

**EAST AMWELL PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**7:30 PM East Amwell Municipal Building**  
**April 11, 2018 - Meeting**

**Call to Order, Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance**

This meeting of the East Amwell Planning Board was opened on April 11, 2018 at 7:30 PM. The following notice was read, "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this is a regularly scheduled meeting pursuant to the annual meeting notice as published in the January 18, 2018 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat, a copy of the agenda for this meeting was forwarded to the Hunterdon County Democrat, filed in the Township Clerk's Office and posted on the bulletin board on April 5, 2018."

**Roll Call and Agenda Review**

**Present:** Mark Castellano  
Roger DeLay  
Frances Gavigan  
Gail Glashoff  
Joe Nyce  
Don Reilly – *Chairman*  
Rick Wolfe  
Rob Gilbert  
John Buckwalter- Alt. #1  
Tim Willey- Alt. #3  
Attorney Norman  
Planner Slagle

**Absent:** Dick Mc Manus

**Citizens' Privilege to Speak on Items not on the Agenda**

A motion by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. DeLay to open to the public was unanimously approved. Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion by Mr. DeLay, seconded by Ms. Gavigan to close to the public was unanimously approved.

**Review of Minutes**

A motion by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Delay to approve the Board's 03/18/2018 minutes as revised was unanimously approved.

**New Business – Other**

Chairman Reilly proposed to switch Item 1 and 2, so the board could hear the application first. Application for bulk variance, Cirianni-Jones, Blk. 41 Lot 29. There were no objections to this proposal.

**Applications to be Deemed Complete or Incomplete**  
**Cirianni-Jones : Application for Bulk Variance**  
**Block 41 Lot 29 – Sourland Mountain District**

Chairman Reilly called the applicants forward and explained the determination procedure. Planner Slagle explained to the Board that this application was done differently as the professional did the completeness administratively due to losing a month in the boards' consolidation. Cirianni-Jones application was originally deemed incomplete by Mr. O'Neal and Planner Slagle. They both met with the applicants and were able to deem their application complete as they were able to submit all required items except checklist item 3-Identification of any trees to be removed, Item 8- anything that requires an NJEDP letter of consistency determination for water management, Item 9- zoning permit or letter of denial and Item 10- copy of the completed zoning permit, which these are not applicable to this application. Cirianni-Jones were able to submit everything else that was required. Planner Slagle and Attorney Norman deemed them complete.

Mr. Wolfe asked "if the tree removal was not relevant due to the trees not being removed".

Planner Slagle stated "that is correct".

Attorney Norman swore in all parties as well as the Board's Planner, Joanna Slagle.

Sarina Cirianni-Jones, gave testimony that they are requesting a bulk variance be approved as they have purchased property on Snyderstown Road that has an existing dwelling. The addition is very small, 308 square foot in its entirety. They would like to add an addition to include another bedroom as they are a family of 3. They would also like to improve the property as it has fallen in disrepair and would also like to expand the living space to make it more comfortable and functional.

The addition will be taking the place of the current deck and extending it by 14ft. Due to this addition, the current placement of the shed would be in the way and would need to be relocated. They are proposing relocation of the shed. Due to the triangular lot, they do not have a back yard and the side yard does not have room, being the only option left would be the front yard. They are requesting it to be 5ft. from the property line, however, are open to different suggestions. The applicants would still like to have the shed as they do not have a basement or attic and would need storage for outside equipment.

The lot is .3 of an acre. The placement of the existing dwelling is already non-conforming and falls outside the setback requirements. Whatever they do to this existing dwelling, it will need a variance.

Currently the well is in the front of the house, so there is less room on the east side that is why the addition is requested for the west side due to more room.

Neighboring lots, Block 30 is 1.5 acres and there is some land between the property line and the house. They cannot build out on this side due to no room. The other lot next to them, Block 45 is the side they are building on, which is a couple hundred acres and the shed would be close to property line. The applicants do not think they would infringe on neighbors as there is a lot of land and trees between them. They also will be creating a modest home and improve the value of neighboring homes.

The current square footage for the home is 680 square feet, which is still under the 4,000 square feet requirement. With the addition, they still are within in the requirement coming in at 1,688 square feet as they will be removing the deck to put on the addition.

Chairman Reilly explained to the applicants what the board tries to do with a grandfather situation, when the applicants are looking to make an improvement and where there are existing deviations from bulk variances. The Board tries to correct them if we can but we don't want to exacerbate them either. It appears to Chairman Reilly, by replacing the deck with the addition that the applicants are not encroaching on lot 45 more than they currently are with the deck.

There were a few discussion by board members concerning different issues/concerns. 1. The proposal of the shed being 5 feet from the property line. The applicants are not set on the 5 feet and are up to any suggestions made by the board. 2. The clump of trees that would hinder the walkway that was proposed in the plans and they could end up damaging the house. Suggestion was made that they may need to be removed. 3. Cement pipe driveway that was determined not to be a concern. 4. Plastic pipe that comes out of the basement and into the ground. It was determined that this was the sump pump.

Mr. Buckwalter had some questions for the applicants regarding the basement. They stated earlier they didn't have a basement or attic but he noticed some sort of basement. Sarina Ciriannit-Jones stated that they have a crawl space.

He also asked why they did not consider building up and adding a second story. The applicants stated that this was a thought and did speak to their builder however, they would be losing a bedroom due to a staircase and essentially squeezing two bedrooms in the same size footprint.

There was more conversation regarding the shed about moving it further away from the property line. Mr. DeLay stated it is a minor point whether it is 5 feet or 10 feet away from the property line, as long as you can get behind the shed and maintain it. The board understands there are constraints and not sure how practical it would be for the shed to be moved to the other side.

Attorney Norman sated the applicants are asking for the variance in the application based on the concept of undue hardship. Lots 30 and 45 are already developed and they are undersized lots and there is no way to acquire land from an adjoining property to eliminate the variance.

Mrs. Cirianni-Jones state that lot 30 is very small and is developed and lot 45 is a big lot and they aren't even sure if there is a house on it. Per Chairman Reilly, lot 40 looks to have an easement and if that is the case it is not possible to acquire land from that lot.

Planner Slagle went over her review memo with the board. (See attached memo)

A motion made by Mr. Castellano, second by Mr. Gilbert to open to the public was unanimously approved. Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion by Mr. DeLay, seconded by Mr. Gilbert to close to the public was unanimously approved.

There was discussion by the board regarding the application. Ms. Gavigan stated that it's a very good improvement to the property and recommends less than 5 feet from the property line for the shed. Mr. Wolfe is comfortable with the 5 feet and does not feel it will impact anyone's view. He also agrees with Ms. Gavigan that it will be an esthetic improvement. Chairman Reilly stated that there are also other dwellings on Snyderstown Road that have been added to and this is not atypical along Snyderstown Road. Having it upgraded would be very positive.

Ms. Gavigan moves to accept the conditions as outlined in the memo, second by Mr. Gilbert.

The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mark. Castellano: Yes, Roger DeLay: Yes, Frances Gavigan: Yes, Rob Gilbert: Yes, Gail Glashoff: Yes, Joe Nyce: Yes, Don Reilly: Yes, Rick Wolfe: Yes.

Application approved.

**Discussion – Township Committee Introduction of Ordinance 18-02: An Ordinance of the Township of East Amwell to Dissolve the Board of Adjustment and Vest Its Powers in the Planning Board**

Attorney Norman reviewed the different variances for the board. (See attached memo)

**COAH Settlement**

No new information. The hearing is being held at the Courthouse in Somerville on April 19, 2018.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Hunterdon County Community Day
2. Township Committee Resolution #22-18
3. NJ Planner Newsletter- Jan./Feb. 2018 Edition

**Oral Reports**

FOSPC – A number of people went to the county meeting to encourage them to approve the grant for the Wertsville Industries property. The committee is seeking a \$850,000.00 grant. The hearing was tough but East Amwell was very well represented and the grant was approved. Once NJCF finalizes on more grant not for profit, the committee will be in a position to close on the Wertsville Industries property.

Environmental Commission – A full time board member was made Vice-Chair. The committee still plans to go forward with all the things that need to be done especially the environmental resource inventory. Ms. Gavigan scanned and downloaded a lot of the material. They have gotten neighbors mockups from 1975 which was the regional 5-6 towns including Hillsborough and Tewksbury. They plan to use the formats that West Amwell used and spoke to individuals at

West Amwell to get permission from them to follow their format just like they did with Delaware Township.

PB Secretary – Discussed starting Planning and Zoning Board Classes. Also discussed how the members of the board would like their packets for the meeting. It was decided that they will be emailed and plans will be picked up by the members.

Chairman – No report was given

### **Open to the Public**

A motion by Mr. DeLay, seconded by Ms. Gavigan to open to the public was unanimously approved by voice vote. Seeing no other members of the public come forward, a motion was made by Ms. Gavigan and seconded by Mr. DeLay to close to the public. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Presentation of Vouchers**

There was concern brought up by Ms. Gavigan regarding the last application being a challenge due to the the previous Administrative Officer leaving and the combing of boards. Ms. Gavigan stated that the new MLUL has great letters, procedures and checklists and the board should take into consideration implementing procedures for when new employees start so they know what to do.

Chairman Reilly suggested when the Administrative Officer is done with her courses, she could document procedures that she learns and share with the board.

Ms. Gavigan also stated that the board should set up processes regarding what they are charging applicants and tax payers and take a look at how the board is spending money. She stated that the last applicant had a “huge price tag”.

Chairman Reilly stated he applauds the professionals as they walked the applicants through the entirety of this process and the applicants did not have any professional of their own. The invoices that were presented were modest for the services provided. However, he agrees with Ms. Gavigan concern.

Chairman Reilly asked the board if they approve of the vouchers. A motion made by Mr. Nyce, second by Ms. Gavigan. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Adjournment**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:18 PM.

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**Krista Parsons**  
**Administrative Officer**