



**TOWNSHIP of HOPEWELL
MERCER COUNTY**

**201 WASHINGTON CROSSING – PENNINGTON ROAD
TITUSVILLE, NEW JERSEY 08560-1410**

PROJECT / APPLICATION

BLOCK:

LOT:

ADDRESS:

PROJECT NAME:

REVIEW REPORTS

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TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

201 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, New Jersey 08560-1410
Phone 609.737.0605 Ext. 6280

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hopewell Township Zoning Board of Adjustment

CC: Applicant

FROM: James Hutzemann PE, PP - Board Engineer 

DATE: September 16, 2022

RE: **Engineering Review #1 – ZBA 22-10**
Sheetal Dewan & Siddharth Kumar
Bulk Var. – Home Addition; R-100 Well and/or Septic
Blocks 74, Lot 56; 56 East Welling Avenue

I. Application Submission Items

The following documents were received by the Township for review:

- A. Zoning Board Application Form EZ, with required fees, escrow and authorization forms.
- B. Lot Coverage Calculation Worksheet, dated 8/4/2022.
- C. Plan entitled “Additions and Alterations to the Kumar Residence, 56 East Welling Avenue, Block 74, Lot 56, Hopewell Township, Mercer County, New Jersey”, Prepared by Douglas R. Schotland, Architect, dated 8/10/2022, consisting of 9 sheets.

II. Completeness

The application was deemed complete on September 16, 2022.

III. Description

The property in question is a 20,240± square foot parcel located in the R-100 Well and/or Septic Zoning District. The property is served by an on-site individual septic system and well. The property is a corner lot and contains frontage on East Welling Avenue and Curlis Avenue. The property is improved with a single-family residential structure, containing approximately 1,600 square feet, and a paved driveway providing access from Curlis Avenue. There are no wetlands or environmentally sensitive areas located on the property. The property is located in the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commissions Zone B. Surrounding properties contain single-family residential structures of similar sizes.

The application proposes the construction of an addition and alterations to the existing dwelling. No new motor vehicle surfaces are proposed and no new impervious surfaces are within the proposed scope of work.

IV. Zoning

A. The property is located within the R-100 Well and/or Septic Zoning District and required to meet Section 17-159j of the Ordinance. Compliance with the applicable standards for the Zoning District is summarized as follows:

Bulk Requirements	Required	Existing	Proposed
Min. lot area (sf)	80,000 sf	20,240 sf	No Change (e)
Min. lot width (ft)	150'	150'	No Change
Min. lot depth (ft)	200'	135' (e)	No Change (e)
Min. front yard (ft)	75'	39.6 (e)	No Change (e)***
Min. side yard (ft)	40'	39.7' (e)	No Change (e)***
Min. rear yard (ft)	50'	54.8'	No Change
Max. Building Height (ft)	35'	21.5'	25.5'
Max. lot coverage (%)	15%	18.9% (e)	No Change (e)***

(e): Existing non-conformity

(V): Proposed Non-Conformity

***: Proposed improvement does not change setback but requires variance for the expansion of an existing non-conforming structure

B. Variances

a. A review of the existing conditions on the property reveal the following non-conformities that are proposed to remain with the current application:

i. The property does not meet the R-100 Well and/or Septic Zoning District requirements for the minimum lot area, lot depth, front yard setback, side yard, setback and maximum lot coverage. These are existing non-conformities with no changes proposed.

b. The proposed application creates the following variance:

i. Although the proposed addition and alterations do not change the existing, non-conforming bulk standards, variances are required for front and side yard setbacks as they are an expansion of an existing non-conforming structure.

C. The applicant should provide testimony in support of the variance. Applicants may seek a variance from bulk zoning requirements under one of the following two statutory provisions of the NJ Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.:

a. C-1 Variances – Property “Hardship” Variances. The Board of Adjustment has the power to grant a bulk variance if, due to the unusual and unique features of the property - including the existing layout of buildings and improvements - denying the variance would impose an undue hardship. The applicant must also satisfy what is referred to as the “negative criteria”, by showing that a) the

variance can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good, and, b) that the granting of a variance will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the municipal master plan and ordinances.

- b. C-2 Variances – “Flexible c”. The Board of Adjustment may grant a bulk variance if the Board determines that the benefits of granting the variance outweigh the detriments of noncompliance with zone requirements. The Board must determine that the purposes of zoning (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2), such as health, safety and welfare, or promotion of a desirable visual environment, will be advanced by a deviation from zoning ordinance requirements and that the benefits of the deviation will substantially outweigh any detriment. The “negative criteria” described above for c1 variances must also be satisfied.

V. Comments

- A. The application indicates that there is no increase in impervious coverage. Testimony shall be provided to confirm that there are no plans to increase impervious coverage on the property. It appears that the proposed front porch is slightly larger than existing. Any increase in impervious coverage would be subject to compliance with the Township’s Stormwater Control Ordinance, which would require treatment for all lot coverage beyond the allowable 15%.
- B. Testimony shall be provided regarding the existing number of bedrooms and the proposed number of bedrooms and whether the existing septic system is appropriately sized. This is subject to review and approval by the Hopewell Township Health Department.

VI. Outside Agency Approvals

- A. The following additional approvals or letters of no interest will be required:
 1. Hopewell Township Health Department

VII. Recommended Conditions of Approval

- A. Should this application be approved, we recommend, at a minimum, the following conditions of approval:
 1. Continued payment of any required application and escrow fees.

TOWNSHIP of HOPEWELL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hopewell Township Zoning Board

FROM: Glen Belnay, Ph. D, PP, AICP, CEP
Part-Time Registered Environmental Health Specialist

DATE: September 21, 2022

SUBJECT: Dewan/Kumar Addition
56 East Welling Ave
Block 74, Lot 56
Case 22-10



The applicants Sheetal Dewan and Siddharth Kumar propose the construction of a second floor master bedroom addition, a remodeled front porch and a second floor sitting room to their existing residence located at 56 East Welling Ave, Block 74 Lot 56. The subject property is served by well and septic. The septic system was designed by Engineering and Land Use Planning (E & LP) of High Bridge, New Jersey in July 2019 and was recently certified to be in working order in April 2021 by Lewis Home Inspection. Given the small lot size, the well is only 80 feet from the septic system rather than 100 feet as required by the New Jersey Individual Sewage Disposal Code. The septic system was designed for a 4 bedroom residence and the septic inspection and subsequent certification of its working condition reported that the residence was a 4 bedroom. The Hopewell Township Tax Assessor's records have the residence as a 4 bedroom with 2 bedrooms downstairs and 2 bedrooms upstairs. A conversation with Mr. Kumar during my visit to the site on September 19, 2022 confirmed that the proposed addition would result in the residence becoming 5 bedrooms. Mr. Kumar was advised, at that time that the additional bedroom would require the expansion of the septic system. My site visit confirmed however, that given the small lot size and already nonconforming well setback from the existing septic disposal field there is no location on the site that can provide for an enlargement. As such, the applicant's proposal must be modified in some way to preclude the creation of a 5th bedroom.

TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Zoning Board of Adjustment Members

FROM: Environmental Commission Members

DATE: September 22, 2022

RE: Case No. 22-10: **Dewan/Kumar Addition**
Block 74, Lot 56; 56 East Welling Avenue;
R-100 Zoning District
Bulk variance

We are writing to inform you of our concerns regarding the subject application, which is scheduled to be reviewed by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

During our Environmental Commission meeting on September 20, 2022, members Mike Aucott, Rex Parker, Mark Bean, Jim Gambino, Andrew Plunkett, Nora Sirbaugh, and Vanessa Sandom reviewed and discussed the subject application together with Jim Hutzelmann.

We have no environmental concerns for the proposed project, although we do note that the existing property exceeds the allowable lot coverage area for this zone.

Respectfully submitted: Jim Gambino, Secretary

cc: J. Hutzelmann, U. Purandare, EC Members



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

If one sprinkler goes off, do they all go off?

Sprinklers activate independently; only the sprinkler(s) closest to the fire will activate. In most home fires only one sprinkler is needed to control a fire.

If I burn the toast will the sprinkler activate?

Fire sprinklers do not respond to smoke; they respond to the high temperature of a fire – about 135° to 165°F. Smoke caused by cooking or cigars cannot and will not cause a sprinkler to activate.

Will my sprinklers leak?

Sprinkler mishaps are generally less likely and less severe than home plumbing system problems.

Is post-fire water damage from sprinklers worse than fire damage would be without sprinklers?

Fire damage and water from high-pressure fire hoses is far greater. A residential sprinkler flows 10-26 gallons of water per minute, for approximately 10 minutes (or less if the fire department turns the water off sooner). An uncontrolled fire will cause far greater fire destruction and smoke damage, requiring a tremendous amount of water from fire department hoses – more than 10 times the water per minute. The property loss in a sprinklered home fire is typically only a fraction of the loss in an unsprinklered home fire.

Won't the fire department be able to put out the fire and save my things?

A 9-12 minute fire department response time is considered good in most communities. In that time, an uncontrolled fire will have grown and spread through the home, causing tremendous smoke and fire damage before the fire department can get there.

Will my sprinklers freeze in the winter?

Freezing is not a problem with proper installation. The national sprinkler installation standard provides guidance for proper installation in cold regions, including appropriate additional insulation and anti-freeze usage.

Since I have smoke alarms why do I need fire sprinklers?

Smoke alarms are essential in every home, but they can only detect a fire. To be effective, residents must be willing and able to respond quickly to the alarm. Fire sprinklers detect the fire and automatically control or extinguish it, paving the way for residents to make a safe escape – and also protecting property and valuables. The best protection from fire is having both smoke alarms and a fire sprinkler system.

Are sprinklers allowed by my homeowner's insurance?

Most insurance companies provide financial incentives to encourage homeowners to protect their homes from fire loss. HFSC research shows that fire sprinkler discounts range from 5% to 30% off homeowner policy premiums. Insurance rates and discounts vary by state. Check with your insurer and shop around for the best discount.

Are fire sprinklers expensive?

The cost to install home fire sprinklers varies. In areas where competition is brisk, sprinklers are well below \$1 per square foot; in areas without many residential installers the cost is higher. On average, a good rule of thumb is about 1- 1.5 percent of the total cost of new construction.

Will fire sprinklers ruin my décor?

Residential fire sprinklers are actually smaller than most recessed lighting. Unlike sprinklers in warehouses and public buildings, residential sprinklers are designed to blend into ceiling and wall paint and can be completely concealed beneath plates.

Are fire sprinklers difficult to maintain?

No maintenance is needed. Regular flow tests should be conducted and homeowners can do these simple tests themselves or have the sprinkler contractor do it every year or so. It's a good idea to check sprinklers and pipes occasionally to be sure nothing is obstructing potential water flow. Water valves should be routinely checked or kept padlocked in the "turned on" position.