

**Borough of Ho-Ho-Kus  
Bergen County, New Jersey  
Planning Board Minutes  
September 14, 2023  
Combined Session**

**Meeting Called to Order at 7:00PM by Chairman Hanlon**

**Open Public Meeting's Act Statement: Read into the record by the Board Secretary.**

**Salute to the Flag**

**Roll Call:** Messrs. Jones (absent), Madden, Thomas, Hart, Councilman Policastro, Chairman Hanlon, Mayor Randall (absent)

**Also in Attendance:** Gary J. Cucchiara, Esq., Board Attorney; Ms. JoAnn Carroll, Board Secretary

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**Mr. Cucchiara administered the Oath of Office to the following:  
Mr. Bryan Hart, Class IV Member, Term Expiration 12/31/2024**

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**New Business:**

**Docket #13-2023: Ms. Fiona McMahon, Ember Physical Therapy, 10 Sycamore Avenue, Block 1010, Lot 12.01, GB Zone:** new business application; physical therapy clinic; suite located within Garger Center for Endocrinology

**Ms. Fiona McMahon:** stated she is renting space for her physical therapy business; one-on-one treatment; one patient per hour; pelvic floor therapy; no hours on Saturday or Sunday; she is the only employee; is aware there is ample parking; is interested in putting up a sign.

**Councilman Policastro:** instructed Ms. McMahon to reach out to the Board Secretary regarding submitting a sign application.

**Motion to approve application:** Councilman Policastro

**Seconded by:** Hart

**Ayes:** Madden, Thomas, Hart, Councilman Policastro, Chairman Hanlon

**Nays:** None

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**Conceptual Review #2:**

**Docket #12-2023: 235 Wearimus Road LLC, 235 Wearimus Road, Block 903, Lot 11, R1 Zone:** proposed 3 lot subdivision with municipal road access

**Chairman Hanlon:** stated the application was before the Board for a Conceptual Review only; 2<sup>nd</sup> appearance; informal discussion for application; not a public hearing; public not notified but the Conceptual Review was listed on the agenda; Board Members may ask questions of the applicant; the Board

has received the revised letter from the applicant's attorney and the revised conceptual subdivision plan.

**Louis D'Arminio, Esq., Price, Meese, Shulman & D'Arminio, applicant's attorney:** stated this is not a substantive review; no notice required or given; share ideas to get the opportunity to see if there are better alternatives the Board would like to see; the Board had suggested the applicant contact the County first; the County was receptive to the plans; they wanted a dedication of the road section that is the road that everyone presently uses; no plans for widening the road; reserve the easement for future use if the County does decide to widen it; did acknowledge the existence of a drainage system on site; the County wanted better mapping; some minor tweaks to the radii where the road came in; the road was wide for what is necessary; the connection is the County but the road width is the Board's purview; the tweaks were made to the plan; the red on the plan shows what the client owns in the road; the hashed marks are where the County may want to widen the road in the future; the curb has been slightly changed so it meets the existing conditions better; the existing drainage needs to be mapped but is shown on the plan; applicant made some additional changes of their own; wanted to eliminate a variance; the first 2 lots are conforming; lot 3 is the only non-conforming lot; the variances for lot frontages still exist; keeping options open to the house that is there; will also notice for the setback to the rear yard for the house; believed there was a variance for lot width, but there is none per the ordinance.

**Chairman Hanlon:** stated there was a law passed 8 years ago which dictated to communities that the road could be narrow; Copper Beech is an example of that law; allowed to have parking on one side of the street due to the amount of land; no curbs there.

**Mr. D'Arminio:** stated the ordinance speaks to safety for commercial vehicles; have 40 ft. radius; may have slight tweaks; taken into consideration the Board's thoughts; Trevor Curtis, the applicant's engineer, is present and can relay other details from the County.

**Chairman Hanlon:** asked if the applicant had spoken to David Hals, the Borough Engineer.

**Mr. Curtis:** stated he spoke with Mr. Hals before the first site plan review; met with the County who were surprisingly receptive; minor comments; actually helped out with giving them the Copper Beech plans; used as basis for the right of way width; similar development; sent along other plans in adjacent area; noted the survey shows a pipe which runs along the adjacent property line; believes the ditch on the subject property conveyed water from overflow from a pond from another development; it seems it was adjusted; the County has no application for it; the pipe and ditch on the property are both dry; Mr. Hals mentioned water flows down that ditch; was not witnessed by Mr. Curtis; believes someone may have piped it without any approval; other County concerns dealt with the inlet in the street; curb radii, pavement right of way and width in road; maintaining the existing asphalt curbing in the road; changes made on plan; sent to Mr. Timsak who said it looked good; doesn't guarantee County approval; eliminated 2 variances; one for lot depth which was 18 inches; adjusted the bulb slightly; eliminated the lot depth and lot area variances; two lots are compliant one is not; one variance for lot area; 2



frontages and a side yard; 3 variances in total; County pointed to Copper Beech plan which has a 40 ft. right of way and a slightly narrow road; they want access; sufficient turn around for an emergency vehicle; will file with the County at the same time the Board application is filed.

**Mr. Madden:** asked if the drainage issues had been addressed.

**Mr. Curtis:** stated he understood the drainage concerns; Mr. Hals made it apparent; run off rates to be reduced; not adding any more flow to the County right of way.

**Councilman Policastro:** stated, conceptually, he had no major objections; would like to hear Mr. Hals' comments regarding drainage and Mr. Snieckus' comments on the variances; better way to situate lots; asked the applicant to take into consideration the Borough's tree ordinance which has recently been updated; the town Arborist would be able to walk the property with the applicant; replanting to be discussed; consider a fire hydrant in the cul-de-sac; there is one currently at the intersection of Wearimus Road and Deerhill Drive.

**Mr. Curtis:** stated he has worked with the town water department in the past; will work with them to get hydrant in that location.

**Chairman Hanlon:** stated the formal application will be provided to the Board and Borough professionals and agencies.

**Mr. Curtis:** stated he was the engineer for the Crossing project; knows the team; will put together a "real" plan and speak with Mr. Hals before an official application is submitted.

**Councilman Policastro:** stated the curbing should be Belgian block.

**Chairman Hanlon:** stated curbing may not be needed; continued, his only concern is regarding lot 11.02; frontage is half of what is required; not sure how that will work; possibly only 2 lots should be proposed; in the R1 Zone, you will not find any homes built in the last 22 years that has a frontage that is proposed for lot 11.02; if there is one, it was most likely built in the early 1900s.

**Mr. D'Arminio:** stated that was understood; the cul-de-sac makes it difficult.

**Chairman Hanlon:** stated it if cannot be done, possible there would only be a driveway, not a road.

**Mr. Curtis:** stated he will speak with Mr. Hals and discuss the RSIS compliance with the length of the roadway and the minimum required for the cul-de-sac vs. a hammerhead turn around; the cul-de-sac is driving a lot of variances; stated the lot width is based on the average of the lot; the frontage is to prevent a "pizza pie" lot; will look and try to make it bigger for the final plan.

**Chairman Hanlon:** reiterated that lot 3 has a small frontage compared to the rest of the R1 Zone.

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**Chairman Hanlon:** stated it is not mandatory at this time to update the Master Plan but it is the time to put together the information while it is fresh instead of waiting until the next amendment; Board Members may be working on more than one topic; segments include: utilities; stormwater management;

circulation/transportation; housing, Ho-Ho-Kus Crossing project; Normandy Court; Brookside affordable housing; land use, the bank property; library, etc.; Mr. Hart and Mr. Thomas will be covering the community facility section with Councilman Policastro as a back-up; Mr. Jones can help as well due to his knowledge; need to make sure people in the future will understand what was done in the town; major job previously regarding drainage; can refer to the Master Plan; new element is the climate control section; mandated by the State; please let him or the Board Secretary know if there is a particular subject you would like to work on; look at it from the view of a citizen; if there are errors you find in the current Master Plan, please let us know that as well.

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**Approval of July 13, 2023 Minutes:** Hart

**Seconded by:** Thomas

**Ayes:** Madden, Thomas, Hart, Councilman Policastro, Chairman Hanlon

**Nays:** None

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**Motion to Adjourn:** Thomas

**Seconded by:** Hart

**All in Favor**

**None Opposed**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:39PM**

Respectfully submitted by:

  
JoAnn Carroll

Planning Board Secretary

October 2, 2023

**APPROVED ON NOVEMBER 9, 2023**