

**Metuchen Planning Board Minutes
Virtual Meeting
March 18, 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
Linda Koskoski, Councilmember
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
Patricia Cullen, Zoning Official
Denise Hamilton, Secretary
- Absent:** Jay Galeota, Alt. II - Late 7:32p
Jonathan Busch, Mayor

RESOLUTION:

21-1280 Phoenix 410 Main Street – *(Applicant is seeking preliminary, final, major site plan approval with variances, waivers and exceptions, to continue commercial use, add new commercial space and 15 new apartments to the parcel).* Approved February 10, 2021

410 Main Street Block 121 Lot 9

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

NEW BUSINESS:

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.

67 Pearl Street Block 113 Lots 4 & 6

Mr. John Wiley, Applicant's Attorney, stated that the application is part of the redevelopment project. They will discuss the site plan and issues raised by the Planner and Engineer on their memorandums.

Mr. Angelo Valetutto, Engineer, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud. He has appeared before the Board numerous times and accepted as an expert witness.

Mr. Valetutto stated that there is a structure on the premises and a parking lot in the rear. Access to the parking lot is through an existing easement that will remain. The Applicant is seeking to add two stories to the existing structure to make it three stories. The second floor have four one-bedroom and one three-bedroom apartments. The third floor will be five one-bedroom apartments. The ground floor will be mixed-use with a salon, and five one-bedroom apartments. The rear will have 14 parking spaces with one designated for handicap. There will also be a concrete dumpster for refuse. The existing building will not be demolished but renovated. Access to the refuse area will continue to be at the rear of the building by the easement off of Middlesex Avenue. There will be fencing with

self-closing gates as requested by the Engineer. The roof drains will be off the back of the building, to discharge into a small grass area, and into the existing storm drain system.

Mr. Mannix stated that the drain system would not be an improvement over what currently exist. He suggested tying into the storm system on Pearl Street.

Mr. Valettutto stated that an effort can be made to have drainage run on a slope and pipe into the Pearl Street system.

The Board requested a visual of the plans being presented.

Mr. Mannix also suggested piping the roof drains into the inlet used by the adjacent property in the rear.

Mr. Josell was agreeable to that request and shared his screen with the Board, displaying the site plan.

The discussion continued with the Engineer and Architect in regards to the storm water system. Mr. Valettutto said they would try to secure an easement to tie into the existing storm drain. Mr. Mannix was agreeable to having the discharge closer to the inlet, if not directly tied into it.

Mr. Valettutto stated that they will comply with all other suggestions from the Engineer's memo. All construction details will be submitted on the revised plans.

Mr. Erickson invited questions from the Board for the witness. There were no questions.

Mr. Jeff Josell, Applicant, was sworn in by Renaud.

Mr. Wiley concluded with the Engineer's memo and referred to the Planner's memo.

Mr. Renaud informed the Board that their approval of the parking standards will be required. The Applicant is proposing fewer spaces than what meets the Residential Site Improvement Standards by offering 14 spaces.

Mr. Cosenza stated that under the RSIS the application would require 25.7 spaces, but since the Redevelopment Agreement specifies one parking space per unit was acceptable, the application was in compliance with that agreement. The recommendation is to approve the parking offered. It is the same as a previous redevelopment application that received approval and other parking resources are available.

The Board continued with a discussion whether or not the number of parking spaces offered were adequate. The concern that this building was both residential and commercial with limited spaces.

Mr. Josell said the building will be EV adaptable. There will an indoor and outdoor parking space for bikes. The area under the stairwell will be for indoor parking and the bike rack outside will be extended. There will be an outdoor gated patio available to the two apartments that front on Pearl Street. The rear yard parking lot will be left as is.

Mr. Wiley stated they will comply with the Planner's suggestions for lighting and landscaping.

Mr. Jeff Josell said that the vents 29 x 29 will be the same color as the building and blend. They will require a variance. Two of the six units will be inside a gated area.

Mr. Cosenza stated that an exception would be required and he would work with the Applicant.

Mr. Josell stated they will continue to work on the building design with LRK. Although they will not agree to solar, the design will be sustainable. It will not have an elevator.

The Board requested a visual of the building design.

Mr. Renaud stated that the application must comply with the Affordable Housing Ordinance and offer two affordable units; one low income and one moderate income. They must be two and three bedroom units. There is a required contribution for the fractional number unit that is not being constructed.

Mr. Josell stated that the materials and façade of the building have been discussed with the Planner and they will continue with his guidance. Building materials will be brick and stucco for the façade. Due to limited spacing between buildings, only the right side will be decorative. The back will have stucco or vinyl siding. Everything on the first floor will be handicap adaptable.

Mr. Cosenza asked about push button accessibility.

The Board expressed appreciation for the building and the changes forthcoming. It will be an improvement for the block. Lack of EV parking spaces is a disappointment. Projects are missing opportunities to be more sustainable.

Mr. Renaud reminded the Board that they are allowed to shape the design.

Public Portion:

Mr. Erickson opened the floor to the public.

Todd Pagel, Resident, asked why the building proposed was not a story of two higher.

Mr. Wiley responded that there are two constraints: 1) one is the Zoning Ordinance, and 2) the Agreement with the Borough. Substantial use variance would be required.

Mr. Renaud closed the Public Portion for questions and open the floor for comments.

Mr. Todd Pagel was sworn in by Mr. Renaud. He commented that the building looks great, but we should be trying for sustainable energy. Charging stations, solar panels, etc., should have been considered.

Mr. Renaud invited additional comments from the public. No one responded.

Mr. Erickson closed the public portion for comments.

Mr. Renaud stated the Conditions/Issues discussed: 1) Compliance with the Affordable Housing Fee Ordinance and compliance with the Development Fee Ordinance; 2) push pad access at the back door closest to the parking area.; 3) one exception, the HVAC units; and 4) drainage to get easement to catch basin or bring storm water as close to the inlet as possible.

There was a discussion on building accessibility and Mr. Josell mentioned that key access will also be available.

The Board expressed concern that there is nothing being done to make the building more sustainable. Metuchen would be more of an example if buildings were being constructed with the efforts of sustainability.

Motion to approve the application was made by Ms. Perilstein and seconded by Mr. Lifton. Ms. Clarkson, Mr. Grossman, Councilmember Koskoski, Ms. Perilstein, Mr. Branch, Mr. Green, Ms. Nowak, Mr. Lifton and Mr. Erickson voted yes.

Correspondence:

Minutes, March 10, 2021

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

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Perilstein and seconded by Ms. Nowak. Voice vote, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,



D. E. Hamilton