

MINUTES
 PLANNING BOARD VIRTUAL MEETING
 THURSDAY - MAY 7, 2020 - 7:30 PM

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975), adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by mailing the Annual Schedule of Meetings and by electronic advanced notice of at least 48 hours pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-9.1 as permitted during a declared emergency to the Star Ledger, Union County Local Source and TAP into Clark, by posting such Annual Meeting Schedule on the bulletin board in Town Hall reserved for such announcements and by the proper filing of said Notice with the Township Clerk. Formal action may be taken at this meeting.

This meeting is a judicial proceeding. Any questions or comments must be limited to issues that are relevant to what the board may legally consider in reaching a decision and decorum appropriate to a judicial hearing must be maintained at all time.

Chairman opened meeting.

1. Roll Call

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT		
Mayor Sal Bonaccorso		X		
Council Rep. Frank Mazarella	x			
John Laezza	X			
Kevin Koch	X			
Robert Tarantino	X			
Matthew Casey	x			
Michael Altmann	x			
Michael Triola	X			
George Olear	X			
Michael Bonaccorso, Jr., Alternate 1		X		
Joe Sordillo, Planning Board Attorney	X			
Rich O'Connor, Township Engineer	X			
Det. Sgt. Christian Lott, Police Dept. Rep.		X		
Chief Frank Cerasa, Fire Dept. Rep.		X		
Donna Mazzucco, Secretary	X			

2. Pledge of Allegiance

2a. Mr. Laezza introduced our new Board Attorney, Mr. Joseph Sordillo of the law firm of DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, P.C.

3. Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of February 6, 2020 meeting was made by Mr. Tarantino and seconded by Mr. Casey. All Ayes.

4. Correspondence

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

5. A motion to approve a Resolution for Site Plan Approval of Clark Walnut Developers, LLC, 35 Walnut Avenue and 92 Valley Road, Block 155, Lots 7 & 10 was made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Altmann. Roll call taken. 8 Ayes, 2 Absent. Resolution approved.
6. Site Plan Application - Tomarc Retail Company, LLC, 45 & 77 Central Avenue, Block 70, Lots 7 & 28.01

Ms. Diane Dabulas, Esq. attorney for the applicant, gave a brief overview of the project as a retail/restaurant adjacent to the Marshall's Department Store on the site. She stated the importance of diversification of the site becoming more important in light of the pandemic and its effect on certain business that remain closed. She also stated that the engineer and the architect for the applicant will be presenting this evening.

Our first witness was Mr. Greg Elko of Langen Engineering, Warrington, PA. Mr. Elko stated his credentials and was approved by the Board and sworn in by Mr. Sordillo. Mr. Langen started his presentation by describing the present site including the location, size and use of the various tenants. He also described the parking signage, surrounding areas and present non-conformities within the site.

Next Mr. Elko presented new proposed conditions; a commercial retail/restaurant space. As the tenant has not been identified yet, the parking variance requested would be for a restaurant; the higher parking requirements of the two. Site improvements presented included a sidewalk, landscaping, lighting, etc. Mr. Elko then detailed all the requested variances including number of parking spaces, impervious coverage and increased signage. He also discussed garbage removal, deliveries, etc. Mr. Elko explained "site specific parking ratio" and how it applied to this site. He also gave a brief history of the parking resolutions for this site as well as the results of several parking studies conducted. Lastly, he discussed the two waivers requested for setback and scale on the master site plan and detailed the responses to the technical review letter. All items were addressed and resolved. Mr. Elko finished his presentation and Mr. Koch asked if the Board had any questions or comments.

Councilman Mazzarella questioned the additional sewer use and Mr. Elko stated that it would be approximately 1,500 gallons per day.

Mr. Koch questioned the fire exit and Mr. O'Connor stated that the Fire Department had no issues. Mr. O'Connor brought up condo lot lines in the master plan which will be a condition of the approval.

Mr. O'Brien asked about the trash compartment enclosure, canopy and landscaping and Mr. Elko indicated that the architect would respond.

Mr. O'Brien questioned the number of parking spaces by increasing the use and decreasing the parking. Mr. Elko stated that online shopping has actually caused a decrease in parking demand. Discussion ensued. Mr. Tom Newman, co-owner of the site, was sworn in and joined the discussion.

Seeing no more questions from the Board, Mr. Koch asked for a motion to open Mr. Elko's testimony to the public. Motion made by Mr. Altmann and seconded by Mr. Tarantino. All Ayes.

Seeing no one come forward, Mr. Koch asked for a motion to close Mr. Elko's testimony to the public moved by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Tarantino. All Ayes.

The next witness was Mr. James Ramentol, Principal of GRA Architects, Berkeley Heights, NJ. Mr. Ramentol stated his credentials was approved by the Board and sworn in by Mr. Sordillo. Mr. Ramentol presented the floor plans of both of retail and restaurant. He then discussed the **conceptual design for the façade, canopy and signage**. As the signage requires a variance in both size and number of signs, Mr. Ramentol explained in detail those requests.

Mr. Ramentol stated that he was done with his testimony and was open for questions from the Board. The Board did not have any questions but Mr. O'Brien asked about the canopy, pillars and the gate by the fire exit. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Koch asked for a motion to open Mr. Ramentol's testimony up to the Public. Motion made by Mr. Altmann and seconded by Mr. Triola. All Ayes.

Seeing no one come forward, Mr. Koch asked for a motion to close the public comment on Mr. Ramentol's testimony. Motion made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Tarantino. All Ayes.

As there were no more witnesses for the applicant, Ms. Dabulas gave a final summary and closing statement. Mr. Sordillo asked Ms. Dabulas what basis the variances were being requested as they were not specifically mentioned in the testimony. Ms. Dabulas stated that both C1 and C2 variances were requested as detailed by the witnesses.

Mr. Koch asked for a motion to open the meeting up to the Public for this application. Motion made by Mr. Tarantino and seconded by Mr. Altmann. All Ayes.

Seeing no one with questions, Mr. Koch asked for a motion to close the Public Session Made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Mr. Tarantino. All Ayes.

Mr. Koch then asked if the Board had any questions or comments. Based on the professional comments on behalf of the applicant regarding Township concerns, (i.e., parking, sub-division, variances requested, etc.), Mr. Laezza proposed the resolution granting approval of the application based on compliance with items requested by the Engineer, Planner, Fire and Police.

Motion to approve the application made by Mr. Laezza and seconded by Councilman Mazzarella. Roll call taken. 8 Ayes, 2 Absent. Application Approved.

7. New Business

None

8. Old Business

None

9. Public Session

Motion made by Mr. Altmann to open the session to the public for general questions, seconded by Mr. Triola. All Ayes.

Seeing no one come forward, motion made by Mr. Altmann to close the public session seconded by Mr. Triola. All Ayes.

10. Next Meetings

June 4
July 2
August 6

11. Adjournment

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