

**METUCHEN PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES**

**July 7, 2022**

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.

<b>Present:</b>	Alan Grossman Councilmember Koskoski Melissa Perilstein, Administrator William Love, Mayor's Designee Jonathan Lifton Eric Erickson, Chairman	Lauren Cohn, Alt. II Robert Renaud, Attorney Robert Mannix, Engineer Christopher Cosenza, Planner Patricia Kaulfers, Zoning Official Denise Hamilton, Secretary
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<b>Absent:</b>	Ellen Clarkson, Vice Chairperson Jonathan Busch, Mayor	Lynn Nowak James Griffin
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**RESOLUTION:**

Moss School	16 Simpson Avenue
Campbell School	24 Durham Avenue
Edgar School	49 Brunswick Avenue
Metuchen High School	400 Grove Avenue

Motion to adopt the resolution as written was made by Councilmember Koskoski and seconded by Mr. Love. Mr. Grossman, Councilmember Koskoski, Mr. Love, Ms. Cohn and Mr. Erickson voted yes. Motion was approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**22-1322 Lepore Realty** – Applicant requires variance approval for front yard setback and maximum impervious coverage to pave parking lot for stripped parking, and traffic ingress/egress signs.

**257-267 Central Avenue Bl: 49 Lot: 18.02 & 18.03**

Mr. John Wiley, Applicant's Attorney, explained that the application is to pave the rear lot graveled parking spaces which would affect the impervious coverage. There would be no physical changes to the building.

Mr. Leslie Walker, Engineer, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud. He has a Master's Degree in Engineering and Licensed in New Jersey. Mr. Walker was accepted as an expert witness. He stated that the initial plan originally submitted by Mr. Joseph Schaffer had been revised. The buildings are multi-use spaces. Stones are also proposed to assist with the run off. Trees will be planted at the side of the building where currently there is gravel.

Mr. Wiley confirmed that Applicant will abide by the suggestions made by Mr. Cosenza pertaining to the ingress/egress areas being memorialized and parking calculation would be adjusted to include the sit-in restaurant. This should increase parking by two spaces.

Mr. Cosenza stated that a parking exception may be required.

Mr. Renaud stated that ownership of the cross easement and storm water system could be made permanent through a resolution or other means.

Mr. Walker mentioned that a total of 40 spaces would be available.

Mr. Renaud suggested an exception for the deficiency in parking.

Mr. Cosenza requested Applicant to consider inclusion of bike spaces, an electric charging station, and more green spaces. A variance would be required for the impervious coverage.

Mr. Mannix suggested moving the fence to gain additional space for a trash enclosure.

The Board inquired about the bike rack and charging station as suggested by Mr. Cosenza.

Applicant was not receptive to the suggestions.

Mr. Erickson opened the floor to the public, no one responded, the floor was closed.

Mr. Renaud stated the Conditions. 1) Applicant has agreed to comply with all Engineer's requirements and Planner's suggestions for cross easement for ingress/egress parking and drainage areas. 2) Revision of the parking chart.

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Lifton and seconded by Mr. Love. Mr. Grossman, Councilmember Koskoski, Ms. Perilstein, Mr. Love, Mr. Lifton, Ms. Cohn and Mr. Erickson voted yes. Motion was approved.

**22-1323 Thomspson, William** – Applicant is requesting preliminary and minor final subdivision approval with bulk variances to subdivide property and construct a new single-family house on the new lot.

**22 Ethel Place Bl: 205 Lot: 40**

Mr. John Wiley, Applicant's Attorney, stated that it was a minor subdivision application requiring bulk variances. The new property would be conforming.

Mr. Mark Marcille, Architect, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud. He has appeared numerous times before the Board and was accepted as an expert witness.

Mr. Marcille stated that the proposal includes a new four-bedroom house, two-car garage house and a wrap-around front porch. The garage will be pushed back. Most homes on that block are 1920s style.

Mr. Ericson opened the floor for questioning of the witness, and after hearing no response, the floor was closed.

Mr. James Watson, Planner, was sworn in by Mr. Renaud. He is a Licensed Surveyor and Planner in New Jersey. He was accepted as an expert witness. He explained that one variance is for a 50-foot lot width, 5000 sq. ft. total, where the requirement is 62.5 width and 7500 sq. ft. total. Variances are required for impervious coverage and side setback for the existing garage because of the close proximity of the new lot line. Parking is below the requirements. Foundation plantings are proposed for the front with some street trees. Driveway width will be revised as suggested by the Engineer to accommodate required parking. Final grading plan will be submitted. Most variances have to do with the existing lot which is 12,500 sq. ft. All setback variances are along the lot line. Positive criteria meets the general welfare requirement. Any negative would be associated with traffic and noise. It is a good infill development which matches the character of the neighborhood. The benefits outweigh the detriments.

The Board held a brief discussion on the proposal to create non-conforming lots. Application was not in compliance with the Ordinance although most of the houses on the block are in conformance.

Mr. Wiley responded that larger houses are being built on newer lots and this neighborhood existed before the Ordinance was created. The houses would conform to the character of the neighborhood, but not necessarily the Ordinance.

Mr. Cosenza mentioned that infill developments should not be a detriment to the character of the neighborhood. Housing policies have been amended and adopted to promote the neighborhood. The new lot would be too big.

Mr. Renaud explained that the Application presented before the Board is what should be considered.

Mr. Mannix mentioned that Applicant has offered to remove the impervious coverage variance on the lot with the existing dwelling and will adhere to the Plot and Grading Ordinance. This has become the norm to stop the spread of the sum pump problems.

#### **PUBLIC PORTION:**

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

Several residents expressed their opposition to the application; the new house was too large, sunlight would be obstructed, and potential for increased noise.

Mr. Erickson invited additional comments from the Board, no one responded, the floor was closed.

In summary, Mr. Renaud stated that the application was for a subdivision with variations in sizes and widths of the lots. Variances can be granted under the C1 or C2 criteria. A condition to deny the variance for impervious coverage, or require Applicant to make lot conform, could be included. The usual conditions would also apply as stated in Planner's and Engineer's memos.

Motion to deny the application was made by Mr. Lifton and seconded by Councilmember Koskoski. Mr. Grossman, Councilmember Koskoski, Ms. Perilstein, Mr. Love, Mr. Lifton, Ms. Cohn and Mr. Erickson voted yes. Motion was approved.

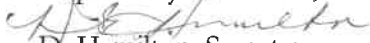
**CORREPENDENCE:**

Minutes for June 2, 2022

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Grossman and seconded by Ms. Cohn. With all in favor, the minutes were approved.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Perilstein and seconded by Mr. Lifton. With all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
  
D. Hamilton, Secretary