



Borough of Demarest
Joint Planning Board Special Meeting
MINUTES

July 29, 2025

7:30 PM

DEMAREST BOROUGH HALL

The Borough of Demarest Planning Board held a special meeting TUESDAY, JULY 29, 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, Jodi Brenner, Camille DiSclafani, Councilwoman Daryl Fox, Fatemah Mamdani, Timothy Woods, Mary Hamilton

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Mayor Brian Bernstein, Kiran Chin

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Chelius – Engineer, Darlene Green – Planner, Danielle Federico – Attorney, Michael Greco – Secretary, Zoning Officer

Mr. Greco explained that Mayor Bernstein is absent for this meeting due to his conflict with the application, as he lives within 200 feet of the home being discussed.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS**30 Hardenburgh Ave**

Mr. Capizzi begins with an opening statement on this application. Mr. Capizzi states that it is an oversized lot in the R-D zone with 29,000 sq ft, having a mixed use of four residential units and a dentist's office. Mr. Capizzi also expands on the parking area that accesses Hardenburgh Ave through curb cuts, as well as needing improved vegetation and drainage. Mr. Capizzi explains the applicant wants to remove all the existing improvements and turn them into three residential lots. These lots will need their own variances although many non-conforming conditions will be eliminated. Mr. Capizzi states that Lot 26.01 has 70ft width rather than the required 100ft, and the front yard setback is 20ft rather than the required 25ft. Mr. Capizzi explains on the middle lot of 26.02 will need variances in lot area, as it is slightly undersized. Finally, the last lot of 26.03 will need a variance for lot width as it is 70ft rather than the required 100ft.

Mr. Capizzi explains the benefits of this building. He explains how all other measurements are conforming, the density is being reduced from four residential units to three, and the mixed use non-conforming condition will be

eliminated. In addition, drainage and impervious coverage will be generally improved. Mr. Capizzi invites Mr. Martins to speak.

Ms. Federico swears Mr. Martins in and his credentials are confirmed and accepted by the Board Chair.

Mr. Martins identifies the plan, and the survey, beginning to explain the current state of the plan with the four residential units, dentist's office, and parking lots. Mr. Martins mentions the property slopes from the east down to the west. Mr. Martins states that in terms of building, an increased building area will be needed with a non-conforming front setback. Although the building complies, the building and driveway coverage goes over 25% maximum at 29.6% with the improved lot coverage of 31.37%. Mr. Martins states there are no existing drainage improvements on the property.

Mr. Martins continues to review the proposed plan. This plan is a minor subdivision of 3 lots with 2 corner lots, and there are variances needed for the lot size, driveway, and building. Mr. Martins addresses neighboring setbacks on corner lots in the area, addressing how their requested setbacks do not differ greatly from other setbacks nearby. These documents are labeled SK1 and SK2 and are aerial images of buildings with similar setbacks on the same street. Ms. Federico marks this exhibit as A1. Mr. Martins confirms these setbacks were calculated by a surveyor.

Chair Woods asks about lot 26.02, and how the calculation for building coverage was made, including the area of the driveway. Mr. Martins explains that the building coverage was calculated with the building area and driveway in mind, including the turnaround areas for vehicles exiting onto Hardenburgh Ave. Chair Woods asks whether the improved lot coverage includes more than the driveway and building. Mr. Martin states it does, as it also includes a patio and walkway for the residents.

Councilwoman Fox asks if all the front yards are in Hardenburgh and therefore are referring to side yard deficiencies on Prescott St. Mr. Martin states that it does apply to the side yards. Chair Woods clarifies both sides on a corner lot are front yards and both must comply.

Chair Woods asks if Mr. Chelius has questions.

Mr. Chelius asks about stormwater improvements. Mr. Martin states the applicant will be adding drainage improvements once the official site plan is created. Mr. Chelius therefore wants to require additional mitigations for stormwater via the roof and seepage pits as a condition of approval. Mr. Chelius then asks whether any trees will be removed. Mr. Martins states at least 5 will be, but more will be known when the site plan is created. He adds that the applicant plans to be in full compliance with the tree ordinance. Mr. Chelius asks if there will be any extra retaining walls put in place to mitigate the site grading. Mr. Martins states that wasn't looked at yet, but the intention is not to create any more variances. Mr. Chelius reminds that retaining walls over 2ft would be considered accessory structures and therefore adding to improved lot coverage and require a variance.

Councilwoman Fox clarifies there is a 10ft pitch down from higher to lower. Mr. Martin confirms this.

Mr. Capizzi clarifies a conversation he had between him and Mr. Martins, stating that there were conversations about having a retaining wall in the driveway although that is not confirmed. Mr. Martins states that all retaining walls would be under 2ft.

Chair Woods asks if the board planner has any questions.

Ms. Green asks if the current spaces for parking are delineated and conforming. Mr. Martins states they are marked but very irregular. Ms. Green also asks if the driveway in the rear of the property is also non-conforming, which Mr. Martins confirms. However, Mr. Martins clarifies that both non-conforming structures will be removed in the new plan.

Ms. Green noted some minor discrepancies in the plans and therefore makes a condition of approval that they get revised. In addition, Ms. Green asks that the applicant comply with the rule that there should be one shade tree planted every 40ft upon a street frontage. Mr. Martins agrees.

Chair Woods asks if anyone on the board has questions. There are none, so Mr. Capizzi invites up David Spatz. Ms. Federico swears in David Spatz. Mr. Spatz has his credentials accepted by the Board Chair.

Mr. Spatz briefly summarizes the plot as a mixed-use unit on an otherwise single-family neighborhood. Mr. Spatz goes into the pros of the plan, stating that, Property is well suited for 3 lots, two lots are already conforming, and the one non-conforming lot matches other non-conforming lots on the street. In addition, although variances are needed for the middle plot, the size and frontage are still consistent with other plans. Mr. Spatz adds the street space will not be affected because there is a subdivision across the street that is similar. Mr. Spatz reiterates that the mixed use will be eliminated by the creation of these residential units. Furthermore, the elimination of the pre-existing driveways also stops mixed use, as the turnarounds in the new driveways will prevent the cars from backing into the street and causing congestion. Finally, trees will be added to all lots as well as drainage, reducing impervious coverage overall. Mr. Spatz states there are very minimal drawbacks to this plot besides the bulk variances being requested.

Ms. Green clarifies that the current building is 4 residential units and a dentist's office, which is confirmed. She further clarifies that the application reduces all units and is therefore less intense as well as more conforming with the new plan. Mr. Martins confirms this as well.

A motion was made to open the meeting to the public for questions of the applicant's professionals by Councilwoman Fox and seconded by Mr. Adelman.
All in Favor – Motion Passed

Having no public wishing to ask questions.

A motion was made to close the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Fox and was seconded by Mr. Adelman.
All in favor – Motion Passed.

A motion was made to open the meeting to the public for comments on the application by Councilwoman Fox and seconded by Mr. Adelman.
All in Favor – Motion Passed

Having no public wishing to ask questions.

A motion was made to close the meeting to the public by Councilwoman Fox and was seconded by Vice Chair Brenner.
All in favor – Motion Passed.

Mr. Capizzi makes a brief closing statement.

Chair Woods asks in the event of approval if the applicant understands it will be based upon what is presented with limited variances with the intent to not encourage more variances as the plan moves forward. Mr. Capizzi states it is impossible to prevent future variances, and the applicants have done their best to comply with current standards. In addition, there is improved coverage for a patio in the middle lot, and therefore there is room for adjustment if variances should arise.

Chair Woods directs this question to Federico, asking if conditions can be created that reflect the approval of the plan as it stands. Ms. Federico states that an opinion and reasoning as to this approval can be written into the resolution to reflect the current state of the plan.

A motion was made to approve the variances and the subdivision of 30 Hardenburgh Ave, with full summary of the plan and conditions provided by Ms. Green and Mr. Chelius was made by Councilwoman Fox, and was seconded by Mr. Adelman.

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

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

Motion passed

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Councilwoman Fox and seconded by Mr. Adelman.

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Greco, Joint Planning Board Secretary