



**Borough of Demarest  
Planning Board Regular Meeting  
MINUTES**

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**June 4, 2025** **7:30 PM** **DEMAREST BOROUGH HALL**

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The Borough of Demarest Planning Board held a special meeting on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. located at 118 Serpentine Road Demarest, NJ 07627.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair Woods

**FLAG SALUTE**

The Board was led in a salute to the flag by Chair Woods.

**ROLL CALL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Todd Adelman, Theodore Alevrontas, Mayor Brian Bernstein, Jodi Brenner, Kiran Chin, Camille DiSclafani, Councilwoman Daryl Fox, Fatemah Mamdani, Timothy Woods, Mary Hamilton

**MEMBER(S) ABSENT:** N/A

**ALSO PRESENT:** Danielle Federico – Attorney, Austin Bejin – Planner, Nick Chelius – Engineer, Michael Greco – Secretary, Zoning Officer

**RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution JPB-007-25**, JPB-25-003, 17 Laurel Road

A motion was made to approve Resolution JPB-007-25, by Mayor Bernstein and was seconded by Mr. Adelman.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows *n/e = not eligible*

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Mr. Adelman	yes	Mr. Alevrontas:	yes	Mayor Bernstein:	yes
Vice Chair Brenner:	yes	Ms. Chin:	yes	Ms. DiSclafani:	yes
Councilwoman Fox:	yes	Ms. Mamdani:	yes	Chair Woods:	n/e
Mrs. Hamilton:	n/e				

*Motion passed*

**Resolution JPB-008-25**, JPB-25-004, 17 Duck Pond Road

Councilwoman Fox asked for a change to the resolution to state that there was not an approval of the sports court and patio, instead that it was determined that they were in the rear yard.

A motion was made to approve Resolution JPB-008-25 as amended, by Councilwoman Fox and was seconded by Mayor Bernstein.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows *n/e = not eligible*

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Mr. Adelman	<i>yes</i>	Mr. Alevrontas:	<i>yes</i>	Mayor Bernstein:	<i>yes</i>
Vice Chair Brenner:	<i>yes</i>	Ms. Chin:	<i>yes</i>	Ms. DiSclafani:	<i>yes</i>
Councilwoman Fox:	<i>yes</i>	Ms. Mamdani:	<i>yes</i>	Chair Woods:	<i>n/e</i>
Mrs. Hamilton:	<i>n/e</i>				

*Motion passed*

## **CONCEPT DISCUSSION**

### **232 County Road – Bed and Breakfast Concept Discussion**

Ms. Federico explained to the board the purpose of the concept discussion and the board's role in this discussion.

Jonathan Kreiger, restaurant owner, Spring House, explained his idea to convert a large home in Demarest into a Bed and Breakfast and Restaurant, while keeping the building intact.

The board asked questions about the presentation on the topics of neighborhood disturbance, parking, keeping the entire building intact and additional uses of the property. In Ms. Chin and Mayor Bernstein expressed that they believed this could be an excellent use of the property in question, as opposed to a possible subdivision.

A motion was made to open the meeting to the public for comments on the concept discussion by Mayor Bernstein and was seconded by Mr. Adelman.

All in favor – Motion Passed.

No public in attendance sought to make comment.

A motion was made to close the meeting to the public for comments on the concept discussion by Mayor Bernstein and was seconded by Councilwoman Fox.

All in favor – Motion Passed.

## **NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS**

### **JPB-25-001 – 44 Pine Terrace – BF Development LLC**

Matthew Capizzi, the applicant's attorney, introduced the application to the board as a proposed Subdivision of the property into two equal size lots, both require variances for lot dimensions and would remove existing bulk variances.

Robert Costa, Costa Engineering, 325 South River Street, Hackensack NJ, was sworn in by Ms. Federico, and had his credentials accepted by the board.

Mr. Capizzi introduced two exhibits to the board.

A1: Colorized version, pg. 2 revised 06/04/2025.

A2: Average Setback Study.

Mr. Costa presented the application to the board. Mr. Costa explained that the current lot is oversized with some existing non-conforming coverage variances. He stated that the new lots would require variances for lot size and lot frontage, but that they would remove the coverage variances.

Mayor Bernstein and Vice Chair Brenner asked questions about the existing coverage and if the removal of the tennis court meant less coverage overall.

Ms. Federico swore in the Board's professionals.

Mr. Chelius clarified the total lot coverage being presented.

Mayor Bernstein asked what the improved lot coverage would be if the structures were not removed.

Ms. Chin stated that the current improved lot coverage would be more than the combined coverage of the two proposed lots.

Councilwoman Fox clarified some abbreviated elements of the proposed plan.

Mr. Costa explained that the new proposal makes most of the requirements conform. He continued to explain the storm water management that the applicant would be adding to reduce storm water runoff for the neighbors.

Mayor Bernstein asked if they were familiar with the gate at the end of the unimproved portion of the road. Mayor Bernstein asked for the distance from the gate and if it would be affected by this. Mr. Costa explained that the gate would not be affected by the subdivision and clarified the distance.

Councilwoman Fox asked if the plan would be correcting an existing non-conformity and Mr. Costa confirmed that they would.

Mr. Costa then explained the drainage design.

Vice Chair Brenner asked if there were any prior variances on the current lot. Mr. Costa explained that he was not able to uncover any.

Mayor Bernstein asked a question about the existing house and if it would remain and with what owner.

Mr. Capizzi explained that a new owner would be moving into the original house and the new house, but it is not determined at this time who will be occupying the home.

Ms. Chin asked if the architectural drawing is what would be going up or is it only a possibility, Mr. Capizzi explained that the rendition is a very close rendition of the house they seek to build.

Mayor Bernstein asked the applicant to clarify the difference between a major and minor subdivision.

Mr. Costa explained that the subdivision is a minor one and explained why.

Mr. Costa explained that due to the area being affected, this application is not a major development and though it does not require strict storm water management measures, the applicant is still proposing more than enough storm water management.

Mr. Bejin, the Board's Planner, explained the difference between major and minor subdivisions at Chair Woods request. Austin stated that the application is a minor subdivision.

Ms. Chin asked if the street has other undersized lots.

Mayor Bernstein asked about drainage for the new and existing homes.

Mr. Costa explained that from a drainage perspective the proposed would be a better configuration than the existing.

Mr. Costa stated that the applicant would be happy to increase the drainage if it becomes necessary during the engineering review.

Councilwoman Fox asked for clarification on the variances required. Mr. Bejin clarified the variances needed for each lot.

Chair Woods let the public know that the board will open up for questions and comments after all of the experts have presented.

Mr. Adelman asked if the grade would be raised. Mr. Costa stated that the grading on the proposed lot would be modified, but the grading around the existing home would stay the same, and the new grade will be very close to the existing.

Mr. Chelius asked if any consideration was given to drainage for lot 3.08 in the driveway as it currently slopes towards the house. Mr. Chelius recommended an inlet.

Mr. Chelius asked if the applicant intended to use pervious pavers. Mr. Costa explained that pervious pavers would be used for most of the outside structures, but not necessarily all throughout.

Mr. Costa stated that if the board requires pervious pavers, they would be happy to do that. Chair Woods clarified that pervious or impervious the areas are still coverage, with no credit.

Mayor Bernstein asked if the intention is to avoid raising the ground water. Mr. Costa explained that this is a requirement and that the use of seepage pits will be used to help prevent that.

Mr. Bejin asked if any calculation was done regarding the F.A.R. and Mr. Capizzi stated that the existing house would be below the maximum and the new house would comply with the maximum as well.

Mayor Bernstein asked who the applicant is. Mr. Capizzi stated that Austin Siboni is the applicant.

Pierro Gabucci, Axis Group Architects, 201 West Passaic Street, Rochelle Park NJ, was sworn in by Ms. Federico, and had his credentials accepted by the board.

Mr. Gabucci presented the application, showing the architectural drawings for the board. He testified that the F.A.R. of the two dwellings would be conforming to the code. He described the intention of the new building and the limited modifications on the existing building.

Michael J. Pessolano, New Jersey Planner, 140 Elmwood Avenue, Bogota NJ, was sworn in by Ms. Federico and had his credentials accepted by the board.

Mr. Pessolano presented to the board the application from a planning perspective.

Mr. Pessolano added Exhibit A3: a Map and Photo Exhibit prepared by himself, consisting of 6 sheets depicting various features that he will explain.

Mr. Pessolano gave explanations of the statutory criteria for approval of variances, explaining why the application is an improvement in the use of the land. Mr. Pessolano showed images depicting the neighboring properties and explained that the new homes would not be inconsistent with the homes on the street.

Mr. Pessolano spoke on the lot area, and showed that the properties surrounding the subject property are mostly undersized in the same way that the applicant is requesting for his proposed lots.

Mr. Pessolano presented the required positive and negative statutory criteria. He testified that the application meets the required criteria and the application warrants approval from the board.

Mayor Bernstein asked if there is current water flowing between the property and its neighboring properties. Mr. Pessolano explained that he is not an expert in this and does not have this information. Mayor Bernstein also asked about the change in driveways and the addition of another three-car garage, and whether the added cars create a greater disturbance for the neighborhood, especially as an unimproved road. Mr. Pessolano explained that he believes this to be a negligible disturbance, considering it is only to the homes with no traffic through. Mr. Pessolano stated that he did not perform an analysis of the dirt and dust disturbances on the road.

Chair Woods asked about the reduction of curb cuts. Mr. Pessolano explained this reduces the number of conflict points.

A motion was made to open the meeting to public question by Councilwoman Fox and seconded by Mayor Bernstein. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Jeff Martaian, 59 Pine Terrace, asked a question about the impervious coverage. Mr. Capizzi explained that there will be an overall reduction of 6,000 sq. ft. of coverage.

Marvin Chudnoff, 62 Pine Terrace, asked about the ownership of the property and Mr. Capizzi clarified. Mr. Chudnoff asked a question about the coverage calculations. Mr. Chelius clarified the coverage.

With no further questions, a motion was made to close the meeting to public questions by Councilwoman Fox and seconded by Mayor Bernstein.

All in Favor – Motion Passed

A motion was made to open the meeting to public comment by Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Ted Alevrontas.

All in Favor – Motion Passed

Marvin Chudnoff, 62 Pine Terrace, was sworn in by Ms. Federico. Mr. Chudnoff expressed his concern over the application and stated that he was in opposition to it. He stated that the drainage on this street is bad and that he believed this application would exacerbate this issue.

Chair Woods stated that the engineer testified that the new construction would improve the drainage on this street, even if it won't solve it. Mr. Chelius confirmed that this is the view.

Mr. Chudnoff, the board and the applicant's attorney discussed the existing issues of the street and the land.

Mr. Costa explained to Mr. Chudnoff the improvements being added and the benefit of the application.

Mr. Chudnoff ended by re-expressing his opposition of the application.

Mayor Bernstein asked for some clarification on the drainage system. Mr. Capizzi clarified that the existing tennis court is larger than the house being proposed.

Mayor Bernstein stated concern over approving a plan with the expectation that it might work but might not and then they have to change the plan.

Councilwoman Fox suggested that the engineering plan would be subject to the engineer's approval, and that if there is an issue they would then have to fix that issue.

Mayor Bernstein clarified that he understands this but is concerned over approving a plan that might work.

Ms. Federico explained that the board can request additional information or could condition the plan that if the plan does not work, they must correct it.

Vice Chair Brenner asked how Nick came to his conclusion. Mr. Chelius explained his view of the drainage and advised that having the stipulation is enough.

Jeff Martaian, 59 Pine Terrace, was sworn in by Ms. Federico. Mr. Martaian asked a question about the pervious pavers and his concern that they lose their pervious nature. Chair Woods explained that the board does not treat pervious as any different, and so the coverage is the same regardless of pervious or impervious.

With no more public seeking to make a comment, a motion was made to close the meeting to public comment by Councilwoman Fox and seconded by Mayor Bernstein.

All in Favor – Motion Passed

Councilwoman Fox questioned the lack of outdoor structures on the new home and expressed concern over the lack of available coverage for the owners to be able to build exterior structures. Mr. Costa explained that there is an additional 1,000 sq. ft. in coverage remaining.

Ms. Chin stated that the property seems to be meeting the requirements, and that the whole of the problems of pine terrace is not the responsibility of this applicant.

Chair Woods stated that he is not comfortable approving this plan and being able to see the final design, he said it is common of this board to request that the applicant return with more information.

Mr. Costa explained to the board that this application is doing everything to be correct and the best version of what could go there.

Mr. Capizzi requested to carry the application. Mr. Capizzi stated that he would extend the board's deadline to act.

Ms. Federico stated that the application would be carried to the July 2, 2025, meeting without further notice.

#### **JPB-25-002 – 7 Christie Street – Ed Yezekian**

Ms. Federico stated that the application would be carried to the July 2, 2025, meeting without further notice.

#### **DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

##### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No minutes for approval at this meeting.

##### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

A motion was made to open the meeting to the public by Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Ted Alevrontas.  
All in Favor – Motion Passed

With no public seeking to make a comment, a motion was made to close the meeting to the public by Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Ted Alevrontas.

All in Favor – Motion Passed

##### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Ted Alevrontas

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michael Greco, Joint Planning Board Secretary