



Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission
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www.BH-EC.org

MEMO

April 17, 2021

TO: Zoning Board

Subject: 53 Watchung Blvd, Block 4806, Lot 17, Zone R20

Findings of Fact:

- Applicant proposes to construct an in-ground pool
- Groundwater recharge appears to be greater than 12 inches a year.
- Slope ranges from zero at the front to up to 15% at the rear.
- Property does not appear to be in a flood zone, riparian zone or wetlands.

| Coverage | % | % Allowed for zone | Over, under or = |
|----------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Existing Structures | 12.29 | 15 | Under |
| Existing Other | 12.52 | 10 | Over |
| Total existing lot | 24.81 | 25 | Under |
| Total proposed structures | 12.29 | 15 | Under |
| Total proposed other items | 21.56 | 10 | Over |
| Total proposed impervious | 33.85 | 25 | Over |

- General Construction and Design & Grounds and Landscaping Considerations are included.
- Trees are not shown on the plan. Applicant does not indicate what is to be done to protect trees and their roots.
- DEP has adopted new rules requiring green infrastructure to reduce pollution and flooding from stormwater runoff.
- Applications requesting variances are also requesting increases in impervious surface that exceed the maximum allowed. Unless efforts are made to retain stormwater runoff on properties, stormwater runoff can lead to increased flooding downhill.
- The drawing shows a 500 gallon seepage tank for the pool area, but does not show where overflow drains to.

Recommendations:

- Because total proposed impervious surface exceeds the maximum allowed, the Commission recommends that the application be denied.
- If the Board decides to approve the application, the Commission recommends the applicant be required to retain other stormwater runoff on the property with green infrastructure. For example, the existing grading implies the seepage tank may be capturing run off from the lawn area and deck area. Perhaps the seepage tank size need to be increased. The applicant should be required to submit a more comprehensive stormwater plan to be approved by the Township Engineer. Disconnect any downspouts or sump pumps from the street and connect them to rain gardens or vegetative swales. Information on rain gardens can be found at http://water.rutgers.edu/Rain_Gardens/RGWebsite/rinfo.html.