INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF LAUREL HOLLOW BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

PUBLIC HEARING October 25, 2017

7:30 p.m.
VILLAGE HALL
1492 Laure1 Hollow Road Syosset, New York 11791-9603

PRESENT: RUSSELL MOHR, CHAIRMAN
NEWTON J. BURKETT, MEMBER
LOUIS LEBEDIN, MEMBER

ALSO PRESENT:
HOWARD AVRUTINE, Village Attorney ZV10-2017: Boutis

RONALD KOENIG
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

MR. AVRUTINE: The next application is case zV10-2017, the public hearing on the application of Loukas and Nicole Boutis to install a swimming pool and patio at 45 Cedarfield Road where:

The accessory structures are not set back at least 40 feet from every lot line not abutting a street in violation of Section 145-5(B)(2) of the Laurel Hollow village Code. The patio setback is 20.8 feet. The swimming pool setback is 25.9 feet.

In addition, the total surface coverage shall not exceed 20 percent of the lot area according to Section $145-5(A)(1)(d)$ of the Laurel hollow village Code. 23.6 percent is proposed.

The property under application is designated as Section 14, Block A, Lot 1116 on the Land and Tax Map of Nassau County.

The exhibits in connection with this application are as follows:

First, notification from the Nassau County Planning Commission dated September 12, 2017 that the matter under application is referred to the Laurel Hollow Board of Zoning Appeals to take action as it deems appropriate.

The next exhibit is the legal notice of public hearing dated september 22, 2017.

The next exhibit is an affidavit of posting from Nick Porcaro that the notice of public hearing was posted conspicuously on the bulletin board at the main entrance to the office of the village clerk on October 13, 2017.

The next exhibit is an affidavit of publication from the Oyster Bay Guardian stating that the legal notice was published in the Oyster Bay Guardian on October 13, 2017.

The next exhibit is an affidavit from the Deputy clerk stating that the notice of public hearing was mailed to other interested parties on October 6, 2017.

The next exhibit consists of documents confirming that the notice of public hearing was published to the village of Laurel Hollow website and sent to Village website NEWS subscribers on October 6, 2017.

And the final exhibit is an affidavit of mailing from the applicant indicating that the notice of public hearing was mailed on October 6, 2017 to the individuals set forth in the affidavit.

Do we have a representative here on behalf of the applicant?

MR. MARNIKA: Yes. Good evening.

MR. AVRUTINE: Please give your name and address.

MR. MARNIKA: Hrvoje Marnika, P.E., Licensed Professional Engineer, State of New York. First name H-R-V-O-J-E. Last name M-A-R-N-I-K-A.

I'm here this evening to present to you the plan here, make a request for three variances, area variances, associated with a proposed patio and swimming pool.

The property is two acres, located on the south side of Cedarfield Road approximately 1,000 foot east from Elizabeth Drive. The property is a one-and-a-half story frame residence with an attached garage. And the proposed improvements is a 24 -by-40 in-ground swimming pool along with a masonry pool patio.

Additional site improvements include a 4-foot high barrier fence around the pool area in accordance with the New York State Code, as well as a dry well pursuant to the village Code.

The proposed pool and patio setbacks are 25.9 and 20.8 feet respectively. Lot coverage, the maximum allowed is 20 percent, while 23.6 percent is proposed.

I feet it's important that I mention to the Board tonight here, there was a small oversight that came to our attention here during the review process,
okay. There is an existing shed on the property that was installed. It's under 144 square feet. It's about 80 square feet. We realize that it needs to be a minimum of 40 feet from the boundary. It is not. It is 21 feet per the survey. So we realize that has to be addressed. Like I said, it was an oversight. It was not listed on the disapproval letter.

Additionally, the homeowner has taken or begun to take the necessary steps to file the necessary paperwork to address the issue.

MS. BOUTIS: If I can -- Nicole Boutis, homeowner, 45 Cedarfield Road, Laurel Hollow.

So regarding that matter, regarding the shed, I will be back here again seeking a variance for that. I have filed the necessary paperwork to start the process to legalize the shed, and I have filed for a permit. I just recently received the notice of disapproval, so I do plan on coming back to legalize it to request a variance.

MR. AVRUTINE: And just for the Board's edification for clarity on the record, it is my understanding, and I think this has been verified, that the shed is counted in the coverage variance that is before the Board this evening. So it will not be a further variance for lot coverage when the shed comes
before you. It will only be a setback issue before the Board. So, I just want to make sure that was clear on the record, and that the Board had the full picture.

MS. BOUTIS: Thank you.
MR. MARNIKA: So, the reason for the request variance here, okay, is basically if you look at the lay of the property and the existing improvements, there is an existing tennis court in the rear of the property. The setbacks are delineated on the plan. The tennis court and the patio here prohibits the, you know, locating the pool in a reasonable location in the rear yard and within the setbacks.

The location of the pool was strategically located where it is now. There's many reasons why to locate the pool here, one of which is a very important one. You know, basically, this area here is the sunniest area during the day, particularly in the afternoon where statistics really show that the pool is used mostly in the afternoon. This area gets the most sun. So that was an important reason to locate it there.

It also does not require any clearing of trees to locate it there, which we felt was important as well. And providing a reasonable setback here from the existing patio to the edge of the pool at 12 feet,
we feel it's a safe distance from the paver patio here to step down and have an area just to get around and, you know, walk around it.

And lastly, it's also more visible here from the inside of the home than if you put it anywhere in this area. It's kind of out of sight and not really favorable in that area. It would require additional clearing, and it wouldn't be in a sunny portion of the yard.

So in conclusion, this variance will not create an undesirable change into the character of the neighborhood. The area variance requested is minimal. There's no adverse impact to the physical environmental conditions of the neighborhood. It's not self-created to the extent that, you know, that the tennis court and everything is already there without relocating that. And there's no other reasonable method to achieve this improvement and keeping everything intact.

I would like to urge the Board to grant the approval, close the hearing tonight. My client would like to proceed with the excavation and the work November 1st, if it's at all possible. And that's basically it.

If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them for you.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: With regard to the pavers, I guess my concern -- I appreciate the configuration of the property and obviously the sun and the whole bit, I can understand your location. Just, I'm more concerned about the lot coverage and how much of a savings it would have on your proposal if we were to remove some of the pavers around the house.

MR. MARNIKA: The proposed pavers?
member lebedin: yes.
MS. BOUTIS: which portion are we --
MEMBER LEBEDIN: I mean, you are roughly 17 percent over the allowable amount. So $I$ believe the idea being, recognizing it is important to try to keep lot coverage at the required amounts obviously for a host of reasons, seeing whether or not you can kind of limit the amount of pavers you use to achieve the 20 percent or so guideline.

MEMBER BURKETT: I think the suggestion would be to try to dial that back as much as you can without creating something that you don't want to have in your yard within reason.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: I don't think we want to redesign your plan, but I do think that, you know, it's the Board's obligation to try to see if we can minimize the variance request. I mean, you do have setback
variances that were already granted significantly for the tennis court, and we're asking for a setback variance here.

We didn't ask anyone from the public. I would like to see, before we go on, if there is anyone from the public here who would like to comment on this file?

MS. BOUTIS: I actually have a letter from my neighbor.

MR. AVRUTINE: Let the record reflect there are no responses.

MS. BOUTIS: I also have a letter from my neighbor at 35 Cedarfield stating he has no objection to the application.

MR. AVRUTINE: Would you like to submit that?
MS. BOUTIS: Yes. Thank you.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: That's the house adjacent to that side of your property?

MS. BOUTIS: Right. That's 35 Cedarfield.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: Conceptually, if you could consider maybe, because if you look at the pool and patio calculations and the coverage analysis, you have approximately --

MR. MARNIKA: So, the proposed pool patio is 1,366 square feet. That's part of the surface coverage analysis.

I would like to turn this board over to have a conceptual rendering. And when I say conceptual, the alignment is, in fact, intact. It's exactly where everything would go. It's just that there's no trees shown exactly where they are. So the darker area is natural. I overlaid aerial so you can see the buffer here.

In terms of the orientation, the design of the patio, I would just like to say, you know, 17 or 18 percent, whatever the number is, the overage, for when I look at it and advised my client in the beginning, I feel that under 20 percent is just -- it's a good starting point for a variance. You know, if my client came to me and said can we put a larger patio, you get in over 20 percent, 1 feel that's not minimal when you ask for it in terms of compliance with SEQRA and granting the variance for New York State requirements. I fee 1 that 17,18 percent is reasonable.

You'11 notice here, the alignment. There's two staircases when you come down. The first one is here. The second one is here. So there's a small walkway to get into this area. This here area is really meant to be a sun deck for lounge chairs. This area here is really not, you know, useable per se.

MS. BOUTIS: I tried to just put a small
amount here just so that we weren't stepping on the grass. I tried to actually keep it very minimal on this side and on this side. I was actually going to do a little less on this side, but the problem was, because of the steps here, I needed to have something, otherwise when you're stepping down you are stepping down onto grass to walk to this area. So I'm not certain which area I would be cutting into.

Do you know what I mean?
MR. MARNIKA: This area is minimal here. It's about 3 foot just to get around if you have to do a manual skimmer or get around the pool.

MS. BOUTIS: If I try and make this less on this side, what happens is I have steps here, so --

MR. MARNIKA: We align here with the steps.
MS. BOUTIS: Right. So if I go inward here, let's say, I'm starting my patio in the middle of the step. So, I'm not really certain where to cut.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: I'm not sure why on the grass, but you can also put a paver or some type of steps without having the whole area patio'd. There are other options you can explore. I just believe the 17 percent over the allowance, despite your thoughts, is excessive.

MEMBER BURKETT: I don't see it as a hardship
you need our help with. It's just a situation where, it would seem to me and it's my opinion, that you could dial that back and be within the code or even close to the code. But I don't accept your arguments that, you know, it's in the margins or it's de minimus. I don't accept that, with respect.

MR. MARNIKA: Understood.
What would be a reasonable percentage?
Because I'm a numbers guy when I look at calculations. MEMBER BURKETT: My name is Newton, so I'm definitely.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: If you could take a look at it, and obviously using a similar type of stepping stone that you have in your tennis court, transition it. If you can use that as transition down to the pool patio, you can bring it down to somewhere around 15 percent, between 12 and 15 percent. I think that would be something that would be more palatable to the Board. There is a lot of patio there already, between the house and the tennis court.

MEMBER BURKETT: You've got two acres of property, but you've got a lot going on.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: It's also a very unusual lot. It's a pie-shaped lot.

MEMBER BURKETT: Otherwise, we wouldn't be
discussing it if it were a simple case.
MR. MARNIKA: Would it be acceptable to the Board if we look at other areas, for example -- and I have to again check with my client, I'm just trying to get an idea here -- something that is not so useable that's existing, if we'11 be able to pull some of that out and --

MEMBER BURKETT: Remove that and grass it over?

MR. MARNIKA: Yeah.
member lebedin: of course.
MR. MARNIKA: Not that it's this area.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: It's just the overall usage.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: That's probably 150 square feet over here.

MEMBER BURKETT: I don't care how you get to the number, we need to protect the code where we can.

MS. BOUTIS: That's fine. That's doable.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: You are asking us for a concession. We are asking for one in return.

MS. BOUTIS: Absolutely.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: And understand, the tennis court is over 8,000 square feet of your coverage. So that creates a separate problem for you to come to the calculation to make it --

MS. BOUTIS: I know. And we've only been in that house for a few years, so obviously the court was already there. It's just kind of in an awkward position on the property. You know, you look at it and you can't help but think to yourself, gee, I would have, and I'm not even a designer, but I would have designed it and placed it differently. But, you know, it is what it is, and we don't want to rip it up. But I'll be more than happy to work with that, absolutely, and trim it down, yes.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: I appreciate it.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: Thank you.
MR. AVRUTINE: I would just like to mark the letter dated October 9, 2017 from the resident at 35 Cedarfield Road that the applicant submitted as Applicant's Exhibit Number 1 for the record.

MEMBER BURKETT: And I would state for the record that there is no biased on the Board against tennis players or tennis courts.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: In order to continue to move this case along, we have no issues with the setbacks, correct?

MEMBER BURKETT: I think it is what it is.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: Recognizing the configuration of the property, we are fine.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: would the Board consider approving the application if they're able to put it at 15 percent or less?

MEMBER BURKETT: Fifteen percent is kind of high, actually.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: I think based on the circumstances, and understanding you certainly want to have chairs around the patio and you need that space, I don't think it's unreasonable, again, based on proximity.

MEMBER BURKETT: If you think it's not unreasonable, I'11 defer to you.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: I think if we do 15 percent, it's a reasonable --

MEMBER BURKETT: From 17 percent?
CHAIRMAN MOHR: It's closer to 18.
MR. MARNIKA: I believe it's actually
18.3 percent.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: Taking all the things into consideration, I think that it works for me.

MEMBER BURKETT: I'11 defer to you.
member lebedin: okay.
MR. AVRUTINE: May we have a motion to close the public hearing?

MEMBER BURKETT: Moved.

MR. AVRUTINE: By Member Burkett.
May I have a second?
member lebedin: Second.
MR. AVRUTINE: Member Lebedin.
Al1 in favor?
CHAIRMAN MOHR: Aye.
MEMBER BURKETT: Aye.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: Aye.
MR. AVRUTINE: Let the record reflect that this matter is deemed Type II under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act.

And a motion on the application?
CHAIRMAN MOHR: Motion to approve.
MR. AVRUTINE: On the condition that the lot coverage be reduced --

CHAIRMAN MOHR: Is no greater --
MR. AVRUTINE: Is no greater than 15 percent.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: You're saying approving --
MR. AVRUTINE: A maximum of --
MEMBER LEBEDIN: Twenty-three percent.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: If you are not in favor -- I'm taking all the conditions into consideration. It's not just -- Lou's a numbers guy. I look at these land issues all the time, and I feel that based on the lot conditions, while there is a lot of coverage, the tennis
court is 8,000 square feet, they are trying to put a pool in, and the place is reasonable, the neighbor has no objection.
member lebedin: I don't have an issue with that. I worry about the precedent setting of getting something where the lot itself doesn't, I think, exacerbate the coverage issue to the point where such an allowance should be provided.

I guess what I was prepared to do is allow them to come back with a suggestion. I'm not sure, does our deferring that element, assuming you proceed to go forward with the pool in that area, slow down the effort, if that's a concern to you?

MEMBER BURKETT: Can you go ahead and build the pool while we figure out --

MEMBER LEBEDIN: Is the landscaping and the decking going to affect your ability to move forward at this point?

MR. AVRUTINE: I don't --
CHAIRMAN MOHR: I don't think the pool and not the patio and all the site plan that ties into it.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: So you can't?
CHAIRMAN MOHR: I would think not.
MR. AVRUTINE: I'd have to consult with the building inspector, but I don't believe so.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: Right now the pool pool patio is 1,366 square feet out of the 20,000 square feet of usage. So that's approximately 6 and-a-half percent of the total usage. So you're willing to shave --

MEMBER BURKETT: Just over three percent.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: So you're basically saying 50 feet, 43 feet.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: Right. I'm looking at the areas where they could possibly shave, which it could be in the west side of the pool, if you can just eliminate that. And this looks like it's a 12-foot measurement on the south side.

MEMBER BURKETT: what about the pavers near the tennis court entrance?

CHAIRMAN MOHR: If you remove that, it takes care a lot of their issue as well. It's probably another 150 --

MEMBER BURKETT: Right. I think that's kind of what we were discussing. That's what she seemed to be open to doing. That gets us closer to 10 percent. I just think that 3 percent is not much of a concession. You say okay, we11, 3 percent.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: I understand.
MEMBER BURKETT: To me, that seems a token concession, where I think Lou and I would prefer to have
something more substantial, as much as I would like to defer to you.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: Do you want to make it subject to removing of the patio pavers as well as a reduction or do you want to see another plan?

MEMBER BURKETT: I don't want to tell them how to get to 10 percent.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: Then 10 percent is a number? MEMBER LEBEDIN: That's fine.

MR. AVRUTINE: That would be 22 percent coverage.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: Right.
As long as it's 22 percent or less, they can go forward with the approvals. To the extent it exceeds that, we need to have another conversation.

MR. AVRUTINE: If the Board is going to act on the application, it would be granting it with a maximum of 22 percent. Anything other than that, could not be approved. So it would be 22 percent or less, whatever configuration the applicant chooses.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: I'm happy with that.
Are you?
MEMBER BURKETT: Yes.
MR. AVRUTINE: So, there's a motion to approve the side yard variances as submitted, as well as a
motion to grant the total surface coverage provided it does not exceed 22 percent of the lot area.

MEMBER LEBEDIN: Correct.
MR. AVRUTINE: And who is making that motion? MEMBER LEBEDIN: Yes.

MR. AVRUTINE: Member Lebedin.
MEMBER BURKETT: I'11 second.
MR. AVRUTINE: Second by Member Burkett.
All in favor?
CHAIRMAN MOHR: Aye.
MEMBER BURKETT: Aye.
MEMBER LEBEDIN: Aye.
MR. AVRUTINE: Application approved.
MR. MARNIKA: We have a small issue.
If we dial this back to 22 percent, unless I'm doing something wrong with the calculator, that means the whole patio has to come out.

MS. BOUTIS: Un7ess we put in the numbers wrong.

MR. MARNIKA: we are trying to get this percentage dialed back from 23.6 to 22 . So the number is 1.6 in percent form. when you put it in decimal place and you divide that, when you times it over the lot area --

CHAIRMAN MOHR: what is the square footage?

MR. MARNIKA: It's basically the whole patio.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: 1,300 feet?
MR. MARNIKA: Yes.
CHAIRMAN MOHR: What he's saying is -- this is probably only 150 feet here, the tennis court patio? MR. MARNIKA: You know, I have that tied together into the tennis court.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: If you had to estimate it based on the scale, what would you say?

MEMBER LEBEDIN: You would be allowed 19,180 versus 20,588 is what is currently requested. So the difference would be 1,400, which is your patio.

MR. MARNIKA: The original proposal would have taken out about 523 square feet, the initial Board's reaction to get it from 23.6 to 23 percent, that's 23 percent. So that would take out about over 500 square feet of the patio from the current proposal.

MS. BOUTIS: I'11 be glad to lessen this portion of the patio. You know, I can shave off. I'11 be glad to do that to make this smaller.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: Just remember, Newt, that 500 square feet is like, it's almost a third. I'm trying to be a practical approach, not a numbers approach, because when you factor in the numbers, sometimes it's not achievable.

MEMBER BURKETT: We understand.
(Pause in the proceedings.)
MR. AVRUTINE: As a legal matter, what the issue is, the Board has already voted on the application, so it was approved with a maximum of 22 percent surface coverage.

Since you're coming back anyway, you can, as part of that application, file it at the same time and request to reopen this case to consider whatever amended plan you are going to submit or whatever percentage it comes in, presumably lower than you have today but not as low as 22 percent, and then the Board can consider it. But as of now, the Board already acted on the application and approved it as the Board stated it. So it's done, essentially.

MEMBER BURKETT: The point is, we are willing to listen to an alternative suggestion on your part, and when you come back on the shed, then, as Mr. Avrutine explained, you can bring up that issue as well.

MR. AVRUTINE: You can speak to Nancy Popper about it. It will be an application to reopen this matter. And if you have any questions, you can call me.

CHAIRMAN MOHR: If you choose to do so. If you can work it out, you can work it out. If not, Howard is giving you an alternative on how to present a
new plan, essentially. MS. BOUTIS: Okay.

MEMBER BURKETT: As a practical matter, could they begin work on the pool because they already have the approval?

That just means that how much of the lot that you cover with the pavers is really what remains to be decided. So again, as a practical matter, of course as a legal matter, you have now the authority, the variance to go and build the pool. So that's not going to hold you up, if you were questioning that.

MR. AVRUTINE: I think as a practical matter what's going to happen is that they're going to have to submit a revised plan even to get a permit for the pool, because it would have to comply with the condition of the 22 percent maximum surface coverage. So they would not be allowed to.

And then what essentially that would require is them preparing that plan and yet another plan to come back before the Board. But that's the applicant's choice as to how they want to handle that.

CERTIFIED THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE TRANSCRIPT OF THE ORIGINAL STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES IN THIS CASE.

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[^0]:    RONALD H. KOENIG Official Court Reporter

