

**Borough of Metuchen
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2023**

Mr. Erickson, the Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Ms. Clarkson
Mr. Erickson
Mr. Delia
Mr. Love
Ms. Nowak
Mr. Lifton
Mr. Griffin
Ms. Cohn
Ms. Gelber

Mr. Renaud, Board Attorney
Mr. Mannix, Board Engineer
Mr. Herits, Borough Engineer
Ms. Perilstein, Borough Administrator
Mr. Cosenza, Borough Planner
Ms. Hamilton, Board Secretary

ABSENT:

Mayor Busch

OLD BUSINESS

21-1304

HES Equity, LLC – Applicant requires approval for variances and waivers to construct an addition to the one-story warehouse on the rear gravel parking lot. ***(Continued from March 3, 2023.)***

100 Prospect Street

Block 152 Lots 51.01 & 52.02

Mr. Wiley, the applicant's attorney, discusses how they have made some modifications to the application. Mr. Cosenza raised some questions regarding the tenant with the three to five employees that they will address. The architect, planner and engineer will testify to the modifications.

Mr. Cosenza asks about the change to the loading area on High Street. The applicant has eliminated the loading bay on High Street that was a concern of neighbors. The operation will have the main facility in the rear of the building on Prospect Street. The concern is about more activity on Prospect Street.

Dihui Hewu, also known as Anthony, is the owner of HES Equities and Bayridge Electrical Supply. The warehouse will service the Brooklyn facility and will store equipment to be transported to the Brooklyn location. There will be box trucks and eighteen wheelers frequenting the facility. There will be three to five employees with the

hours of operation from 7am to 5pm Monday through Friday. There are occasions when trailers can be parked in the lot overnight.

Mr. Renaud informs the Board that the approval runs with the land, not the applicant. Whatever warehouse may be there in the future will adhere to the use approved.

Mr. Frederick Schmitt, licensed architect for the applicant, discusses the revisions. The existing structure is displayed. The addition has been decreased to 8,400 square feet. Exhibit A4 of the warehouse is distributed. The existing building is eight feet lower than the proposed structure. The interior wall has been opened up allowing two forklifts to transfer materials. There is a loading dock in the rear with access from Prospect Street. The parking has eight spaces with a handicap space and an EV charging station. On High Street the existing loading dock will be closed. The curb cut will be removed, and the sidewalk will be repaired on High Street. The front steps will be removed, and that entrance closed up.

On Prospect Street, there will be a loading dock for box trucks and vans. The driveway will be reduced in size. There is a pedestrian door on this side of the building and will be handicap accessible. They have enhanced the landscaping making it more dense. The entry towards Route 27 is elevated as the grading drops. There will be a new loading dock here that can handle box trucks, vans and certain eighteen wheelers.

In the back of the parking lot there is a dumpster and some green space for a table and chairs for staff.

The Board confirms that the façade on High Street will have no openings and Prospect Street will have all the openings; the number of doors in the building to enter and exit; and what route trucks take to get to this building.

Mr. Cosenza questions the floor space of the building and storage; handicap accessibility; the loading bays along High Street being closed is confirmed; the loading areas on Prospect Street and the type of vehicles they can be accommodated is confirmed; the setback on Prospect Street and concerns about blocking the sidewalk by trucks; air conditioning condenser units; the street scape on High Street and adding additional landscaping.

The meeting is opened to the public for questions to the architect.

Barbara Kuhne of 267 High Street, questions trucks entering after operating hours.

George Kuhne of 267 High Street, questions subletting.

Jane Kimler-Pusillo of 292 High Street, questions the High Street façade and lighting.

The meeting is closed to the public for questions to the architect.

Michael Marinelli, licensed engineer for the applicant, goes over in detail the building changes and proposed addition. He discusses the closure of High Street and curbing and sidewalk changes; the narrowing of the Prospect Street driveway; the elimination of parking spaces with the addition of porous pavement; additional landscaping to increase the impervious coverage area; there will be no additional outside lighting required; stormwater drainage is discussed, as well as the other variances are discussed.

Ms. Perilstein emphasizes the need for stormwater management and addressing Mr. Mannix's, the Board Engineer, concerns.

The Board questions the total square footage of the proposed warehouse which is 18,710 square feet.

The meeting is opened to the public for questions to the engineer. There are none.

David Roberts, the planner for the applicant, is sworn in and accepted as a professional by the Board. Mr. Roberts hands out Exhibit A5 and displays the exhibit on the screen. This is a unique lot. Both Prospect and High Street lead into private property. The site is undersized, narrow, and has grade issues sloping up eight feet from High Street to the rear. The setback issues are related to the lot shape and the size. Turning High Street into an inactive side of the building alleviates the activity away from the residential area on High Street. There is not a substantial impact to the neighborhood. The application he feels is upgrading the property. The front side yard relief is justified with the narrow shape, the lot is already less than the minimum lot area; the homes on High Street will not see the new addition of the building.

The Board questions the hardship. With regards to the property size and the addition to the building, there is a decrease in pervious coverage and the Board questions if it is necessary to do the addition. The planner indicates the hardship variance is for the existing conditions. The Board feels there is a negative impact with the increased truck activity with the expansion.

Mr. Cosenza feels Mr. Roberts, the planner, provided sufficient testimony as to positive criteria for the hardship. As for the C variances, there is sufficient testimony about the street scape on High Street and the negative criteria does not impact the master plan but there is concern about the land development and coverage variance as it relates to stormwater management. More information is needed on the stormwater management plan.

The meeting is opened to the public for questions to the planner. There are none.

Mr. Renaud feels this meeting will need to resume when we can have the stormwater management report.

Mr. Renaud announces that the meeting will be continued on June 1 at the Planning Board meeting at 7:30PM. There will be no further notice nor any newspaper notice. He encourages the applicant to get all materials to the Board secretary at least ten days prior to the hearing.

CORRESPONDENCE

2023-04 Resolution – Ordinance Amending Major Site Plan Applicability

This part of the meeting is not legible and there is no Vote on Motion paperwork.

Adoption of March 2, 2023, Meeting Minutes

The board motion and approves the meeting minutes.

Mr. Renaud is speaking but again this is not legible.

ADJOURNMENT

The board motions to adjourn.

/jr