1) 12–18-inch tree, (1) 18–24-inch tree, and (5) 24inch or greater trees. He stated the replacement requirement is 24 trees, but they will be replaced with 36 trees, 115 evergreen trees along the perimeter. Along the western property line there will be 46 green giant arborvitaes at a height of 7-8 feet. There will be irrigation throughout

the property for the landscaping and plantings. The northern property line will have 46 new plantings, remove five adult trees but keep four. He stated they plan to keep large trees and provide some underplanting. They will be removing small hammock trees to do so. They will use plants to sheer. By keeping the tall spruce in front of the property to the Southwest corner, they are able to underplant. They plan to maintain the planting annually for two years, working with the applicant.

Mr. Troast stated he thinks the plan is great, the landscape architect did a great job designing this landscaping for this property.

Mr. Barbara asked about the life expectancy of the green giants.

Mr. Boyce stated they will be around for a long time. He stated they can keep them level, as a condition to keep them at 14ft high, 6ft wide, and 6ft apart from each other.

Mr. Princiotto, Esq. asked Mr. Troast if he had any recommendations for tree heights.

Mr. Troast agreed with the testimony from Mr. Boyce.

### **Public Session**

**A motion to open** to the public for Mr. Boyce's testimony came from Mr. Panso seconded by Mr. Mazor. All were in favor.

Ms. AnnMarie Borrelli, 18 Cressfield Ct., questioned how big the green giants would get because she was worried it that is all she would see driving down her street.

Mr. Boyce stated they will be adding tulip bushes as well, but they will review later to see how the plantings look.

Mr. Lev Barinsky, 10 Cressfield Ct., questioned the height of the green giants and whether they were worried about the deer eating them.

Mr. Boyce stated they are not worried about the deer. The green giants will be planted at 7ft, and they will grow about 1ft or more a year.

Mr. Alex Cuoto, 18 Cressfield Court, questioned Mr. Boyce's testimony of the undergrowth of the trees that will be 14ft tall.

Mr. Boyce reassured Mr. Cuoto there would be substantial undergrowth of the trees that will be 14ft tall.

**A motion to close** to the public for Mr. Boyce's testimony came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Mr. Barbara. All were in favor.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. introduced his fourth witness to the board, Ms. Justine Fox, the applicant's traffic engineer. She was sworn in by Mr. Princiotto, Esq. and accepted by the board.

Ms. Fox stated she reviewed the roadway network to determine how much traffic would generate for this site. She stated Prospect Avenue is under Bergen County jurisdiction, running East and West. Ms. Fox stated she used the trip generation manual to conduct the traffic study. One car in equals one trip and one car out equals one trip. The study performed was for a banquet hall with an occupancy of 250 people, while the restaurant in question will have an occupancy of 325 people. She looked at the square footage for all three floors of the building and overestimated the trip generation for this development. She stated the peak hours for a weekday are between 6-8pm and a weekend peak would be midday. She stated the residents would not notice a difference in traffic with the new operations even with the past business being closed for some time. The trip generations would decrease with this new development. There will be two access points for the restaurant, one driveway toward the West, this will be a means of ingress and egress. The second driveway towards the East will have a means of ingress only to help with Valet parking when needed. They meet the county's site distance for both the right and left turns along with 24ft wide drive aisles. They will be able to accommodate 160 vehicles on site, 124 marked spaces and able to add 40 when valet is used. There would be 150 cars at peak with all spaces occupied. She stated the peak would drop to 100 on a Friday or Saturday night. She stated they are still working on research for the trip generation for Ubers, Lyfts and other means of transportation.

Chairman Belgiovine stated they will be overparked for its use, but they will have adequate parking that will not require street parking.

Ms. Fox stated there is nothing else in town to compare this site to, but they will not require side street parking. She stated most towns do not require parking variances because one parking space allows for 3-4 people to a car.

Mr. Brian Intandola, Borough Traffic Engineer, stated he believed there would be a need for valet parking. He suggested they use valet parking for the first few months of operation. He also recommended they designate an area for ride sharing to drop off and pick up.

Mr. Kaufman stated the operator has other restaurants, and he believed the operator would make it work as efficiently as possible.

Mr. Princiotto, Esq., questioned what the level of impact will be on Prospect Avenue, and Broadway.

Ms. Fox stated she did not look at that because the restaurant will be at its busiest during the lowest peak of traffic on Prospect Avenue. She stated they will be below the DOT threshold and they have not applied to the county yet.

### **Public Session**

**A motion to open** to the public for Ms. Fox's testimony came from Vice Chairman Dhawan seconded by Mr. Panso. All were in favor.

Mr. Alex Cuoto, 18 Cressfield Court, questioned if Linda Terrace and Cressfield Court could be made that only residents are allowed to park/ be on those streets.

Chairman Belgiovine stated only the Police Department can mandate that.

Ms. AnnMarie Borrelli, 18 Cressfield Court, questioned if Ms. Fox accounted for the bar patrons.

Ms. Fox stated she performed a calculation and found the site has parking for bar patrons but if they were looking just for dinner seats, they would meet close to the Borough ordinance. Westwood's parking requirement is 1 car per three people in their commercial spaces.

Ms. Gail Losak, 2 Cressfield Court, stated she feels this will turn the residential area into Orlando. She expressed her worries of the traffic impact on Prospect Avenue.

Mr. Drew Losak, 2 Cressfield Court, expressed his worry for the character change the restaurant will cause to the area. He stated the numbers being discussed are not correct because they are not what he has seen as a resident.

**A motion to close** to the public for Ms. Fox's testimony came from Mr. Kaufman, seconded by Mr. Barbara. All were in favor.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq. introduced his last witness, the applicant's planner, Mr. Thomas Ricci, to the board. Mr. Princiotto, Esq. swore in Mr. Ricci, and he was accepted by the board.

Mr. Ricci stated this site recently operated as the Woodcliff Manor, and that it predated the modern zoning regulations. It is a pre-existing non-conforming use. He stated the 1990 case, *Burbridge vs. Minehill*, found an expansion of a non-conforming use would be better because it can constitute a special reason for approval, by planning to restore and bring a site back to life. He stated they will have substantial buffering and parking will be managed with valet, by allowing the site to add more spaces with expanding the square footage. He stated they will be inputting an ADA compliant sidewalk in front of the property on Prospect Avenue. The D6 height variance increases the height but does not offend open space, it is a small portion, of 200 sq. ft. when compared to other sites. There will be lots of separation between the site and the neighbors. They are improving the stormwater management, the building and plantings. He stated there will only be one loading space and it will happen during off peak hours. 343 seats are proposed, previously 325. They are providing extra parking, with a better ratio to seats than parking. He stated the building is not designated as a historic building, but it adds to the character of the Borough. The operator plans to keep the building as is but modernize it because they know what a beloved establishment it is to the community.

Mr. Troast had no comments on Mr. Ricci's testimony. He stated Mr. Ricci touched on the Borough's Master Plan, and covered all cases provided in his review letter. He was very happy Mr. Ricci covered all comments from the DMR review letter and covered all the criteria of the D2 and D6 variances.

Mr. Princiotto, Esq. questioned how they came to find the previous occupancy of 325 people.

Mr. Ricci stated they submitted an OPRA to the Borough and were provided with information from the fire official, and past documents of advertisements for events for up to 300 people.

The OPRA documents were listed as A-15 and the newspaper advertisement was listed as WCL-8 for the exhibit list.

### **Public Session**

**A motion to open** to the public for Mr. Ricci's testimony came from Mr. Mazor seconded by Mr. Kaufman. All were in favor.

Ms. AnnMarie Borrelli, 18 Cressfield Court, questioned the name of the new establishment, and asked if there would be outdoor entertainment.

Mr. Ricci stated they have not determined the name of the establishment and there will be no outdoor entertainment.

Mr. Alex Cuoto, 18 Cressfield Court, questioned if there is a sound ordinance in place. He questioned what they should do as neighbors if garbage is picked up at another time than the designated time. He asked if there would be food outside.

Chairman Belgiovine stated they restaurant will have to abide by the noise ordinance. He stated if he or the neighbors have an issue with the noise, they should contact the business manager, but if not available to call the police.

Mr. Ricci stated there would only be food on the outdoor patio.

Mr. Lev Baransky stated he saw previous advertisement for the Manor for 200 people.

**A motion to close** to the public for Mr. Ricci's testimony came from Mr. Barbara, seconded by Vice Chairman Dhawan. All were in favor.

Chairman Belgiovine stated the planner mentioned this property is a somewhat historical site, he questioned if the elevator shaft would be a clocktower to the site or if it would just blend into the site.

Mr. Arthur Michaels, the applicant's architect, stated he could make it a stronger element, restoring the original building. He stated he wasn't sure he wanted to make the building higher, but he can make it an accent point of the building.

Vice Chairman Dhawan suggested raising the peaks by providing more pointed angles.

Mr. Michaels stated he could add an additional 5ft. He stated this would take the height variance from 45.58 ft to 50.58 ft.

**Public Session**

**A motion to open** to the public for Mr. Michael's testimony came from Mr. Kaufman seconded by Mr. Barbara. All were in favor.

Mr. Alex Cuoto, 18 Cressfield Court, suggested Mr. Michaels look at the 216 Broadway building for comparison.

Mr. Lev Baransky, Woodcliff Lake, thought 45 ft is too high and 50 ft would be way too high.

**A motion to close** to the public for Mr. Michael's testimony came from Mr. Barbara, seconded by Mr. Panso. All were in favor.

**\*\* A 5-minute recess was taken at 9:05pm \*\***

**The meeting opened back up at 9:10pm**

Mr. Princiotto, Esq. listed the conditions of the resolution to the board as the following:

- Valet determined as progressed in business
- Hours of garbage pickup will be Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- A 6-month review of the lighting will be done by the Borough engineer
- No truck parking on the premises
- No staff parking on the residential streets
- Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday will be the designated days for deliveries at the rear of the building
- The hours of operation: Sunday- Thursday 11:30am- 10pm, Friday-Saturday 11:30am- 11pm
- Occupancy limitations, including the outdoor patio
- No outdoor music/entertainment

The plantings/landscaping will be maintained by the owner and the sign in the municipal Right of Way.

**Public Session**

**A motion to open** to the public for public comment came from Mr. Kaufman seconded by Mr. Barbara. All were in favor.

Ms. AnnMarie Borrelli, 18 Cressfield Court, stated she looks forward to their relationship with the new owners/operators.

**A motion to close** to the public for public comment came from Vice Chairman Dhawan, seconded by Mr. Kaufman. All were in favor.

Mr. Piromalli, Esq., states they have heard the concerns of the board, its professionals, and the public. He asked to amend the application for the height variance of an additional 5ft to make everyone happy.

**The application was approved** on a motion from Vice Chairman Dhawan seconded by Mr. Barbara. All members voted favorably.

**The meeting was adjourned** on a motion from Mr. Barbara, seconded by Mr. Kaufman. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Clairese Aquilino