

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 29, 2013 PLANNING BOARD
BOROUGH HALL, BOROUGH OF HILLSDALE

MEMBERS PRESENT: E. Alter, E. Lichtstein, , M. Giancarlo, L. Calabria, J. Traudt,
F. Franco, Z. Horvath, Mayor Max Arnowitz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman DeGise, M. Kates, J. Miano

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: D. Lenner, Esq., Acting Board Attorney
C. Statile, P.E., Board Engineer
C. Wyssenski, Deputy Board Secretary

Chairwoman Calabria called the meeting to order with a reading of the Open Public Meetings Statement.

OPEN TO PUBLIC: As no one wished to speak, the meeting was closed to the public.

MINUTES

The October 9, 2013 meeting minutes were approved by the Board.

COMPLETENESS REVIEW:

PZ-14-13, Rifi, Block 107, Lot 2, 62 Douglas Drive, “c” bulk variance and F.A.R. for addition to single-family dwelling

The application was deemed complete by the Board Engineer.

The Board discussed that the 2014 calendar has not been set and a date for the reorganization meeting has not be scheduled. Therefore, the Board is unable to provide hearing dates and carry applications to 2014. Any applications deemed complete or which need to be carried through the next year will be discussed in 2014 after the Board reorganizes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

***PZ-04-13, Mario & Gina Amato, Block 504, Lot 1.01, 765 Hillsdale Avenue
Bulk ‘c’ Variance requests to maintain existing Site Improvements (Patios) to Existing Single-Family Dwelling; Setback Variances.***

Mr. Lamb was present. He indicated revised plans were submitted to the before on October 28th and this did not allow the Board Engineer sufficient time to review same. Therefore, he was seeking an adjournment from this evening’s hearing. The Board informed him of the 2014 scheduling issue. Mr. Lamb acknowledged that the applicant would re-notice for a new hearing date in 2014 once a new hearing date was established by the Board.

***PZ-09-13, Inserra Supermarkets, Inc.: Applicant, Crossroads – Broadway Associates, LLC:
Owner
Block 1007, Lots 13-16, Broadway and Coles Crossing Road, Major Subdivision & Site Plan with
Freestanding Sign Variance Application for new Shopping Center`12***

Mr. Lamb, the applicant’s attorney was present. Inserra Supermarkets is proposing to consolidate four building lots through a major subdivision and construct a new shopping center. The new lot would contain an 11,850 SF retail building with approximately 7,900 SF of the retail space for Shop Rite Liquors. The balance of the building would be leased. No bulk variances are required and the use is permitted within the zone. A variance is required for a free-standing sign. The application does require a design waiver from the Board for existing and proposed stormwater drainage systems within 500 ft. of the subject property.

The proposed site plan provides for 79 parking spaces per the Borough ordinance, however, the Board Engineer suggested in his report that the applicant provide only 56 spaces at this time, to reduce impervious coverage and provide additional landscaping and on-site open space. The applicant was agreeable to the parking reduction, and would stipulate to the condition that the 23 parking space deficiency would be constructed should the need for them become necessary, based on the request of the Board, or Police Department.

Joseph Pagano, Director of Produce and Operations at Hillsdale Shop Rite, was sworn in. Mr. Pagano was qualified as an expert on the operations of Shop Rite liquors. He testified that the store will have 5 to 6 employees as follows: 4 employees per shift on a holiday peak period, 3 employees on non-holiday shifts. Approximately 200-500 customers are expected daily, and approximately 5-10 customers at a time in the store. Mr. Pagano explained that a stand alone liquor store trip is different than a trip to a store where liquor and grocery are sold as in the current Shop Rite. He testified that where there is a grocery store the time spent is much longer versus “stand alone” where the trip is “in and out” thus the need for less on site parking.

The Board questioned Mr. Pagano about the reduction of the number of spaces to 56 and he believed 56 spaces were more than adequate. Mr. Pagano added he has been the Chairman of the Secaucus Planning Board for the last twenty five years.

The Board asked Mr. Pagano several questions relating to parking, traffic, the shoppers’ experience in the store, potential renovations to the existing Shop Rite store, the level of maintenance of the Shop Rite store and the proposed strip mall, and hours of operation of the proposed liquor store.

Considerable discussion ensued relating to the need for shopping carts in and out of the store, thus the need for an exterior “cart corral.”

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: As no one wished to question Mr. Pagano, the meeting was closed to the public.

Mr. Ashbahian, R.A. the applicant's architect was sworn in and presented an architectural rendering of the proposed retail building. He also testified to the architectural plans prepared by his office. The rendering depicted four retail store entrances with Shop Rite liquors on the far left or most southerly side of the building. Shop Rite liquor will occupy the most retail space in the proposed development. Mr. Ashbahian testified the rendering showed the exact proposed building by Inserra Supermarkets with a complementary mix of materials and decorative lighting. Every sign will be the same for each retail location and will be affixed to the building and letters backlit. If a tenant wanted to exceed the allowable permitted sign size, they would need to seek variance approval from the Board.

The proposed free-standing sign was scaled down from 25 ft. to 20 ft. The current sign design is generic, however, Ms. Ashbahian indicated the applicant is agreeable to any design the Board wishes. The Mayor believed the sign should be a symbol representative of the businesses or Shop Rite.

Deliveries will be made at the southern most location where Shop Rite liquors is proposed. No loading dock is proposed or necessary. The building interior has not been designed. The Board was concerned with the location of the dumpster pad and loading area having conflicts in use. Several members also expressed concern with other three retail locations receiving deliveries on the sidewalk versus via rear or interior of the building. Ms. Ashbahian testified deliveries cannot be received through the rear due to the steep slope of the rear yard below the first floor elevation. No egress doors are proposed from the three interior retail locations (end units have side doors). The Board was also concerned with this design for fire fighting/safety reasons. Mr. Ashbahian said the entire building is required to be fire sprinkled by the Building Code and interior egress distances to the front doors were code compliant. The Board wants the Fire Department to review the plans. A sidewalk at the rear of the building to provide pedestrian access from the rear to the side of the building was suggested. These would also require the construction of stairs.

The Police are still reviewing the application for traffic concerns with ingress and egress onto Broadway and will meet with the Board Engineer and County Planning Board to discuss roadway access and driveway locations (Police Chief and Board Engineer to meet week of Nov 11th). The application requires County Planning Board approval; during their initial reviews they suggested prohibiting certain turning movements to/from the site.

A monument vs. free-standing sign, small shopping carts for liquor store use, rear doors for deliveries, and exterior fire fighter access to the roof were suggested for Mr. Ashbahian's consideration.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: As no one wished to question Mr. Ashbahian, the meeting was closed to the public.

Mr. Napolitano, P.E., the applicant's site design engineer was sworn in and testified to the site plan his office prepared. He reviewed layout, circulation, drainage, and the condition of the existing site.

The Board asked Mr. Napolitano if access to the rear of the building was possible. He testified that vehicle access would not be possible due to the grade, but the design could be modified to provide rear access doors with a sidewalk and platform. He testified there is an approximate 8 ft. difference to the rear of the property and the finished floor of the building.

Mr. Napolitano testified regarding his discussions with the Bergen County Planning Department about ingress/egress and turning prohibitions from the site, the County road widening easement and the alignment of driveways with the opposite Shop Rite driveways. Coles Crossing will have a newly marked crosswalk. The dumpster enclosure can be either chain link or board-on-board fencing to hide its appearance

He continued to testify about the stormwater management systems which will reduce the existing runoff. Impervious coverage is being reduced from the current paved parking lot. The reduction to 56 parking spaces will in turn further reduce the impervious coverage and stormwater runoff.

The Board asked Mr. Napolitano about site lighting, the removal of the islands in the parking area, if the County can reduce the speed limit to 25 MPH in that area of Broadway, the specifics of the stormwater management system, test pits, fire safety, rear access doors, and County road easement. Additional lighting near the Coles Crossing proposed crosswalk was suggested. Mr. Statile suggested a PSEG pole-mounted cobra head light fixture to provide the most lighting. Mayor Arnowitz asked that a natural buffer be provided on the southbound side of the building between the new retail building and the nursery school.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: As no one wished to question Mr. Napolitano, the meeting was closed to the public.

Board Engineer Statile explained why he suggested the reduction in the number of proposed parking spaces based on the 2nd Edition ITE Parking Generation Manual. He also explained the reason for elimination the two traffic islands. Mr. Statile indicated he was satisfied with proposed stormwater management system and his office would be present to witness any new soil test pits that must be performed.

Mr. Statile will arrange a meeting with Mr. Napolitano, Eric Timsak (County Planning Department) and the Hillsdale Police Traffic Bureau to discuss everyone's concerns.

Mr. Statile indicated that he has discussed reducing the speed limit of Broadway several times with the County. He informed the Board of the process in which the County undertakes their study. He will prepare a letter for the Mayor to ask the County to consider the request again.

Mr. Lamb asked the Chairwoman to poll the Board for a preference on the parking so revised plans can be prepared. Revised plans indicating the 56 spaces will be prepared. The application will be again heard in 2014. A date will be provided following the reorganization meeting in January of the Board. The applicant will re-notice members of the public.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christie S. Wyssenski
Deputy Board Secretary