

**MINUTES OF THE MAY 25, 2017 PLANNING BOARD MEETING
BOROUGH HALL, BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE**

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

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

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: S. Muhlstock, Esq., Acting Board Attorney
C. Statile, P.E., Board Engineer
E. Leheny, AICP, PP, Acting Board Planner
C. Chadwick, Deputy 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.

MINUTES:

The *May 11, 2017 Meeting Minutes* were approved by the Board.

INVOICES:

Invoices from *Gittleman, Muhlstock, Chewcaskie, LLP* and *C.P. Statile, P.A.* were approved by the Board for payment.

RESOLUTIONS:

***Resolution No. 2017-11; Pascack Valley Regional High School District Board of Education;
Block 1101, Lot 8; 63 Patterson Street***

Use Variance Application

Mr. Horvath made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Franco, to approve the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution approved.

COMPLETENESS REVIEW:

PZ-08-17; Hans Ramrup; Block 1402, Lot 4; 72 Central Avenue

Variance Application

Board Engineer Statile explained the nature of the application to the Board and deemed it complete. It was scheduled for a public hearing date of June 29, 2017.

PUBLIC HEARING:

***PZ-06-17; Jean Bond; Block 1104, Lot 4; 434 Hillsdale Avenue
Use Variance Application***

Counsel for the Applicant – Nancy Saccente, Esq.

Jean Bond, of 434 Hillsdale Avenue, Hillsdale, was sworn in to testify. Ms. Bond owns a clothing boutique called “Fashion Camp NJ” and would like to incorporate instructional crafting classes into her business, as well as birthday parties and a summer camp program for children. Ms. Bond explained to the Board the classes would teach crafting skills such as beading, gemming, patching of garments, and trim work. She has a sewing machine and heat press in the store, but most projects don’t require these tools. Ms. Bond moved her business here due to the great location and is certified as a substitute teacher.

The layout of the space was reviewed; it is set up as a retail store and has extra unused space. The dimensions were reviewed. Documents were marked as follows:

Exhibit A-1: Schematic Layout

Exhibit A-2: through A-13: Photographs

Parking was discussed, and it was determined there are currently six to eight parking spaces on site. There is also a “drop-off” location alongside the building. Ms. Bond stated the yarn store next to her has similar classes to the ones she will offer at her store. Regarding staff and employees, Ms. Bond stated she is usually the only one in the store, but occasionally her daughter and her friend help her out. Ms. Bond has no other employees.

Negative criteria was discussed. Ms. Bond stated the storefront is in a good area that would be safe for children. Furthermore, other stores in the area are offering similar classes to service and educate people. Ms. Saccente stated she had no further questions of this witness. The meeting was then opened to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

Acting Board Planner Leheny reviewed the positive and negative criteria the Board must consider prior to granting the applicant a use variance. Ms. Leheny stated existing non-conformities and operational concerns were noted in her firm’s review letter, and all have been sufficiently addressed by the applicant. Board Engineer Statile confirmed he is not aware of any operational problems or issues with parking or deliveries on the site.

Board members were then given the opportunity to ask questions of Ms. Bond. It was confirmed that for every five children, there will be one adult staff member present to supervise during parties or summer camp. Ms. Bond also confirmed that the summer camp program, which will be more of a recreational activities program than a traditional camp, will have a new theme every week for children. Concerns were raised regarding Ms. Bond’s online advertisement of her classes and camp programs considering approval for same has not yet been obtained. Ms. Bond explained to the Board she has an agreement with the local Elks Club and conducts classes at their location when the space is available. In the event she is denied approval, she will conduct her summer camp program there as well. Ms. Bond the retail portion of the store will be open during parties/camp/classes as she will have another staff member present to assist her. Ms. Bond will have tables set up along the perimeter of her store for the class/camp attendees to sit at while they work, and there will be open space in the center of her store for retail purposes. If Ms. Bond has more attendees at a birthday party or camp than her retail space allows for, the party or camp will be held at the Elks Club

instead. The Board also raised concerns regarding children crossing the corner near the Fashion Camp NJ store, as they believed it to be dangerous. In addition, Ms. Kates stated she was confused about the use, and stated it seems the primary business or use is educational and the secondary or incidental use is retail.

It was confirmed Ms. Bond also offers fashion party opportunities for adults, between the hours of 7pm and 9pm. Birthday parties or camps for children will be offered between the hours of 10am to 3pm, and adult classes from 6pm to 9pm. The “camp” program will be offer one week or one day increments for children; no one will be arriving by bus. Ms. Kates suggested Ms. Bond call her program a “summer program” rather than a “camp.” There will be no additional signage on site other than one advertising the “camp” program; Ms. Bond will comply with the Borough’s sign ordinance. She currently has a temporary sign on site.

Acting Board Attorney Muhlstock stated the property survey is twenty years old and asked Ms. Bond if any changes had been made to the site since then. Board Engineer Statile reminded Mr. Muhlstock that Ms. Bond is a tenant and therefore not qualified to answer. Mr. Statile stated Mr. Wells, the owner of the property, would be more qualified to answer and was present in the audience. Mr. Statile stated he can attest that no changes have been made to the property.

Mr. Horvath raised concerns about the safety of two benches, set on gravel, located in front of the store. Mr. Statile confirmed the benches are not in the public right of way and there are no standards prohibiting them. Ms. Bond stated they are for decorative purposes, not for seating. The Board raised concerns that fire inspections are stricter for those who market themselves as a “camp” versus “program.” Board Engineer Statile stated what Ms. Bond calls her operation is her responsibility, not the Board’s; the Board’s responsibility is to discuss the use variance aspect of the application. Concerns were raised regarding how many doors the store has for egress; Mr. Statile stated the Borough’s Construction Code Official makes such determinations based on occupancy loads and it is a code issue. The meeting was again opened to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public. Ms. Saccente gave a brief summation of the application stating it is a “hybrid” use which will not have any negative impact on the neighborhood.

Mr. Alter made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Franco. The Board was polled and the application approved; the use variance was granted.

Chairman Giancarlo then made a formal announcement that the June 6, 2017 meeting was cancelled as the Board has no business to conduct. Chairman Giancarlo also stated the resolution for recently approved application number PZ-03-17 will be voted on at the June 29, 2017 meeting, and reminded the Board and public that a public hearing for application PZ-08-17 will also occur on June 29, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Chadwick, Deputy Secretary