RULS - AD - 1978-60 4/19/78

Stenographic Transcript of Order to Show Cause

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SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY LAW DIVISION-SOMERSET COUNTY 2 DOCKET NO. L-36896-70 3 ALLAN-DEANE CORPORATION, 4 et als, STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPT Plaintiffs, 5 0F VS. 6 ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE TOWNSHIP OF BEDMINSTER, 7 Defendant. 8 Place: 9 Somerset County Courthouse Somerville, New Jersey 10 Date: 11 April 19, 1978 12 RULS - AD - 1978 - 60 13 BEFORE: HON. B. THOMAS LEAHY, J.C.C. 14 TRANSCRIPT ORDERED BY: 15 HENRY A. HILL, ESQ. 16 17 APPEARANCES: 18 HENRY A. HILL, ESQ. (Mason, Griffin & Pierson, Esqs.) 19 For Plaintiff Allan-Deane Corporation. 20 GARY D. GORDON, ESQ. (American Civil Liberties Union) 21 For Plaintiff Cieswick. 22 ANN NELSON, ESQ. (American Civil Liberties Union)

For Plaintiff Cieswick.

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ALFRED L. FERGUSON, ESQ. (McCarter & English, Esqs.) For Township of Bedminster.  ROSLYN HARRISON, ESQ. (McCarter & English, Esqs.) For Township of Bedminster.  EDNARD D. BOWLBY, ESQ. For Township of Bedminster.  Bedminster.  Marian V. Balerno, C.S.R. 1913 Scenic Drive Trenton, NJ 08828	1	APPEARANCES (Continued):	
For Township of Bedminster.  ROSLYN HARRISON, ESQ. (McCarter & English, Esqs.) For Township of Bedminster.  EDWARD D. BOWLBY, ESQ. For Township of Bedminster.  Bedminster.  Marian V. Balerno, C.S.R. 1913 Scenic Drive Trenton, NJ 08828		ALFRED L. FERGUSON, ESQ.	
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Trenton, NJ 08828			C.S.R.
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THE COURT: 1 May I apologize for keeping 2 vou waiting. I had some matrimonial matters I 3 had to handle in Judge Imbriani's room. Counsel, I'll be happy to hear you on your application. 5 MR. GORDON: My name is Gary Gordon. and I represent the Cieswick Plaintiffs. I will 7 submit to the Court my substitution of attorney 8 I would like to move to have Ann Nelson form. 9 admitted as counsel pro hoc vice. She is an 10 admitted attorney from Pennsylvania and is the 11 staff counsel of the American Civil Liberties 12 Union. She's not yet admitted to the New Jersey 13 Bar, but hopefully will be soon. 14 THE COURT: Is there any objection by 15 any of the other parties to Ms. Nelson appearing 16 pro hoc vice? 17 MR. FERGUSON: No, Sir. 18 MR. HILL: No, Sir. 19 THE COURT: The Court is happy to grant 20 that request. 21 MS. NELSON: Thank you, Your Honor. 22 THE COURT: It's obvious that there 23 have to be some procedural ground rules determined 24 before this matter proceeds, and I would like to 25 hear discussion by counsel on that point.

Mr. Hill, this is your application for an order to show cause. I'll hear you first.

MR. HILL: Your Honor, there are two procedural matters which we believe should be settled by the Court before this application proceeds. Both matters are purely in the discretion of the Court. In other words, there's no case law that we can find that would dictate that you should adopt a certain procedure because it's an order to show cause.

Under Rule 1:10-5 Your Honor sets the ground rules. The first question to be decided is who has the burden of going forward. That is different from the burden of proof. We acknowledge -- Allan-Deane acknowledges that we have the burden of proof of showing, first of all, that Bedminster Township has not complied with previous orders of this Court. And secondly, that after we have made that showing to the Court's satisfaction, that specific corporate relief should be granted. And as Your Honor knows from reviewing the affidavits, Allan-Deane acknowledges that it's asking this Court to bestow a private benefit on the Allan-Deane Corporation and under a rule of law which talks about public need and public good, and Allan-

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Deane is willing and able to shoulder its fair share of the public burden in the form of providing a certain percentage of the housing on the site for least cost or low and moderate.

On the issue of the burden of moving forward, we contend that since there are unrebutted affidavits on file with the Court, that we have established, at this point in time, a prima facie case, and that rather than have our witnesses, all of whom are sitting in the court, go forward and explain to the Court what their affidavit said and what they present and be subjected to cross-examination, that the most procedurally expeditious manner of handling this case would be for Your Honor to determine that Bedminster Township has the burden of moving forward. In other words, that they should meet the prima facie case that we have established in our affidavits, and then we should have a chance to rebut.

The second procedural issue to be determined by the Court, the first one being who has the burden of moving forward, is whether or not this case should be, in effect, bifurcated or tried in two parts. We contend that the most reasonable manner of trying the case, the manner

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that will result in the most intelligible record is for the Court first to hear evidence on the question of whether or not Bedminster has complied with the previous orders of this Court. And then after that issue has been determined, assuming it has been determined in plaintiff's favor, to hear and decide how to proceed with respect to specific corporate relief. We're asking Your Honor's indulgence in bringing forward witnesses to testify only on the zoning ordinance which Bedminster has enacted, allegedly, in response to Your Honor's previous orders and to have the right to call them later if Your Honor determines favorably on that issue on what we plan to do on our property and why we'll do it and why we believe it's feasible and how we can provide our share of the public need for housing in the lower income spectrums of the population.

Once again, this is completely at Your Honor's discretion. We think that it's the logical way to proceed. We think that it will protect the Court's order, that conceptually, it will be easiest on you and easiest on us if we can focus, first of all, on the one issue, has Bedminster complied, rather than perhaps waste the Court's time in

talking about our plan for development prior to a determination or at least the presentation of evidence on that issue. In other words, we strongly urge the Court to, in effect, allow us to bifurcate, and I believe that the order to show cause, as presented and as signed provides for that bifurcation. It says the Court will hear two issues, and it spells those issues out. We'd like to be able to just call the witness on the one issue first and have the right to recall them later to talk about our plan if and when Your Honor decides that Bedminster has not complied.

Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Ms. Nelson, do you want to be heard?

MS. NELSON: Your Honor, I don't think we have too much to add to what Mr. Hill has already stated on the record. We essentially adopt his position on both issues. The bifurcation issue, I would just urge upon the Court that it's probably the most sufficient use of the Court's time to bifurcate the matter at this point, and also not to muddy the waters in an already very complex case.

On the issue of who has the obligation to

go forward at this point, essentially, I adopt
Mr. Hill's arguments, Your Honor, that Bedminster
should go forward. I would also urge upon the
Court that the plaintiffs in this action, I think,
have been most patient. We've been waiting for
years and years and years at this point, and a
prima facie case has been made out by way of
affidavit.

Defendants had ample time to file affidavits, counter-affidavits. They failed to do that. And I think they have the obligation, at this point, to go forward with their case.

THE COURT: Mr. Ferguson.

MR. FERGUSON: May it please the Court, the utility of not bifurcating would be that the enormity of the Allan-Deane site plan going for 1,840 plus units on grounds that their own expert who testified shouldn't have more than 540 plus at the first trial, would, apparently and hopefully, get rid of Allan-Deane as a plaintiff forever.

I would think that would accomplish much more than a staged trial process. As long as Allan-Deane can try for the pot of gold at the end of the Madison Township rainbow in the terms of a

building permit, I think they will be here
taking the Court's time.

I think the Court should hear testimony on whether the Allan-Deane proposal of 1,840 plus units is appropriate for their ground. The same witnesses will be testifying about the same issues, and to my mind, it would be better to hear it all at once.

As to the first issue of who should go forward, I think the affidavits are unrebutted for two reasons. One is that even on the plaintiffs affidavits, it is clear that the Township did rezone. It rezoned for density in excess of that specified by the trial court and the Somerset County Master Plan. It rezoned in locations specified as appropriate by this Court in the prior case and by the Somerset County Master Plan, and it rezoned in numbers sufficient for -- there are 1,582 units in the current Master Plan Zone, in excess of five dwelling units per acre, subject to the 300 unit limitation in the ordinance.

And as to that limitation, it's our position, and we will so testify, that that is sufficient a staging mechanism and is not intended to be a limitation. It's spelled out in the Master

Plan that if the units are built and if the zoning scheme works out, the number will be raised. In point of fact, there are 1,582 units zoned in the R-20 zone and in the CRC cluster concept. So I think the simple question of whether Bedminster Township has complied must be answered in the affirmative.

Now, in the traditional rule, 1:10-5 hearing, that's all the Court is called upon to determine, has a defendant complied. Have you signed the deed. Have you transferred the bank account to your ex-wife who needs the alimony. Have you done this, have you done that. That kind of determination can be made usually on affidavits or with minimal testimony. I think it's important to note that Rule 4:6-7 deals with summary proceedings. If it's a summary proceeding which can be determined on affidavit or minimal testimony, it's appropriate to do so. Minimal testimony is defined in the Rules at page 795 as testimony which should not exceed one day.

If we had that kind of issue before the Court, I would agree with Mr. Hill that it would be appropriate for us to go first and that, indeed, it could be determined on both affidavits and what

minimal testimony the Court wanted to hear.

Unfortunately, however, this case is just not a 1:10-5 hearing. It is a full plenary hearing on whether the constitutional obligations of Mount Laurel and Madison Township have been met. And in that context, the Township is prepared to present testimony on a number of issues.

And the other reason why there are not counter-affidavits on file is that it took a great deal of time in terms of consulting with the planner who prepared the ordinance, other planners and cur clients, the planning Board and the Township officials to determine exactly issues we were prepared to put testimony forward on, what issues we were prepared to concede to Mr. Hill, what items we claim Mr. Hill is wrong concerning in his affidavits, and what issues are legal issues and don't require testimony at all.

I have an extensive memorandum which we prepared yesterday, and I can recite each of those issues to the Court at this time if the Court wishes. I won't do so unless the Court would ask me.

THE COURT: Not on that point.

MR. FERGUSON: Our basic position is that we are prepared to justify our multi-family housing

and the basic numbers of units provided for in the ordinance. I think they're in keeping in the prior decision in this case by this Court, in keeping with Mount Laurel and in keeping with Madison Township.

The witnesses whom we will present include the following, and I specify these for the guidance of the Court in adopting the ground rules: Candace Ashmun, Chairman of the Environmental Commission and a member of the Zoning Committee that did the Master Plan and the ordinance; Robert Graff, Chairman of the Planning Board; Charles Agle, the professional planner who was a consultant during the process. Perhaps some others from the Planning Board, although I'm not quite sure about that at this time.

In addition, we have two additional witnesses, Richard Cappola and Peter Durham, professional planners who will testify as to the appropriateness of the response of the ordinance to Madison Township and Mount Laurel in terms of density, location and numbers. As to issue number two, the appropriateness of the plaintiffs' site plan and their proposal for 1,840 plus units. We will have additional experts. At this time, I cannot

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tell the Court exactly who they will be. The problem is that the town has never seen the site plan except in the papers that were served upon.

As the Court will note, that site plan is dated December 1977, and the first time the town officials saw it was when it was served in late March. I have consulted with a number of planners on it, and they tell me that in order to testify, they must have access to and see the backup documents which were attached to it. And indeed, some of the exhibits I didn't even receive. Some of them I may have from the Bernards Township litigation, but, at this point, I don't think I received a full set.

I understand there are large blowup maps and additional data which support the site plan, and before we can present extensive testimony on that, our people will have, of course, to review it.

I think, Your Honor, that what we have here is a full plenary trial on a constitutional issue and not simply a 1:10-5 hearing. Whether we complied with the court order by rezoning must be answered in the affirmative. The question is does that stand up to constitutional scrutiny. I think it's appropriate for this Court to follow the

suggestion in the <u>Curtis Point</u> case at 138 N.J.

Super, page 51, the schedule "A" pretrial conference or some kind of a proceeding where the attorneys will specify the issues to be tried, the fact witnesses to be presented, the expert witnesses to be presented. And perhaps we can mark maps and documents to save the time both of counsel and the Court. I would conceive of that to be a far preferable method of proceeding rather than just call either one of us to go forward.

Should the Court, however, do so, I am prepared to put on witnesses starting today, but I will inform the Court that in my judgment, our presentation will suffer because of the time constraints which I think will be eliminated if we follow my suggestion which is to have an orderly procedure.

MR. HILL: Your Honor, may I just respond on two points.

We also are prepared to go forward. All the witnesses who signed affidavits are sitting in the courtroom. Now, we've been over it, and we believe we are prepared.

I'd just like to answer one of the points or the main point that Mr. Ferguson makes which is

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that the issues here are complex, and he says because they're complex, they shouldn't be under Rule 1:10-5, and it should be scheduled at some later date after going through full trial proceedings.

I'd just like to point out to the Court that the issues really are only whether or not Bedminster has complied, that our affidavits say that they've actually provided for less multifamily units at lower densities than the ordinance previously invalidated by this Court. We can show you that today if the issues are complex, they are complex because Bedminster has made them complex by adopting a Byzantine ordinance that is almost unintelligible, but which we have spent many hours trying to understand and trying to work with. we can show you some plans of what they say a developer must do if they want to develop in Bedminster. You'll see from the affidavits that not many people develop in Bedminster. There are 8 or 12 building permits issued in the last eight years, less than 20.

The only reason that this case might be complex is that the ordinance is maze-like and very complex, but the issues before the Court

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aren't complex. The issues are compliance or non-compliance that Bedminster has not, in effect, even attempted to comply, and their overall intention insofar as intentions can be interpreted from the officials of the governing body and the Planning Board is that there be no development in Bedminster Township.

THE COURT: Well, the point remains that I have diametrically opposed assertions by counsel as to what the ordinance does or does not permit, the densities that will or will not result from the ordinance. And it may be necessary for us to progress carefully through that Byzantine labyrinth before we can decide who is accurate in those assertions. So the matter remains complex.

MR. HILL: Complex because they wrote an ordinance that is complex.

application for what has been called, I believe most in New Jersey, relief to litigant. The relief is sought even in the order to show cause in two aspects; one, a declaration of invalidity of a municipal zoning ordinance and plan; and second, a request for extraordinary relief of Court direction for issuance of permit for development to one of the

plaintiffs.

The original litigation in this matter was extraordinarily complex. In the Court's original decision, a distinction was found between the bulk of the Township and the more developed corridor in the eastern portion of the Township, a distinction which, at least, this Court found based on the fact in the record rather important ecological considerations, water quality, concepts, etc.

On reconsideration after the issuance of the decision in the Mount Laurel case by the State Supreme Court, this Court realized that that decision did not permit the trial court to draw such a distinction, at least not on the basis on which the Court then drew it on the proofs before it.

The Supreme Court, having inserted a footnote in its opinion in Mount Laurel, expressly holding that there was no statutory scheme, at that time, requiring any compatibility with the County Master Plan. The law by legislative enactment has shifted somewhat since then on that issue. This Court will want to know to what extent the new zoning ordinance does or does not

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comply with the County Master Plan. The Court will be interested in knowing whether or not the new zoning ordinance is, at least in part, necessitated by the ecological proofs that were presented a few years ago. As I mentioned a few minutes ago, we will have to work our way through the ordinance to see what it does or does not permit and to what extent. I'm satisfied, in effect, that there are a number of issues that will require introduction of substantial testimony before they can be resolved and put in shape for ultimate resolution. I'm sure by the Court, different than this one, we have a certain obligation to keep things orderly and organized for those review panels. I, therefore, agree with the defendant that a pretrial conference and order is warranted and needed in this case. I, therefore, schedule a pretrial, however, in the near future. Of course, when this Court uses that phrase, that means 30 days, not tomorrow.

In light of that, I question whether it would be appropriate, at this point, to rule on the bifurcation aspect or even on the burden of producing evidence. That might better be resolved at the pretrial conference. It could be one of the

issues listed for determination on that date. I don't want to delay discovery. If I'm going to order a pretrial conference, I'd just as soon start

Who wants discovery and of what, and we might as well go the same order.

MR. HILL: I understand that the defendants have contacted four planners. Both of them have refused to testify on behalf of this ordinance. Some have submitted reports. I would like copies

THE COURT: Ms. Nelson, any request for discovery? Is there anything above and beyond this

MS. NELSON: Not at this time.

MR. FERGUSON: I want to see the reports received by the plaintiff from its experts, some of which I understand were used to prepare the affidavits, but some of which may not have been used for anything to this point.

I would also like availability of all the backup documents for the plaintiffs' site plan to have those experts whom I have contacted review them, and those are the four experts that Mr. Henry Hill refers to. I, of course, will

resist Mr. Hill's discovery of experts retained for the purposes of this litigation and which we may or may not use until it becomes clear we're going to use them, in which case he's entitled to the reports, and we will certainly supply them.

If Mr. Hill limits the testimony of Messrs. Lynbloom, Rahenkamp and Mallach to the substance of their affidavits, I don't see that we need any depositions or further discovery of those witnesses. If there are matters beyond those affidavits, and if they're covered in reports, I would think that would be adequate.

I do not think the parties ought to get bogged down in a large discovery process. I think that would waste time and money, and I think we should try and avoid that.

THE COURT: I agree with you substantially in that respect. This case is very similar to that old tale about the fourth grader who read a book and said I now know more than I ever cared to know about such and such. The record is adequate.

Any reluctance to give the Township the discovery just requested?

MR. HILL: Your Honor, we are daily working on our site plans and our proposals and

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modifying them, and to some extent, negotiating with the Cieswick plaintiffs as to how much, low and moderate, they want to support us in our application. That process is by its nature fluid. I would urge on the Court until we get to the point where Your Honor has said that Bedminster is in contempt or concluded that Bedminster has not complied with the court order, what we might plan to develop on our land is none of their business until we apply to Bedminster. They can keep most of the lawyers in our offices busy on depositions regarding --

THE COURT: Nobody has asked for depositions yet. He just wanted all the underlying reports and studies that supported the affidavits submitted with the order to show cause. Isn't that basically what you've asked for?

MR. FERGUSON: Yes, Sir.

MR. HILL: We gave you a preliminary preview of what we're asking for in the nature of corporate relief, the affidavits supporting that, the data supporting that, the soil boring tests, the computer model of the mountain and how runoff works. All the stuff that comes out of some computer in Boston is terrifically voluminous, and

I have only seen summaries of some of it. I don't think that what we plan to do on our property should be properly discoverable at this time when the issue still remains whether Bedminster is in compliance or not in compliance. I would be glad to furnish them with all our data relating to our analysis of their ordinance, but I would resist, at this point, presenting them with our data relevant to what we plan to do on our land and why we think it appropriate. I think that the Court is first going to have to make a determination as to whether or not Bedminster has complied before that becomes relevant. And it's extremely expensive to produce, extremely large plans, and we are continually playing with slight variations of site plans as we, indeed, talk with the Cieswick plaintiffs, and I don't want an obligation to run to McCarter & English every time a line is changed on a plan that may not be relevant. I'd like to focus, and I'll be glad to give them the material on our analysis of their ordinance, but they wrote the ordinance.

I don't see why they should be entitled to that either. But we finally have it figured out, and there are various levels of study that go beyond

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the affidavits as to the assumptions we made, the ways we figured out what they were doing, and on reflection when the question is whether a party has complied or not complied, how we intend to show that they have not complied with previous orders which are available to them, how we have analyzed their ordinance, what work we've done, and it's very expensive to figure out how much land is in each zone. They don't know. They have no It's not in their master plan. idea. Their master plan is a 4-page document which is merely conceptual. We have, over weeks and months analyzed what their ordinance really says, and the fact they need to know that in order to protect themselves, to know what they've adopted, to me, is, in fact, remarkable and displays that the many assurances that Your Honor has received that they were proceeding in good faith and studying hard and that it would take a little longer to adopt this ordinance are questionable.

I resist that discovery because the issue is solely whether or not they have complied.

THE COURT: It may well be helpful to the Court, however, if both sides know what the other is trying to do. It may save some time. Go ahead.

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MR. FERGUSON: I would only say it's not quite so easy to differentiate the two issues of their site plan and the attack on the ordinance. This Allan-Deane says if I buy Pikes Peak at \$10,000,000 with one building at the bottom, I'm entitled to, as a matter of right, to a high-rise building on that lot with sufficient floor space for me to get the return for the other. And pure and simple, their attack on the ordinance is motivated by the fact that they have \$10,00,00according to their testimony in that investment which consists of some good land on the bottom and 240 acres of very, very steep slope and some flat land at the top which may or may not be appropriate for what they want. The point is they have to justify their attack on the ordinance in terms that give them the right under their theory to pay off their investment, and I think the two may very well be interrelated, and I think some discovery might show it.

MR. HILL: As a matter of law, it's clear that we have standing, just as the Cieswick plaintiffs have standing. I do attack their ordinance and the economic variations aren't relevant except insofar -- we think that it's very

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relevant that it costs Allan-Deane \$3,500 per day to hold that land. That, historically, has cost them that. And Mr. Muror's affidavit, there is a table of expenses of the Allan-Deane Corporation in fighting -- in litigating with Bernards Township over eight and a half, seven years. And every day that goes by with computed interest and expenses.

Allan-Deane -- it costs Allan-Deane \$3,500, and that is --

THE COURT: These two issues don't help me much in deciding who's going to get what discovery. My present intention is that this pretrial conference will be held during the week of May 22nd somehow, some time. I will, therefore, permit all parties to serve interrogatories and demands for admissions on all other parties through April 28th. Normal time for answering will be permitted because, I assume, that after pretrial conference that fourth week of May, there will be some time before the matter is scheduled for plenary hearing. That will give everybody, basically, three weeks to prepare their arguments, why everybody else's request for discovery are extraordinary, burdensome, improper, etc., and I can decide that and order answers at the pretrial

conference.

Those orders may be short-term, however, so you will be using three weeks to compile information. Don't be caught short having to answer things in three or four days. Be ready to answer while you're also arguing whether you should have to or not.

All right, I think that puts things on a track, at least, and leads us in a common direction.

We'll cross the other bridges that develop at the time of pretrial conference. There may also be a request for briefs on short notice, at this time, so I'm sure you will have a great deal of research in your files, and in your office keep it handy. You may have to prepare your briefs rather promptly also.

MR. FERGUSON: Do I understand the Court would grant perhaps a brief before the pretrial or -

THE COURT: No. I'm anticipating a sixor seven-hour pretrial. I'm going to tell the
assignment clerk I want a whole day for this. You
may, if you wish, submit letter memoranda to me on
any issues which you may feel will be helpful on
the pretrial, and get it to me sufficiently in

advance so you have some assurance that I'll read them. But I'll leave that up to you. I don't order the same.

MR. HILL: I understand there will be no evidence taken upon the date of the pretrial; is that correct?

THE COURT: That's correct. I may want a number of exhibits marked not because you like them, but because you do acknowledge that they will probably be admissible in order to support an argument by your adversary which you do not at all agree.

All right, anything else that we should decide now for then?

MR. HILL: Can you give us any idea as to when we might be taking testimony? Some of my witnesses live in California. They'll be glad to be here, but sometimes they like to plan.

express a hope on my part that the matter could be completed as far as proofs before I go on my summer recess so I will have something to keep me busy other than pure leisure activities, but my wishes are not always granted. So I can't have any assurance. But I'd be very happy to have the

whole thing over with the week of the Fourth of July, but we can't be sure of that. All right, thank you for your help. (The matter was concluded for the day.) 

## CERTIFICATE

I, MARIAN V. BALERNO, C.S.R., one of the Official Court Reporters in and for the State of New Jersey, certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my original stenographic notes to the best of my knowledge and ability.