

**Metuchen Planning Board Minutes**  
**April 15, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Eric Erickson, Chairperson, who read the statement in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

- Present:** Ellen Clarkson, Vice Chairperson  
Alan Grossman  
Melissa Perilstein, Administrator  
Joel Branch, Mayor’s Designee  
Richard Green III  
Lynn Nowak  
Eric Erickson, Chairman
- Jonathan Lifton  
James Griffin, Alt I  
Robert Renaud, Attorney  
Robert Mannix, Engineer  
Christopher Cosenza, Planner  
Denise Hamilton, Secretary
- Absent:** Linda Koskoski, Councilmember  
Jay Galeota, Alt. II  
Jonathan Busch, Mayor  
Patricia Cullen, Zoning Official

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**21-1288 Aros Development** – *(Applicant is seeking preliminary and final major subdivision plan approval to create three lots on parcel).* Approved. 3.4.21

**443 Middlesex Avenue Block 117                      Lot 93**

Motion to approve the resolution was made by Ms. Clarkson and seconded by Mr. Branch. Ms. Clarkson, Mr. Grossman, Ms. Perilstein, Mr. Branch, Mr. Green, Ms. Nowak, Mr. Lifton, Mr. Griffin and Mr. Erickson voted yes. Motion was approved.

**21-1287 Greenway Village LLC** – *(Applicant requires preliminary and final major site plan approval with variances and waivers (if required), for the addition of two-stories to the existing structure to make it a three-story mixed use building).* Approved March 18, 2021

**67 Pearl Street                      Block 113                      Lots 4 & 6**

Motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Green and seconded by Mr. Grossman. Ms. Clarkson, Mr. Grossman, Ms. Perilstein, Mr. Branch, Mr. Green, Ms. Nowak, Mr. Lifton, Mr. Griffin and Mr. Erickson voted yes. Motion was approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**21-1289 Fox & Foxx Development LLC** – Applicant requires variance approval to demolish existing 1.5 story single family dwelling and construct a 2.5 story two-family detached condominium.

**29 Halsey Street                      Block 144                      Lot 8**

Donna Jennings, Applicant’s Attorney, explained that Applicant is seeking conditional use approval for construction of a proposed two family detached dwelling. The existing non-conforming single family structure would be demolished. In addition, bulk variances for existing site conditions are being requested for the lot size and width. Engineer’s and Planner’s memos would also be addressed.

Mr. Jeff Kraft, Licensed Land Surveyor & Planner, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. He shared his screen for the presentation to display the exhibits. He stated that the property is an undersized lot located in the B3 Zone, with an existing one-and-a-half single family residence. The proposal is to construct a two-family residential dwelling compliant with requirements for the B3 Zone. The dwelling would consist of two separate units side by side, with separate walkways, driveways and utility connections. Each would have four bedrooms, a floor area of 2,788 sq. ft., and a 37-foot long driveway. The two conditional use requirements are met; 1) house would not front on the streets stipulated in the Ordinance, and 2) the front, side and rear yard setback requirements have been met. The setbacks proposed are; front yard 28.8 ft., side yard 10 feet/combined 24.74 ft., and rear yard 25.73 ft. All bulk requirements for the B3 Zone would be met; building height of 2.5 stories, building coverage 34.2%, and total impervious coverage of 45%. Variances are being requested for the pre-existing non-conforming lot area of 9,503.06 ft. and lot width of 76.74 ft. The application falls under the C1 Criteria due to size and shape of the lot, and the C2 Criteria for removal of a non-conforming use to be replaced with a conforming use. There will be no detriment to the property or neighborhood. The proposal is in compliance with the Ordinance and Master Plan. They will adhere to suggestions made by the Engineer and Planner, and will continue to work with the Planner for landscaping and parking issues. No additional variances are being sought.

Mr. Cosenza stated that the two-family detached structure is a conditional use in the B3 Zone. It is a single structure on a single lot unattached to any other building. He asked for clarification of the measurement for the front yard setback.

Mr. Paul Fletcher, Engineer, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud. He verified the front yard setback dimension of 28.8 ft. was taken from the main body of the house and not from the porch.

Mr. Cosenza gave his approval for the setback and inquired about the insufficient parking spaces proposed. The Applicant is required to have five spaces yet only four were offered, although additional spaces could be acquired by using the extended driveway. The Board could grant a de minimus exception for parking.

Mr. Mannix stated that Applicant has agreed to comply the suggestions from his memo.

Mr. Mark Marcille, Architect, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. He stated that it was a traditional design approach and would continue work with the Planner on final plans. There's differentiation in the overhead doors for individuality. Units will have adjacent entry porches, one car garage, four bedrooms, and other standard living spaces.

The Board questioned the difference in the front façades of the units and were informed by the Applicant that it was deliberate.

## **PUBLIC PORTION:**

Mr. Erickson opened the floor to the public for questions.

Residents inquired about the replacement of trees for a fence and possibly creating a walkway from Halsey Street to the Arts Center on Lake Avenue.

Mr. Renaud stated that the Board could consider the request for a fence at the conclusion of the meeting.

Ms. Jennings responded that a walkway would not be considered as the new residents may find that intrusive.

Mr. Erickson closed the Public Portion for questions and opened the floor for comments.

Concern was expressed by the Board for the exclusion of solar panels, green roof, or any approach to address climate crisis.

Mr. Erickson invited additional questions from the public. No one responded. He closed the public portion.

Mr. Renaud explained that it is an application for conditional use approval and the use standards have been met based on the testimony. The two variances being sought are for pre-existing conditions that cannot be altered. Applicant has agreed to work with the Planner for final design, and to comply with recommendations submitted in both the Planner's and Engineer's memorandums. To grant the application, Board must agree to a de minimus exception for the deficient parking spaces. No additional bedrooms will be permitted due to the inadequate parking situation. The Board could grant relief on the removal of trees without charge.

The Board declined to rule on the removal of trees since that was not part of the application. A brief discussion continued between Board members whether or not they were in favor of the application.

Motion to approve the application was made by Mr. Lifton and seconded by Mr. Grossman. Ms. Clarkson, Mr. Grossman, Ms. Perilstein, Mr. Branch, Mr. Green, Ms. Nowak, Mr. Lifton and Mr. Erickson voted yes. Mr. Griffin voted no. Motion approved.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

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Motion to approve was made by Ms. Novak and seconded by Mr. Green. Voice vote, all in favor, minutes were approved.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Clarkson and seconded by Mr. Grossman. Voice vote, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned 8:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
D. Hamilton