

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 22nd, 2022
HILLSDALE PLANNING/ZONING BOARD MEETING
BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE, NJ**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman D. Burleson, Vice Chairman S. Riordan, Secretary M. Kates, D. Friedman, J. MacEwen, J. Miano, Mayor J. Ruocco,

MEMBERS ABSENT: E. Alter , S. Griep, S. Raymond, Council Liaison Z. Horvath

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: M. Stinley, Esq., Board Attorney
C. Statile, P.E., Board Engineer
J. Burgis, Board Planner

Deputy Secretary N. Rowe

Chairman Burleson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 pm. Secretary Kates recited the Open Public Meeting Statement and Pledge of Allegiance.

OPEN TO PUBLIC (for matters not on the Agenda):

The meeting was opened to the public. No residents wished to speak; therefore, the meeting was closed to the public.

INVOICES:

A motion was made by Mayor Ruocco and seconded by Ms. Miano to approve the invoices for Burgis Associates. The Board was polled and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Mr. MacEwen and seconded by Mayor Ruocco to approve the invoices for Statile Associates. The Board was polled and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Ms. Miano and seconded by Vice Chairman Riordan to approve the invoices for Cleary, Giaccobe, Alfieri, Jacobs LLC. Ms. Miano questions invoices related to pending litigation. Ms. Stinely commented that a closed session could be called and discussed later in the meeting. The Board was polled and the motion passed.

HEARING:

**Major Site Plan Application PZ-8-22
Block 1210, Lots 6 & 7, Borough of Hillsdale
100 Prospect Place & 560 Piermont Ave.
Applicant: Westwood Banana Co., Inc.
Owner: T.C.M. Realty, LLC**

The applicant's attorney, Mr. John Conte Jr. provided a summary of the application. A warehouse for storage is proposed on the existing property to include parking for trailers and space for a dumpster. The warehouse would replace the trailers that are currently used for storage.

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The applicant's Engineer, Mr. Christopher Lantelme, was sworn in and reviewed the site plan dated 10-10-22.

The plan provides for 11 proposed parking spaces, exceeding the eight that are required. One handicapped space and one space accommodating electric vehicles are included in the 11 spaces.

The foundation will be flood proof based on current DEP requirements.

Parking is planned for 13 trailers.

Landscaping is planned on the corner of Brookside Place and Prospect Place.

A drafting error was pointed out regarding the setback from the loading dock to the property line. 17.9 ft is indicated but the correct measurement is 20 ft.

Existing lighting provided by PSEG will be used. The owner currently pays a fee to PSEG for this. Imperious coverage will be reduced with the new plan; a seepage pit is planned.

Mr. Statile and Mr. Burgis were sworn in.

Mr. Statile provided a summary of the completeness reports. Mr. Statile indicated that a provision will need to be made for a buffer along the east side of the site.

Mr. Burgis asked questions regarding the placement of the drop curbs.

Questions and comments from the board concerning noise levels, staging of trucks, spillover lighting, sidewalks, number of lots, the dumpster enclosure, the placement of the dumpster, landscaping and electric vehicle charging stations were posed. The client testified that all containers will be on trailers and not on the ground and will be electric vs diesel.

A sidewalk is not in the proposed plan. The applicant stated that the property will be paved; however, the board has concerns as the area has been designated as an area in need of redevelopment and will include residential units in the future.

The applicant's attorney stated that the applicant will comply with all local ordinances.

The applicant's architect, Mr. Scott Lurie, was sworn in and reviewed the architectural plan dated 10-11-22.

Mr. Lurie pointed out that three LED wall lights with no spillage are planned on the exterior of the building.

Questions and comments from the board and the professionals included improvement of aesthetics and/or addition of external embellishments, inclusion of interior racks, HVAC mounting, number of exits, and roof drainage.

The applicant requested a brief recess which ensued from 8:40pm – 8:55 pm.

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Attendance was taken upon return from the recess.

Mr. Nicholas Markantes, President and CEO of Westwood Banana Co was sworn in.

Mr. Markantes provided a brief history of the business and an overview of the operations.

The Board had questions and comments regarding zoning, noise levels, power, the trailers, fire suppression, the ripening process, operating hours and a walkway for pedestrians. This property is affected by the redevelopment plan which stipulates that the Borough may vacate Brookside Place; however, an ordinance has not yet been issued.

There are no current or planned retail operations on the site. Deliveries to tri state locations and distributors are made daily. Typically, 10-20 trucks arrive/exit the property daily. Operating hours are 8a – 4p; however, trucks come in all throughout the day. All trailers are refrigerated. There will be no changes to the number of employees.

Mr. Markantes provided testimony regarding previous noise complaints which were investigated by both local and county officials; however, no violations were issued. The trailers are planned on the south side of the property and will run on electric instead of diesel which should mitigate noise. With the proposed warehouse, Mr. Markantes anticipates that fewer trucks will be running.

Mr. Lurie was recalled and testified that fire suppression is not required as there is nothing flammable planned.

Mr. Michael D. Kauker, Professional Planner for the applicant was sworn in.

Mr. Kauker provided testimony regarding the plans and the report drafted by the Borough's planner, Burgis Associates Inc. Per Mr. Kauker, the property is being improved and will be more efficiently used and will meet the goals and objectives of the master plan.

Mr. Kauker the variance being sought is for parking and a waiver for parking near an intersection. Ten 10 Ft setback is required and Five 5 ft is being requested. Majority of employee parking will be on the north and west side of the property. The proposed building may provide a noise buffer to the surrounding neighbors.

The Board asked questions regarding sidewalks and paving. The applicant agreed to install a sidewalk along Piermont Ave, Prospect Place and partially on Brookside sides of the property.

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A motion was made by Chairman Burleson and seconded by Secretary Kates to approve the application with the following conditions:

- the addition of sidewalks along Piermont Ave and Prospect Place and partially on Brookside sides of the property,
- adding landscaping per the environment commission recommendations,
- installing seepage pits for the building only per the Borough engineer's requirements,
- installation of an Electric Vehicle charging station in one of the 11 spots designated,
- 13 tractor trailer parking spaces, no cabs will be connected to those trailers,
- improvement to the building design regarding aesthetics
- re-orientation of the dumpster doors
- applicant will obtain NJ DEP approval
- applicant will meet local and state requirements with respect to noise
- revised plans based on testimony provided including the corrected to the easterly setback to 20 ft
- no diesel run trailers to be parked on the property

A motion was made by Chairman Burleson and seconded by Secretary Kates to approve the application with the conditions noted. The Board was polled and the motion was passed.

RFP/RFQ for Planning Board Professional Services

Chairman Burleson recommended that the Borough seek bids from the planning board professionals (attorneys, engineers, planners) via and RFP (Request Ffor Proposal) for the coming year.

A subcommittee will potentially need to be formed to review the bids received.

The target date to publish the RFP is the week of 11/28.

A motion was made by Chairman Burleson and seconded by Ms. Kates to enter into a closed session. Mayor Ruocco recused himself from the closed session.

A brief recess ensued and the Board reconvened at approximately 10:30 pm.

Attendance was called upon return from the recess.

OPEN SESSION:

There being no further comment, the meeting was closed to the public.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31 pm.