

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Monday, May 23, 2016

Present:

Chairman Wagenbach

Vice-Chairman Anderson Ms. Mandelbaum

Mr. Naidu Mr. Brinkerhoff

Ms. Balson-Alvarez Mr. Matias

Mr. Drummond Mr. Zucker

Mr. Keiser Clifford Gibbons

Notice of Meeting

Chairman Wagenbach called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and stated that adequate notice of this meeting had been provided in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Act."

Minutes from the previous meeting were discussed, revisions & corrections made and unanimously approved.

Resolutions

PB - 16 - 240; 40 Maple Street - Elks Lodge

The resolution pertaining to 40 Maple Street, Elks Lodge was discussed. Mr. Gibbons noted that he was contacted by the applicant's attorney who noted some corrections regarding the source of the acoustical evaluation, use of bands, deejay facilities and amplified speakers and specific wording on the use of the outdoor sound system. Mr. Drummond added that the wording 'not available for rental use' be included in the resolution. Chairman Wagenbach moved the resolution for approval and second by Ms. Mandelbaum. The resolution was approved with the following votes: Yay; Mr. Brinkerhoff, Mr. Drummond, Ms. Mandelbaum, Mr. Matias, Mr. Naidu, Chairman Wagenbach, Abstain; Mr. Keiser, Mr. Zucker, Not eligible to vote; Mr. Anderson, Not present for vote; Ms. Balson Alvarez, Mr. Giangliulio

PB - 16 - 242; 86 Morris Avenue - Celgene

The resolution pertaining to 86 Morris Avenue, Celgene was discussed. Mr. Gibbons noted that he was again contacted by the applicant's attorney regarding specific wording of the mezzanine construction, description of the submitted plans and that an updated floor area ratio would be provided as part of the west and east general development plans. Ms. Mandelbaum questioned the use of the term fire flow in the resolution to which a discussion ensued between Mr. Gibbons, Ms. Mandelbaum and Chairman Wagenbach. Mr. Hipolit, the Board Engineer, explained the use of the term and noted that it was used correctly. Mr. Naidu moved the resolution for approval and second by Mr. Keiser. The resolution was approved with the following votes: Yay; Ms. Balson Alvarez, Mr. Brinkerhoff, Mr. Kieser, Ms. Mandelbaum, Mr. Matias, Mr. Naidu, Chairman Wagenbach, Mr. Zucker, Not eligible to vote; Mr. Anderson, Absent not voting; Mr. Giangliulio, Abstain; Mr. Drummond

Master Plan

Chairman Wagenbach announced a brief update on the Master Plan. The first meeting of all the subcommittees had taken place and they were preparing for the second. A public workshop meeting was to be held at the Elks Club and members of the community were encouraged to attend. Chairman Wagenbach noted that the process has been moving forward smoothly.

Public Hearings

PB – 16 – 244; 190 River Road, Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

Mr. Keith Davis, of Nehmad, Perillo & Davis, represented the applicant and began with a project description of the major site plan approval and its variances pertaining to existing non conformities. The application consists of re-striping and re-shaping the existing parking deck located within the site, by making adjustments to aisle widths and planter locations.

Two witnesses, Mr. Thomas Pugsley, project engineer and Anmar Baban, property manager, were sworn in and questioned by Mr. Davis. Mr. Pugsley went on to describe the site conditions, parking spaces and circulation and design aspects to increase the number of parking spaces on site. Mr. Pugsley was offered to the Board for questioning.

Mr. Zucker questioned if any of the existing parking spaces were reduced in size. Mr. Anderson and Ms. Mandelbaum asked for clarification on the planter locations and exactly which parking areas would be adjusted. Mr. Kieser questioned if all the changes met the parking requirements for the building and if there was anticipated growth. Chairman Wagenbach requested clarification as to whether the location included retail banking or if it were just administrative offices. Mr. Anderson questioned whether a tractor trailer could access the site and Mr. Naidu discussed the site landscaping and potential additional plantings.

Mr. Brinkerhoff noted that staff members suggested the use of a pedestrian path to the existing patio area. Conversation ensued between members of the Board, professional staff and the applicant pertaining to the feasibility of the path, use of the patio and traffic circulation.

Mr. Anderson asked if the comments regarding the sprinkler system would be addressed and Chairman Wagenbach noted Mr. Linson's, the City's Forester, comments and their incorporation into the overall plan.

The application was moved for approval by Mr. Anderson and second by Mr. Naidu. The application was approved with the following votes: Yay; Mr. Anderson, Ms. Balson Alvarez, Mr. Brinkerhoff, Mr. Drummond, Mr. Kieser, Ms. Mandelbaum, Mr. Matias, Mr. Naidu, Chairman Wagenbach, Mr. Zucker; Absent Not voting: Mr. Giangiulio

PB – 16 – 245; 25 Deforest Avenue, NREFIII 25 Deforest, LLC

Mr. Drummond recused himself from this hearing.

Mr. Bartholomew Sheehan of Dempsey, Dempsey & Sheehan, represented the applicant and described the project in detail. Mr. Sheehan clarified that the work is to be limited to the rear parking lot and does not include any work on the existing building structure or front entrance to the site. The proposal included the renovation of the existing parking lot surface and included lighting, striping and landscaping. Mr. Sheehan explained that the applicant was seeking specific relief from the height of light posts, parking aisle widths and parking space widths.

Mr. Mark Yeager, owner representative, Craig Peregoy, traffic engineer, Steve Szynal, lighting engineer and Tom Salaki, landscape architect, were all sworn in and questioned by Mr. Sheehan. Mr. Yeager offered a brief project description and answered specific questions from Mr. Sheehan regarding the objective of the proposal and its impacts on the neighboring properties. Mr. Yeager discussed in detail the thought process behind the lighting design and keeping the light spillage to a minimum. The removal of the lighting along the rear of the building was noted as being a significant reduction factor of light spillage onto the neighboring properties.

Mr. Sheehan continued to review the administrative review comments individually with Mr. Yeager and addressed the concerns raised and then offered Mr. Yeager and the professionals to questioning by the Board.

Mr. Anderson questioned the removal of the wall mounted lights at the rear of the building. Mr. Matias questioned the amount of parking required at the site and the layout of the parking aisles. Chairman Wagenbach questioned the consideration of fencing along the rear of the property and the reuse of the existing light poles. Mr. Zucker questioned the potential significant shortage of parking on site if the building is fully rented out.

Mr. Synzal testified that he is a local resident residing two blocks away and that the lighting design was minimalistic in nature and yet provided increased lighting to the site. Mr. Synzal went on to discuss the use of the existing poles, removal of the wall mounted fixtures and addition of the new light poles along the center of the parking lot. Mr. Naidu questioned the timing of the lights and what their schedule would be. Ms. Balson Alvarez questioned potential changes to the height of the proposed lights. Mr. Hipolit, Board Engineer discussed the use of LED lights as opposed to the use of traditional lights and how they improve the conditions with less glare and less spillage.

Comments were heard from Alan Green of 14 Euclid Avenue regarding the existing lighting at 1 Deforest Avenue and compared it to the proposal at 25 Deforest Avenue. Mr. Naidu questioned if the ability of the lighting design to dim the lights to lower levels after certain times of night. Mr. Synzal responded that the design did not include a dimmer but agreed that it could be incorporated in the design.

Mr. Kieser questioned the reduced width in the parking space size and requested Mr. Hipolit's opinion on the matter. Mr. Hipolit responded that he felt the proposal would work and if managed properly by the owner would not pose a detriment to the City or its residents.

The application was moved for approval by Mr. Brinkerhoff and second by Mr. Anderson. The application was approved with the following votes: Yay; Mr. Anderson, Ms. Balson Alvarez, Mr. Brinkerhoff, Mr. Kieser, Ms. Mandelbaum, Mr. Matias, Mr. Naidu, Chairman Wagenbach, Mr. Zucker; Not eligible; Mr. Drummond. Absent not voting; Mr. Giangiulio

PB – 16 – 243; 83 Summit Avenue, GCL 83 Summit, LLC

Mr. William Fiore of Meyner & Landis, represented the applicant and described the site plan application. The proposal included the addition of two residential units to the existing four units located above commercial retail that includes a restaurant and tutoring office. Mr. Fiore explained that no variances were being sought and that the site plan was in conformance with the regulations of the CRBD.

Mr. John Hou, property owner, and James Weill, architect/planner, were sworn in and questioned by Mr. Fiore. Mr. Fiore first questioned Mr. Weill who went through the design of the proposed additions to the existing structure and spoke to the specific elements of the project. Mr. Gibbons noted the comments submitted by the City's construction official regarding the sprinkler system. Mr. Fiore continued with questions related to the appearance of the addition, lighting, parking and other specific design elements.

Mr. Keiser and Mr. Zucker questioned the parking situation for tenants and for properties within the CRBD, Chairman Wagenbach questioned the screening of mechanical equipment and Mr. Anderson questioned the requirement of County approval as some work was shown to take place within Union County Right of Way. Ms. Balson Alvarez discussed improving the south façade of the addition by adding brick headers to which Mr. Weill agreed.

The application was moved for approval by Mr. Naidu and second by Mr. Keiser. The application was approved with the following votes: Yay; Mr. Anderson, Ms. Balson Alvarez, Mr. Brinkerhoff, Mr. Drummond, Mr. Kieser, Ms. Mandelbaum, Mr. Matias, Mr. Naidu, Chairman Wagenbach, Mr. Zucker; Absent not voting; Mr. Giangiulio

Discussion

Chairman Wagenbach mentioned that that there was a piece of correspondence not included in the packet but that had been emailed out, which was the 2014/2015 annual report from the Zoning Board and for those who had not received it that it would be resent by Mr. Matias.

Ms. Mandelbaum noted that the first 2016 issue of the New Jersey Planner publication discussed hours of operation and site plan approval and that the best practice would be to adopt an ordinance to submit hours of operation restrictions on site plans. Discussion ensued as to whether we should be considering the recommendation of legislation to that effect.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Matias
Planning Board Class II Member