

**Borough of Pitman  
Combined Planning/Zoning Board**

**Minutes of February 19, 2019**

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Aspras called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**Attendance:**

Chairman Aspras, Councilman Weng, Mrs. Kelley, Mr. Owen, Mr. Ryder, Mr. Slenkamp, Mrs. Stech, Mr. Romick, Mr. Scutt, Mr. Franchi

**Absent Members:**

Mr. Fijalkowski, Mr. Lowden, Mrs. Cioffi

**Advisors Present:** Mr. MacDonald, Solicitor, Mr. Kernan, Planner/Engineer, Mr. Pierpont, Zoning Officer, Mr. Madison, Historic Preservation Commission

**Mrs. Cioffi arrived after roll call.**

**Approval of January 2019 Minutes:**

A motion was made by Mr. Romick and second by Mrs. Stech **to approve** the minutes of January 2019.

Chairman Aspras – Yes  
Mrs. Kelley – Yes  
Mr. Ryder – Yes  
Mrs. Stech – Yes  
Mr. Franchi – Yes

Councilman Weng – Yes  
Mr. Owen – Yes  
Mr. Slenkamp – Yes  
Mr. Romick – Yes

**Public Comments: None**

**Historic Preservation Commission:**

Mr. MacDonald swore in Walt Madison

Application No. 2019-3            Alan & Diana Capaccio  
   136 South Ave.  
   BI-15 / L-21  
   Siding

Application No. 2019-4            Gabe Glesener  
   46 Webb Ave.  
   BI-7 / L-10  
   Removing back stairs and adding back porch

Application No. 2019-6                      Alisa Johnson  
27 West Ave.  
Bl-7 / L-16  
Paint house / Replace windows/Remove screen front porch  
Paint door / Add decorative cedar shake shingles  
New front doors

Mrs. Kelley motioned, second by Mr. Romick **to approve** Applications 2019-3, 4, and 6.

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Chairman Aspras: Yes | Councilman Weng: Yes |
| Mrs. Kelley : Yes    | Mr. Owen: Yes        |
| Mr. Ryder: Yes       | Mr. Slenkamp: Yes    |
| Mrs. Stech: Yes      | Mr. Romick: Yes      |
| Mr. Franchi: Yes     | Mr. Scutt: Yes       |
| Mrs. Cioffi: Yes     |                      |

Application No. 2019-5                      Roland Green  
104 Second Ave.  
Bl-11 / L-7  
Demolition of Abandoned Property  
**Application Denied**  
**Lack of information**  
**Report from an Engineer should accompany application**

Councilman Weng then stated that this property has also been looked at by the Borough, as being one that needs to be condemned and demolished.

Mr. MacDonald added, that it has been the history of the board, regarding applications that have insufficient information and are denied, that they be denied without prejudice. This allows the applicant to reapply with the needed information.

Mr. Owen asked for clarity on the motion, as to what information the property owner still needed to provide. Mr. Madison replied that the application needed to be accompanied by an Engineers report.

Mr. Owen asked if he wanted to demolish his home would he need an Engineers report. Chairman Aspras answered no, because his home is not in the Historic District.

Mr. Slenkamp motioned, second by Mr. Ryder **to approve** the denial of Application No. 2019-5

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Chairman Aspras: Yes | Councilman Weng: Yes |
| Mrs. Kelley: Yes     | Mr. Owen: No         |
| Mr. Ryder: Yes       | Mr. Slenkamp: Yes    |
| Mrs. Stech: Yes      | Mr. Romick: Yes      |
| Mr. Franchi: Yes     |                      |

Application No. 2019-2                      West End Development LLC  
141 West Ave.  
Bl-19 / L-33  
Construction of new home.

Vacant lot  
**Application Denied**  
**Lack of information**  
**Not conforming to neighbors**

Mr. MacDonald swore in Drew Homan, 505 Legends Court, Mickleton, NJ

Mr. Homan stated that he would like to construct a new home and had provided this information on his application and was not aware that there was insufficient information provided. Mr. Homan stated that he submitted plans for a 25 ft. wide house on a 40 ft. wide lot. He continued by saying that the Historic Commission wants an 18 ft. width maximum. He then added that the Commission wants a maximum of 15 ½ feet in height and his plans are one foot, too high. Mr. Homan feels that he is getting information in bits and pieces and that the information and response time that he has been provided have been poor. He also feels that there is, no true criteria set. He said he has corrected the esthetics that the Commission wanted him to change but there is nothing in the zoning that states there is an 18 ft. maximum. He then added there are no guidelines set, stating that the guidelines only refer to massing, and that can be interpreted in different ways. Mr. MacDonald asked where, did the information, of 18ft. come from. Mr. Homan answered that it came from the Historic Commission.

Mr. MacDonald then asked Mr. Madison if there was insufficient information for the Commission to act when Mr. Homan went before the Commission.

Mr. Madison said that was correct. Mr. Homan then explained that the first time he went before the Commission that was the case, he was trying to get a feel for what the Commission wanted. However, the second time he presented specifics with true elevations, and that the issue of width is a “new” issue. He then stated that he feels that as he submits, then the guidelines are made up, that there are no true dimensional guidelines.

Mr. MacDonald then explained that the Commission only makes recommendations to the Planning/Zoning board. Mr. Homan said he understood that.

Mr. MacDonald then asked Mr. Madison, with the specific information, that he suggests that he needs, could he give the applicant the information that is needed, so that the Commission can make a recommendation, with everything in front of them, to bring before the Planning/Zoning board. Mr. Madison said that he felt that they could.

Mr. MacDonald then stated that the Planning/Zoning Board doesn't have to agree with the Historic Commission whether they approve or deny the application put forth. Mr. Homan said that he understood.

There was then more discussion about guidelines and criteria and how Mr. Homan felt that there was lack of information and sharing of paperwork. He stated he is trying to integrate a home into the neighborhood and improve the character and increase the sale price and value, but the lack of guidelines brought him to this point. Mr. MacDonald then said that the guidelines are the compatibility of the surrounding homes.

Councilman Weng asked did he, Mr. Homan, feel as though he now knew what he needed to bring to the next Historic Commission meeting. Mr. Homan said he wasn't 100% sure, but okay. Mr. MacDonald then stated that he should find out from the Commission exactly what they wanted so he can be 100% sure, so that it can come before the Planning/Zoning Board.

Mr. MacDonald then swore in Mr. Ross Millard, 140 Colonial Ave. Pitman  
Borough of Pitman

Historic Commission  
Residential Designer

Mr. Millard stated that Mr. Homon is looking for a black and white answer, as a Commission they cannot give black and white answers. The Commission is not saying that he can't build a 25 ft home, he just can't build a 25 ft box. For instance, in the first section concerning massing, he read aloud the following - **uninteresting box like forms shall be broken into smaller various masses**, and that's what the Commission is asking him to do. He stated that it was suggested that he break the masses up into roughly 18 ft. of the 25 ft, creating cut outs. Houses in the Grove are not great big boxes, they have wings and additions and are broken up. The Commission, he stated is asking him to break up the mass. The Commission cannot tell him how to break up the mass, they can only make recommendations and suggestions.

Councilman Weng again asked Mr. Homon if he felt that he now knew what he needed to bring before the next Commission meeting. Mr. Homon answered, the answer is always no. Councilman Weng then said, that they should work it out before he leaves. Mr. Homon said the struggle and the time frame and being hit with late minute paperwork is the problem. There was then more discussion of time frame. Mr. Homon then asked, from the Historical Commission, to the Planning/ Zoning, what is the truth, are we going 100% with what the Historical Commission says.

Mr. MacDonald again explained that the board will listen to both sides. That the Historic Commission is not always agreed with, that there are situations when the Planning/Zoning Board sides with the applicant.

Mrs. Cioffi said that she understood Mr. Homon's frustration because it is very subjective and there should be guidelines. Mr. Homon said he has been through this before in the past with different Historic Boards, however, there has always been more paperwork, guidelines, window schedules and a punch list involved.

Mr. MacDonald then said that the Commission has stated that there is not enough information and that is the situation that the Planning/Zoning Board is dealing with at this moment.

The Commission states that they do not have complete information on the application and that the Board must deny without prejudice.

Mr. Franchi motioned and second by Mr. Romick to deny without prejudice application #2019-02

Chairman Aspras: Yes

Mrs. Stech: No

Councilman Weng: Yes

Mr. Romick: Yes

Mrs. Kelley: No

Mr. Ryder: Yes

Mr. Owen: Yes

Mr. Franchi: Yes

Mr. Slenkamp: Yes

Memorialization of Appeal No. 583 Resolution #2019-08

Application For C1-C2 Variance

Andrew P. Caccia

33 North Oak Ave

Bl 200 / L 7

Mr. Owen motioned to Memorialize, second by Mrs. Kelley, Resolution #2019-08

Chairman Aspras: Yes  
Councilman Weng: Yes  
Mrs. Kelley: Yes  
Mr. Owen: Yes

Mr. Slenkamp: Yes  
Mr. Ryder: Yes  
Mrs. Stech: Yes

#### Public Hearing

Robert & Claudette Blasscyk

55-57 North Oak Avenue

BI 200 / L 4

Use Variance

Construction of a Duplex in a Single - Family Zone

Mr. MacDonald explained that Councilman Weng & Mrs. Kelley, the Mayor's representative, cannot participate in the discussion nor can they vote on a Use Variance application.

The 7 members that will be permitted to vote will be: Chairman Aspras, Mr. Owen, Mr. Ryder, Mr. Slenkamp, Mrs. Stech, Mr. Romick, Mr. Franchi

Mr. MacDonald then explained the application and its different components, and the role of the Board members in this application.

Mr. MacDonald swore in Mr. Blasscyk.

Mr. Blasscyk explained that his family had lost their home on 57 N. Oak Ave to a fire. The home, when he purchased it was a duplex. He is applying to rebuild the home as a duplex in the R1 zone.

Mr. Blasscyk then presented documentation of other duplexes that currently exist in his neighborhood, in the R1 zone.

Mr. Blasscyk explained that his plan is to rebuild but he would like to do it on a different footprint as to provide more adequate parking. He said that currently there is 6.95 ft. from the neighboring property line. He wants to decrease that to 5ft by moving the foundation of the reconstructed duplex. This would provide parking in the front of the home on the right side and then additional parking on the left side of the property.

Chairman Aspras opened the floor to the public.

The attorney for Mr. Michael Cavallaro, 124 N Broadway, approached the Board and stated that he and his client were only present in concern to the Bulk Variances.

Mr. MacDonald explained that the Bulk Variances would only come into play if the Use Variance is granted.

Mr. MacDonald swore in Mr. Brett Williams, 51 N. Oak Ave.

Mr. Williams stated that he lives next door to Mr. Blasscyk. He said that his house and the home across the street are not duplexes as Mr. Blasscyk had stated in his earlier documentation.

Mr. Williams stated that reconstruction as a duplex causes parking issues, and he also expressed concern about the foundation being moved closer to his home, as he feels the firefighters had a problem fighting the recent fire.

Mr. MacDonald explained that the Board is only dealing with the Use Variance at this point and that what he was speaking of would fall under the Bulk Variances.

Chairman Aspras asked if there were any other comments from the public. There were none.

There was then discussion concerning the Use Variance and the application for the Bulk Variances. Mr. Blasscyk explained that he would only be applying for the Bulk Variances if the Variance is granted. Also saying that if the Variance is denied he would build back on the original footprint of the home.

Clark Pierpont, Zoning Officer, was then recognized by Chairman Aspras. He stated that he advised Mr. Blasscyk to submit this application. His application is to move the house a foot to create the extra space for the driveway. In order to do that he must destroy the nonconforming use and that requires a Use Variance to rebuild one foot over. If he were to rebuild the nonconforming use on the existing foundation, he could do that with just Zoning approval, but he cannot move the foundation without the Use Variance.

Mr. Kernan then suggested that Mr. Blasscyk present to the board how moving the footprint of the dwelling would benefit or improve the current parking conditions. Mr. Blasscyk explained that there would be parking in the front on the right of the duplex #55, creating new parking to the left of #57 by creating a driveway and additional parking and access to the rear of the property.

There was more discussion of the current duplexes located in the neighborhood.

Mr. MacDonald then clarified with Mr. Blasscyk what his application was asking for, stating that he, (Mr. Blasscyk) was applying to build a new house on a new foundation as reflected in the proposed # 55-57 map.

Mr. Romick motioned, second by Mr. Ryder to grant the Use Variance, the reconstruction of the partially destroyed house, as a duplex, conditioned upon approval of any bulk variances that might be required, with respect to the applicant's proposal in his application. That proposal being called proposed # 55-57.

Furthermore, this motion would not address either the bulk variances nor would it include the out building as it is shown on the application. Also, on the condition, that the character of the structure should fit the neighborhood. In addition, the square footage of the building, not to exceed what is already there.

Chairman Aspras asked the applicant if he had completed his application. Mr. Blasscyk answered that he had.

Mr. MacDonald then instructed the board that If they are going to vote in favor of the application, they need to address the positive criteria, has the applicant shown that there are special reasons to grant this variance, and what are the positive criteria that come from the applicant's testimony. The second part should address the negative, that the grant of this variance will not impair the Zone plan.

Mr. MacDonald then stated that the motion has a condition that the grant of the use as a duplex is conditioned upon the board's approval of any bulk variances that may be required as a result of the reconstruction. And further its conditioned upon submission and approval by the board of specific elevations of the property to be built, the esthetic elevations of the property.

**Chairman Aspras: Yes** - Unique application will not harm the ordinance or impair.  
Mostly in character with the neighborhood

**Mr. Owen: Yes** – Stays in character with the neighborhood. Not a substantial impairment to the Zone plan.

**Mr. Ryder: Yes** – Basing it on the partial destruction of the nonconforming use. Do not believe it will set a precedent for other duplexes in the neighborhood.

**Mr. Slenkamp: Yes** – It will improve the parking and access to the rear of the property should there ever be a fire. And it will not substantially impair the Zone plan.

**Mrs. Stech: Yes** – It will improve the neighborhood and will not impair the Zone plan since there are other duplexes in the area.

**Mr. Romick: Yes** – As I stated before

**Mr. Franchi: Yes** – Because I feel Mr. Blasscyk has the right to reconstruct his home as he had purchased it 16 yrs. ago and I do not believe it will impair the Zone plan. I do have a concern because of how it is written, as it is all intertwined. I am voting yes with reservation.

Chairman Aspras then recognized Mr. Tim Kernan Planner/Engineer

Mr. Kernan then presented his findings to the board for the Bulk Variances in the application. Lot area, building area, existing and proposed were covered. In addition, the size of both front and side yards, the setback and how it compares to others in the neighborhood. The out buildings, and a proposed garage for the installation of solar panels, and whether they conform was also discussed. At this time Mr. Blasscyk withdrew the proposal for the out building. There was discussion of the current driveway, the proposal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> driveway to the left and access to the rear of the dwelling.

Chairman Aspras then opened the floor to the public. The attorney for Mr. Cavallaro, approached the Board, and stated that his clients only concern was the garage in the rear yard, and since it has been withdrawn, they have no more concern and would like to withdraw and wish Mr. Blasscyk good luck. Assuming the Board votes in his favor.

Mr. Williams then approached the Board stating that he is concerned about squeezing the access between the two properties, if the foundation of the home is moved. There was discussion of shrinking the size of the home or subdividing the lot to the left in order to avoid shrinking the width of the distance between the homes on the right.

Mr. Kernan then suggested moving the footprint of the home three feet to the left, widening the current driveway to the right, by an additional 3 ft. This would allow access to the rear of the property to be on the right side of the house. Mr. Williams said he had no problem with this suggestion.

Mr. Blasscyk said he felt that this could be an option, but he wasn't a fan of the idea. He felt that he would have to take another look at the layout and the plans before he could agree to this proposal.

Mr. Franchi said he thinks Mr. Blasscyk should be allowed to rebuild his duplex but not infringe on Mr. Williams. Mr. Ryder suggested to Mr. Blasscyk that he think on it and come back to the Board. Mr. Blasscyk agreed.

Chairman Aspras motioned, and second by Mr. Owen to extend the hearing until the next meeting.

Chairman Aspras: Yes

Mr. Ryder: Yes

Mrs. Stech: Yes

Mr. Franchi: Yes

Mr. Owen: Yes

Mr. Slenkamp: Yes

Mr. Romick: Yes

Mr. MacDonald then stated that the above 7 voting members, will be the voting members at the next meeting. Adding that if one of these members cannot be at the next meeting, an alternate can vote in their place as long as, they can certify they have heard the transcribed meeting.

**Report from Zoning Officer:**

Clark Pierpont – No report

**Economic Development Committee:**

Mr. Owen stated that the next meeting of the EDC would be held this Thursday Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm.

**New Use Waiver Committee:**

No report

**Site Plan Committee:**

No report

**Subdivision Committee:**

No report

**Master Plan Committee:**

Mr. Ryder – Nothing to report

**Environmental Commission:**

Mr. Slenkamp reported that all residents would soon be receiving a recycling brochure in their mailbox.

**Council Report:**

No report

**Other/Old/New Business:**

Mr. Romick, the acting County Planning Director, reported that the County had signed off on the new Historic Signs. These signs will be installed on the existing posts, but if they intend to put the signs in new locations, they will need a permit from the highway office.

**Mrs. Stech motioned, second by Mr. Ryder, to adjourn. All in favor.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Connie Anderson

