

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 21, 2017 PLANNING BOARD MEETING
BOROUGH HALL, BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE**

MEMBERS PRESENT: F. Franco, E. Alter, M. Kates, E. Lichtstein,
Councilman Pizzella, Mayor Ruocco, S. Raymond,
Vice Chairwoman J. Miano, Chairman M. Giancarlo

MEMBERS ABSENT: L. Calabria, G. Biener

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: N. Nabbie, Esq., Board Attorney
C. Statile, P.E., Board Engineer
L. Leheny, P.P., 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):

Howard Rosenbaum of 817 Hillside Avenue, Bill Drummond of 840 Hillside Avenue, and Edie Orlando of 15 Ellen Court all voiced their concerns and spoke out against the rezoning request of the Tandy Allen property for a commercial parking lot for Demarest Farms. Chairman Giancarlo, Board Attorney Nabbie, and Mayor Ruocco all explained to the residents that this is a matter they need to address with the Mayor and Council, as a formal application has not yet been filed with the Planning Board for this property. As no one else wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

MINUTES:

The *October 12, 2017 Meeting Minutes* were approved by the Board.

INVOICES:

There was a discussion regarding the invoices from the Board professionals in relation to the growing number of deficient escrow accounts. Dr. Lichtstein suggested the Board institute a new procedure to ensure a sufficient amount of monies are in the escrow accounts prior to the Board approving any bills, and prior to the Board professionals completing any work. Ms. Nabbie explained to Dr. Lichtstein and the Board that she has been in contact with the Borough's accounting department and will check every escrow account's balance prior to billing. Mr. Statile expressed that he also has been following this procedure.

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

BOARD BUSINESS:

2018 Meeting Schedule

The Board requested two changes be made to the December 2018 meeting dates.

2018 RFQ's

Chairman Giancarlo authorized Deputy Secretary Chadwick to publish notice of the 2018 Request for RFQ's in *The Record* and *The Ridgewood News*.

COMPLETENESS REVIEWS:

***PZ-11-17; Haglid Engineering and Associates; Block 1308, Lot 19; 80 Broadway
Site Plan & Variance Application***

Board Engineer Statile explained the nature of this application including the fact that it involves a use "d" variance and the Board assigned it a public hearing date of January 23, 2018.

***PZ-12-17; Lyndsay Buehler & Michael DeSimone; Block 603, Lot 9; 117 Stony Ridge Drive
Variance Application***

Mr. Statile explained the nature of this application and the Board assigned it a public hearing date of January 23, 2018.

***PZ-13-17; Leonard & Carol Levy; Block 605, Lots 7 & 8; 76 & 78 Wierimus Lane
Minor Subdivision with Variances Application***

Mr. Statile explained the nature of this application and the Board assigned it a public hearing date of January 23, 2018.

At this time, Councilman Pizzella and Mayor Ruocco recused themselves from the upcoming public hearing and left the chambers.

PUBLIC HEARING:

***PZ-10-17; Aeon Fitness & Gymnastics; Block 1212, Lot 13; 270 Knickerbocker Ave.
Major Preliminary & Final Site Plan with Use Variance Application***

Counsel for the Applicant – Robert Mancinelli, Esq.

Mr. Mancinelli began by stating he has four expert witnesses but only two are available to testify this evening; the site engineer and the traffic engineer.

At this time, Mr. Statile and Ms. Leheny were sworn in. Chris Lantelme, P.E., of 101 West Street, Hillsdale was sworn in as the site engineer. Mr. Lantelme informed the Board that he prepared the site and lighting plans, which were revised on 11/6/2017. The Site & Lighting Plan were marked as **Exhibit A1**. Mr. Lantelme stated the lot is 1.4 acres with two buildings on the property. The lot slopes down from Patterson Avenue in a westerly direction. No drainage changes are being proposed. There are several ingresses and egresses to the property, however most traffic enters from Patterson Street. Fences on the property are to be removed and an additional six trees are being proposed. Regarding parking as it exists currently, there are 17 lined parking spaces and the remainder of the parking is not lined. The applicant will be striping the lot, where there will be a total of 57 parking spaces, 3 of which will be handicapped. There is not currently a sidewalk. The dumpsters will be enclosed with vinyl fencing but their location on the site will not change.

Mr. Lantelme then spoke about the Lighting Plan, stating that lighting is being added to the site. The applicant proposes 17 lights mounted on both buildings and 10 lights added along Knickerbocker and Patterson Avenues in the right of way. Mr. Statile asked Mr. Lantelme to describe the details of the types of lighting fixtures for the Board. Mr. Lantelme stated that the lights being proposed for mounting on the building will be sconces whose light will travel from the building, efficiently lighting the area without reaching too far into the roadway. Mr. Lantelme then discussed the Landscaping Plan, stating six additional trees are being proposed.

Mr. Lantelme stated he reviewed Mr. Statile's two reports and that the latest revision to the site plan addressed Mr. Statile's comments specifically numbers 2, 3 and 11. Regarding Mr. Statile's concerns regarding parking, Mr. Lantelme explained he used the parking standards code for vocational schools and there is one parking space for every two students, as most students get dropped off. Splitting the school into two buildings will help with the traffic circulation and make the area safer for children and easier for parents to drop students off at classes. More striping details were also included as requested by Mr. Statile.

At this time, Mr. Statile suggested that additional striping be included for handicapped parking space, number 157 on the plans, as he is concerned about there being enough room for access in that particular space. Mr. Statile continued to discuss parking and it was confirmed that all parking will be contained on site; off-site parking for picking up and dropping off will require installation of public sidewalk along Knickerbocker Ave. Mr. Statile also requested bollards be installed in front of the overhead door on number 270 for safety. Mr. Statile asked Mr. Lantelme what the lighting distribution is of the wall sconces and asked him to include that information on the plans. In addition, Mr. Statile stated he was unsure of the condition of the service of the parking lot and may need to inspect it. Regarding parking, Mr. Statile stated he believes what the applicant is proposing well exceeds what is required and even in the worst case scenario, parking will be fine and he has no problem with it.

Acting Board Planner Leheny asked if there was any thought to making the drop-curb located off of Knickerbocker Ave a dedicated egress for traffic. Mr. Lantelme replied it could be transformed into such. Mr. Statile stated he believes there are enough driveways on the site already and perhaps the applicant could close it off instead. Mr. Mancinelli stated there will be a traffic engineering witness to testify on that later.

The applicants and owners of Aeon Fitness were sworn in at this time to testify and discuss the ingress and egress of the site and there was a discussion about same with the Board. Mr. Lantelme stated that if there are too many places where traffic is allowed in both directions, there will not be much discipline.

Ms. Kates discussed landscaping on the site with Mr. Lantelme. Mr. Statile stated the lights should be shut off at a certain hour, however some lights should remain on in order to allow police to adequately patrol the area. Mr. Alter asked the Aeon Fitness owners if they have security cameras. They replied they do not have any on the exterior of the building, only interior facing the door. It was also confirmed that clients do often park on Knickerbocker currently, however that will most likely change with the new parking layout as most people will prefer to park in a lot as opposed to on the street. Dr. Lichtstein asked about the handicapped parking space in front of number 157 on the plans and stated he believes this handicapped space should be located closer to the door of the

building. Dr. Lichtstein also expressed concern regarding the lack of space to pile snow during the winter.

At this time, the meeting was opened to the public. As no one wished to speak, the meeting was subsequently closed to the public.

The next witness, Charles Olivo, P.E. of Stonefield Engineering and Design, 92 Park Avenue, Rutherford was sworn in to testify. Mr. Olivo stated that the highest traffic peak occurs between 5:00pm and 5:30pm, but the drop-off and pickup of students happens very quickly, at an average of 40 seconds. He also stated that maintaining the location that Ms. Leheny referenced previously as an egress would allow for the quick traffic pattern to continue.

Mr. Statile asked how many people are using the site at peak hour, as it was not included in Mr. Olivo's testimony. He also pointed out that there is no talk of future growth of the business which is assuming static patronage. Mr. Mancinelli then stated the owners testified to the number of patrons based on their attendance records and Mr. Olivo was instructed to study traffic patterns, not patrons. The owners testified that Mr. Olivo visited their site on two of the busiest days of the entire year. Mr. Olivo stated that almost all the vehicles on site were picking up and/or dropping off students. Dr. Lichtstein stated it is his belief that the driveways would separate traffic between the two buildings, and asked why there are so many parking spaces if the business is not expecting an increased number of patrons. The site is going from 20 parking spaces to 51.

At this time the meeting was opened to the public. Seeing as no one wished to question the witness, the meeting was closed to the public.

Mr. Mancinelli stated the planner will be present to give testimony on December 7th and the architect will also be available at that time; he hopes to conclude on December 7th. Mr. Mancinelli also explained to the Board the nature and purpose of the additional documents he provided to them, stating they include a copy of all prior land use approvals on the site. On December 7th, the planner will testify to the historic use of the site as well as what is permitted and not permitted. He also stated he unfortunately cannot address why there are currently four taxis on the site. Mr. Mancinelli then confirmed the applicant waives and extends the time for the Board to act until December 7, 2017. Ms. Nabbie announced that this application is carried to Thursday, December 7th, 2017 in these chambers at 7:30pm and no further notice will be provided to the public.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Chadwick
Deputy Secretary