

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 9, 2016 PLANNING BOARD MEETING
BOROUGH HALL, BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE

MEMBERS PRESENT: E. Lichtstein, J. Miano, F. Franco, M. Kates, Z. Horvath, G. Biener
Vice Chairwoman Calabria, Chairman M. Giancarlo

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman F. Pizzella, Mayor D. Frank

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: N. Nabbie, Esq., Board Attorney
C. Statile, P.E., Board Engineer
R. Preiss, P.P., Acting Board Planner
C. Chadwick, Deputy Board Secretary

Chairman Giancarlo called the meeting to order with a reading of the Open Public Meetings Statement at approximately 7:30pm.

OPEN TO PUBLIC (for matters not on the Agenda):
As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

MEETING MINUTES:
The *May 24, 2016 Minutes* were approved by the Board.

INVOICES:
Invoices from *Gittleman, Muhlstock & Chewcaskie* were approved by the Board for payment.

COMPLETENESS REVIEW:
PZ-05-16; Zandonella; Block1412, Lot 6; 97 Stockton Street Bulk Variance Application
Board Engineer Statile explained to the Board that this variance application is for a fence. It was deemed complete and scheduled for a public hearing date of July 26, 2016.

RESOLUTION:
Caliber Builders; Block 506, Lot 1; Golden Orchards
Approval of Final Site Plan application for construction of age-restricted, single-family dwellings

At this time, Mr. Statile recused himself and left that dais. Mr. Horvath made a motion to accept the resolution with the revisions which were recently made to it and Mr. Franco seconded the motion. The Board was polled – Dr. Lichtstein, Mr. Franco, Mr. Horvath, Ms. Biener, and Chairman Giancarlo all voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

INFORMAL HEARING:

Block 1308, Lot 15; Kaczala; 333 Washington Ave., Subdivision

Counsel for the Applicant – Thomas Randall, Esq.
Engineer for the Applicant – Rick Eichenlaub, P.E.

Mr. Randall explained that this property is an estate which was inherited by Mr. Kaczala's daughter. The applicant intends to subdivide the property into three equal lots and would be seeking variances, as the lots are deficient in lot width and lot frontage. Although the lots are narrow, they're oversized in area and depth.

Mr. Eichenlaub spoke about the sketch provided to the Board, "Concept Subdivision Plan for Washington Commons" and it was confirmed the sketch is of the property as it currently exists.

PUBLIC HEARING:

PZ-08-12; 305 Patterson St., LLC; Block 1212, Lots 15 & 16; Esplanade & Patterson St. Major Site Plan with Use 'd' Variance application for new 49 multi-family housing complex in Industrial Zone

Counsel for the Applicant – Ira Weiner, Esq.
Engineer for the Applicant – Rick Eichenlaub, P.E.
Planner for the Applicant – Peter Steck, P.P.

Chairman Giancarlo opened the hearing by reviewing the Board's general guidelines for the members of the public to follow when speaking. He explained that the Board members will first have the opportunity to ask questions of the professional witnesses and then, the members of the public will have the same opportunity for questions only. Prior to voting on the application, the Board will give closing statements and the members of the public will be given the same opportunity.

The Board's professionals were sworn in. Mr. Steck remained under oath from the previous public hearing wherein he testified on this application. Since his testimony was complete at the last public hearing, the Board was given the opportunity to question Mr. Steck. Ms. Miano asked him to review the positive and negative criteria of the application. Mr. Steck explained that there has been an amendment to the application and eight units (20%) are now being designated for affordable housing – 5 two-bedroom units, 2 three-bedroom units, and 1 one-bedroom unit. Furthermore, the applicant would still consent to a 50% reservation for veterans. Mr. Steck outlined the positive and negative criteria of the application. Vice Chairwoman Calabria had questions about the truck traffic Mr. Steck referred to in relation to the site. Mr. Franco had concerns about an increase in traffic as a result of the project, as well as visual buffering concerns and requested a retaining wall be installed to block headlights. Mr. Steck spoke about the landscaping plan, which was then marked as follows:

Exhibit Steck 1: Sheet 7 of 11 "Landscaping Plan" – Colorized Version

There were also concerns regarding light pollution and Mr. Weiner stated that his client is willing to abide by any buffering condition the Board decides upon. Ms. Kates asked Mr. Steck if the fact that this is within walking distance to downtown Hillsdale would be considered an item of positive criteria and Mr. Steck responded that it is advantageous. Ms. Kates asked Mr. Steck to confirm that he does not foresee the tenants of this apartment complex having children; Mr. Steck stated he cannot say whether or not the tenants would have children, however he estimated that there may be nine children in the apartment complex.

Board Engineer Statile then suggested that PSE&G and 305 Patterson Street, LLC split the cost of realigning the road, thus eliminating the dangerous "S" curve that Mr. Steck brought up in his testimony.

At this time, the meeting was opened to the public. Kevin O'Brien of 61 Park View Drive, Hillsdale had questions for Mr. Steck, however Ms. Nabbie stated Mr. O'Brien's line of questioning was not relevant to Mr. Steck's testimony on this application. Mr. O'Brien also asked questions pertaining to traffic and Mr. Steck stated that he is not a traffic expert, but takes traffic into consideration from a planning point of view.

Marisa Cefali of 6 Manson Place, Hillsdale asked Mr. Steck questions about economic impact of this project and whether or not the surrounding properties would depreciate in value as a result of this project. Mr. Steck replied that he is not a real estate expert but did not believe the project would affect property values.

Rose D'Ambra of 423 Colonial Boulevard, Washington Township, had concerns pertaining to sidewalks. Anthony Morale of 505 8th Avenue, New York, NY had concerns due to the fact that his mother lives nearby at 325 Patterson and asked questions about sidewalks, curb cuts, if this project has been studied with the local schools, if there will be handicapped and bicycle parking, why there is a road at the rear of the building, and why the coverage of the road is more than the coverage of the building. Mr. Eichenlaub confirmed there will be handicapped parking on site. Mr. Steck confirmed that the project has been studied with the local school system and he estimates nine children may enroll in the local schools.

Terrence Reilly of 24 Esplanade Drive, Hillsdale asked questions about the access road and traffic ingress and egress. Mark Van Mater of 15 Lake Drive, Hillsdale asked about property devaluation. Kevin O'Sullivan of 26 Lake Drive, Hillsdale asked about flooding and affordable housing obligations. Matt Cefali of 6 Manson Place, Hillsdale had comments regarding Mr. Statile's suggested road realignment. Donna Kamfor of 28 Esplanade Drive, Hillsdale asked if accommodations will be made for disabled veterans and it was confirmed accommodations will be made, including an elevator. Steve McKenna of 90 Baylor Ave, Hillsdale had concerns regarding flooding. Gloria Petingi of 41 Beechwood Drive, Hillsdale also had concerns regarding flooding.

The meeting was then closed to the public. Acting Board Planner Preiss then spoke to the Board regarding the planning criteria aspects raised by Mr. Steck.

He said that eight affordable housing units would be consistent with the current affordable housing rules, which at this time are the "Second Round" former COAH rules. Although the eight units are satisfactory, Mr. Preiss stated no more than 20% of the units can be one bedroom units; therefore the eight units will consist of one 1-bedroom, 2 three-bedroom, and 5 two-bedroom units. Mr. Preiss also stated that 50% of the site is designated as open space because it is environmentally constrained by wetlands thus un-usable, and therefore the applicant offering 50% as set aside open space is not a particular benefit to the Borough. Mr. Preiss explained that there are possible liability issues with ownership of open space wetlands, as there are strict limitations as to what can be done with the property. This should be taken into consideration by the Board as they may prefer the applicant continue to own and maintain the open space versus the Borough accepting it as a donation. Mr. Preiss outlined possible benefits of the town owning open space property.

Mr. Preiss continued to speak about the Borough Master Plan and zoning in relation to this application. Although the Master Plan may contain inconsistencies, Mr. Preiss stated there is logic to it and believes the zoning is consistent with the Master Plan. He also stated that the current industrial zoning does not demonstrate a hardship on the applicant, as the property could be used for industrial uses as well. Regarding veteran housing, Mr. Preiss said a benefit of it would be the possibility of two-for-one credit in the current affordable housing process. Mr. Preiss said that although the Council on Affordable Housing is no longer a functioning body, the obligation for affordable housing still exists, and this multi-family housing complex would benefit the community by providing units.

Mr. Preiss discussed building height and design features of the housing complex, stating 30 ft. is not substantial for a three-story building. Mr. Preiss suggested a 3 – 3½ foot landscaping buffer if the Board is concerned about headlight glare. Which lighting fixtures will be used should also be considered by the Board in the conditions and Mr. Preiss recommends LED lighting. Mr. Preiss reviewed the demographics of Hillsdale, stating the population is growing older and decreasing in size, and there is a need for multi-family units therefore this application would be helpful in that respect.

Board members were then granted the opportunity to ask questions of Mr. Preiss. Ms. Kates asked about split zoning and Mr. Preiss confirmed split zoning is a challenge but not quite a hardship. The property may be best or particularly suited to one use over another but Mr. Preiss does not believe zoning presents a substantial hardship.

Chairman Giancarlo announced that the public will be granted the opportunity to question Mr. Preiss at the next public hearing for this application.

The application was therein carried to August 11th, 2016 at 7:30pm. Mr. Weiner announced that the applicant he waives the time frame for the Board to act until August 11th, 2016 and Ms. Nabbie announced that the application is hereby carried and the public will not receive any further notice.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Chadwick
Deputy Secretary