

MINUTES  
 PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
 THURSDAY – AUGUST 1, 2013 - 7:30 PM  
 365 WESTFIELD AVENUE, AUDITORIUM

In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law, P.L. 1975 c231, notice of this meeting was published and a notice as to the time and place of this meeting was deposited with the Township Clerk and posted on the bulletin board of the Clark Municipal Building at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

1. Roll Call

NAME	ROLL CALL			
Mayor Sal Bonaccorso	X			
Council Rep. Frank Mazzeella	X			
John Laezza	X			
Michael Kurzawski	O			
John Zamboni	X			
Kevin Koch	X			
Robert Tarantino	O			
Neil Curcio	X			
Matthew Casey	X			
Michael Altmann, Alternate 1	X			
Michael Cresitello, Planning Board Attorney	X			
Rich O'Connor, Township Engineer	X			
Kevin O'Brien, Planner	X			
Gordon Meth, Planner	X			
Lt. Pollock, Police Dept. Rep.	X			
Chris Buccarelli, Fire Dept. Rep.	X			
Frank Cerasa, Fire Official	X			
Lisa McCabe, Secretary	X			

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Correspondence

- A. Letter from Rich O'Connor Ref: Clark Commons, Technical Review, Block 144, Lots 1 & 2
- B. Letter from RBA Group, Traffic Consultant, ref: Clark Commons
- C. Letter from Shamrock Enterprises, Planner, ref: Clark Commons
- D. Letter from Frank Cerasa, Fire Official, ref: Clark Commons

A motion to dispense with the reading of the correspondence was made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Koch. All Ayes

A motion to approve the minutes of June 6, 2013 was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Curcio. Abstain: Laezza

5. Resolution

A. Tomarc, Clark Retail Center, 45 & 77 Central Avenue, Block 70, Lots 3, 4 & 28.01

A motion to approve the Resolution was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Mazzarella. Ayes: Mazzarella, Zamboni, Curcio, Casey

Mr. Casey recused himself from the site plan application.

6. Site Plan

A. Clark Commons, 1255 Raritan Road/Walnut Avenue, Block 144, Lots 1 & 2

Mr. Stan Fink, Esq. presented the application. He stated that they plan to merge two lots into one. The site is approximately 28 acres and is located in the CLI zone. There are no variances or waivers required. The applicant is Krame Development Company.

All the existing buildings on the site will be demolished. Expert Witnesses that will testify on the application.

William Krame, Principal applicant  
Lisa Degeronlino, Engineer  
Charles Dietz, Architect  
Christine Cofone, Planner  
Scott Kennel & Jay Tropman, Traffic  
Richard Reading, Economist Demographer

Mr. William Krame was sworn in and gave his qualifications. He stated the he has developed major retail projects and works on 1 project at a time. **The proposed shopping center** is 245,000-square-foot complex that would include 15 retail spaces and three restaurants on the 28-acre site. They have not secured any tenants at this time. They plan to attract national tenants, not the mom and pop tenants that would be in Clarkton Shopping Center or Westfield Avenue. He also feels that this center will be the nicest in Union and Middlesex County.

Traffic is of course an issue. They have explored every possibility. He feels that the site needs to operate at the same level or better after it is built than it is today.

As far as environmental issues, they have performed hundreds of thousands of dollars for testing of concrete, ground water, soil and bricks. The site is absolutely clean.

Mr. Koch asked how the flow of the site will be. Mr. Krame stated the side has been designed with sidewalks. There is a detention basin at the corner of the property that will be a year round fountain with colored lights. All the buildings will be facing towards the middle of the site. They are giving tremendous consideration to who the tenants will be. They would like to keep the people on the site to shop, eat and perhaps exercise.

Exhibit A-1 – Memo from ROUX ref: Remediation Status and Site Closure Schedule

Exhibit A-2 – Letter from Elm Group ref: Evaluation of Environmental Conditions

Exhibit A-3 – Letter from Elm Group ref: Phase I – II

Exhibit A-4 – Well Decommissioning Report

Exhibit A-5 – US Gypsum Environmental Statement

Exhibit A-6 – Letter from Dept. of State ref: Administrative Consent Order

Exhibit A-7 – Letter from Elm Group ref: Summary of Concrete Sampling Activities

Exhibit A-8 – Letter from Cardno ATC ref: Asbestos Testing Services

Exhibit A-9 – Letter from Arcadis ref: Sub-Slab Soil Gas Sampling

Asbestos removal has been underway for approximately 2 ½ weeks which have to be done before any demolition can be done.

A motion to open the meeting to the public for questions of Mr. Krame was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Altman. All Ayes

A motion to close the meeting to the public for questions of Mr. Krame was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Curcio. All Ayes

Lisa Degeronlino, Engineer, was sworn in and gave her qualifications. A motion to accept as expert was made by Mr. Mazzarella and seconded by Mr. Koch. All Ayes

Exhibit A-10 – Aerial Image of Surrounding Area

Ms. Degeronlino stated that approximately 40% of the site is building or paved. The storm water management basin is in the back of the site and is considered wetlands. The site is relatively flat with a high elevation of 73 and a low elevation of 58.

Exhibit A-11 – Colored Proposed Landscape & Site Plan

The plan is approximately 241,000 square feet. The plan proposes three large buildings in a semicircle around the property, all facing inward to a central parking area with 1,279 spaces with handicapped spaces spread out throughout the site. There is a 40 foot setback on Raritan Road and Walnut Avenue with a 15 foot side yard setback and a 25 foot rear yard setback. There will be Fire Department access around the facility. There will also be a loading dock behind the large building. The traffic flow around the back of the building will be one way. On the Walnut Avenue site, they will build a wall and then add planting to wall to keep the residents from looking at the back of a building.

The site plan proposes four entrances and exits, one on Walnut Avenue and three on Raritan Road. The main entrance would be across from the Hyatt Hills Golf Course entrance with a traffic light. The other two entrances/exits on Raritan Road would be right turn in, right turn out only, while the entrance/exit on Walnut Avenue would allow left turns in, but out right turns out.

The plan proposes a retention basin made to look like a wet pond, with a fountain, gazebo and benches at the Raritan Road and Walnut Avenue corner of the property. There will be an ornamental fence around the pond. There will be vegetation and annuals around the basin.

The utilities are available to the site for gas line, telephone & electric. Half the sanitary sewer will go out to Raritan Road and the other half will go to a sewer that exists on the site.

The landscaping will have low hedges along the parking lot and in from and there will be series of street trees with shrubs. There will be annuals around the signs and the pond area and at the main entrance. There will be sidewalks throughout the site and also down Raritan Road and Walnut Avenue. There is a walkway coming down the center aisle.

Lighting - There will be a 5 foot candle throughout the site for lighting on a 20 foot pole. For the pedestrian area will have lower lights on 10 foot decorative poles.

Dumpsters will be located at the rear of the building and the restaurants will each have their own dumpster.

The Fire Department has no major issues or concerns. The applicant has met all compliances. The Fire Official had made recommendations and they have been complied with.

Mr. Curcio feels that they have done a good job to protect the residents on Walnut Avenue, but he feels that the pond/fountain is going to be a gathering of crowds. Is there going to be anything done to keep the noise of these people from the residents. She stated that this area is approximately 250 feet away from the residents. Mr. Curcio thought that the fountain was going to be in the center of the site. She stated that the center is a high point of the site and would be hard to get water there.

Ms. Degeronlino stated that they will comply with Mr. O'Connor's reports. Mr. O'Connor is satisfied.

Mr. Altman asked about the berm. Ms. Degeronlino stated that the wall is going to be 3 feet high and then raise the grading up from there and then plant the trees on top of that. Mr. Koch stated that the wall will be used to feather from the sidewalk up.

A motion to open the meeting to the public for question of Ms. Degeronlino was made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Koch. All Ayes.

Tyler Bigelow, 8 Florence Drive, asked why they could not leave the 40 foot trees on Walnut Avenue that is there. She stated that they existing trees are in the way of the building. They extend quite a bit into the property.

Debra McCleaster, 921 Lake Avenue asked approximately how big a 1279 spaced parking lot is. Mr. Laezza stated that there are about 880 spaces at the Target parking lot. She also asked is they are going to have mosquito control at the pond area? Ms. Degeronlino stated that they will have to submit a plan to DEP.

Delia Collins, 72 Georgia Street, asked about the delivery trucks coming onto the site, do they have to travel the whole back of the site to get to the buildings on Walnut Avenue since it is going to be a one way from right to left. The Engineers stated that it would depend on when they were coming from. Ms. Collins asked about the wetlands near ShopRite. The Engineer stated that they have to get the OK from DEP to fill this in. Mr. Cresitello stated that this is regulated by the DEP. Ms. Collins stated that there is a lot of wild life there.

Mayor Bonaccorso asked if the detention basin on the corner of Raritan Road and Walnut was not used as a pond, what it would look like. It would look like a large hole with stone in it like what is near the parkway circle. He stated that they are trying to make this project as nice as possible. The Township will have to work with the police department to make sure that kids are not hanging out there late at night during the summer months.

Tyler Bigelow, 8 Florence Drive asked how what the size of the pond is. The pond will be 110' x 80'. He also asked if the pond will flood Walnut and Raritan in a 100 year storm. She stated that it is a 100 year storm water system.

A motion to close the meeting to the public for questions of Ms. Degeronlino was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Curcio. All Ayes.

Mr. Koch asked how deep the pond will be. She stated that the pond will be 4-6 feet deep. He also asked why they cannot leave the trees on Walnut Avenue and maybe lose some parking spaces. Ms. Degeronlino stated that the trees are significantly onto the property. Mayor Bonaccorso asked what type of colors will be on the Walnut Avenue side of the building. Mr. Krame stated that it will be earth tone and the side of the building will extend so you will not be able to see any rooftop components.

Mr. Mazarella asked if they would need a variance if they were to lose some parking spaces. She stated that yes they would.

Charles Dietz, Architect was sworn in and gave his credentials. A motion to accept as an expert was made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Koch. All Ayes.

#### Exhibit A-12 – Colored rendering of 3 main buildings

Mr. Dietz, stated that he has a personal interest in making the complex beautiful because he lives in nearby Westfield. His plans propose earth-tone stone fronts on the buildings with various building heights and an awning to protect visitors. Most of the one-story buildings would range in height from about 23-30 feet, depending on the decorative cornices and awnings at the top. One anchor retailer would have an arch stretching up to 40 feet. A 25-foot sign made the match the stone on the buildings would be at the main entrance on Raritan Road. There are 7 buildings total on the site. The three main buildings will hold multiple tenants; the other 4 will be single tenant buildings. Each store will have a name on the front of the building that will all be the same height.

The AC units will start midway on the roof of the building. The rear of the building is the same as the front of the building.

Mr. Dietz stated that they will comply with Mr. O'Connor's letter and also the Fire Official's recommendations.

Mr. Curcio asked if the applicant will agree to make the extra 4,000 square feet restricted not to be added to building C. Mr. Krame stated that he will agree with that.

Mayor Bonaccorso asked if the back of the building on Walnut Avenue will mimic the front of the building. They treat the front and the back the same.

Mr. Zamboni asked Mr. O'Brien, our Planner, if he had any comments. Mr. O'Brien stated that he does not at this time, everything has been addressed.

A motion to open the meeting to the public for questions of Mr. Dietz was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Altman. All Ayes

Delia Collins, 72 Georgia Street, asked if the signage on Raritan Road will be illuminated 24 hours. Mr. Dietz stated that it will follow the lighting that is in the shopping center and whatever the ordinance is for the town of Clark. She also asked if there will be any other small signs at the other entrances. He stated that they will probably have ground lighting shining up on them not internally illuminated.

A motion to close the meeting to the public for question of Mr. Dietz was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Curcio. All Ayes.

Christine Cofone, Planner, was sworn in. A motion to accept as an expert was made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Mazzearella. All Ayes.

Ms. Cofone stated that this application is a conforming use and there are no variances. She also feels that the extra 4,000 square feet does not cause any detriment to the plan. She also agrees with Mr. O'Brien's report. She feels that it would be a benefit to combine the site with the current ShopRite site.

Mr. Koch asked about the COAH obligation with this site. Ms. Cofone stated that she has not idea and nobody knows what COAH will be doing. The applicant will have to deal with what the COAH obligations decision is. Mr. Laezza stated that we are knocking down a building and putting a new one up so it is almost a wash.

A motion to open the meeting to the public for questions of Ms. Cofone was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Curcio. All Ayes

Tyler Bigelow, 8 Florence Drive, asked if the township will have to bring on anymore Police, Fire, First Aid or DPW. Mayor Bonaccorso stated that DPW has nothing to do with this site. The other agencies are all adequate and should not be any strain.

Ms. Cofone stated that they have a fiscal impact analysis and this is a very strong project.

Delia Collins, 72 Georgia Street, asked about the connectivity to ShopRite. Ms. Degeronlino stated that the exiting road would be extended but it is not proposed at this time and is not part of the plan.

A motion to close the meeting to the public for question of Ms. Cofone was made by Mayor Bonaccorso and seconded by Mr. Koch. All Ayes.

Richard Reading, Economic Analyst was sworn in and gave his credentials. A motion to accept as an expert was made by Mayor Bonaccorso and seconded by Mr. Laezza.

Mr. Reading stated the he estimates that the complex would be have completed value of \$50 million and would provide \$1.1 million in annual tax revenue compared with the \$298,000 the property does currently. Of that \$1.1 million, the Clark School District would receive a half million dollars and Clark township would receive \$278,000 of added tax revenue. Mr. Reading also agrees with Mr. O'Brien's report. Mayor Bonaccorso stated that the main beneficiary of this project is the school system.

Mr. Reading estimates 425 full-time retail jobs would be created by building the complex.

A motion to open the meeting to the public for questions of Mr. Reading was made by Mayor Bonaccorso and seconded by Mr. Koch. All Ayes

A motion to close the meeting to the public for questions of Mr. Reading was made by Mr. Koch and was seconded by Mr. Altman. All Ayes

7. New Business

8. Old Business

9. Public Session

A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Curcio. All Ayes

Debra McCleaster, 921 Lake Avenue, likes the idea of beautifying the retention basin but doesn't think a gazebo should go there and make it a place to hang out because of the traffic.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Altman. All Ayes

10. Next Meeting

August 22 – Special Meeting – ALJ Auditorium at 7PM

September 5

October 3

11. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Koch and seconded by Mr. Altman. All Ayes