

STRATFORD JOINT LAND USE BOARD
MINUTES
January 25, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Mancini at 6:30 pm and the public statement was read that the meeting was advertised in the Courier Post, the Collingswood Retrospect and a notice was posted on the bulletin board at the Borough Hall stating the time and place.

The Chairman led the board in the pledge of allegiance and a prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Present

M. Mancini, Chairman Class IV
P. McGovern, Vice Chairman Class IV
J. Keenan Class I
T. Lomanno Class III
K. Campbell Class IV
T. Hall Class IV
R. Morello Class II
R. St. Maur Class I

Absent

T. Kozeniewski Class IV

M. Chicalo, Alternate I
K. Walton, Alternate II

A. Costa, Solicitor
S. Bach, Engineer, Bach Associates
C. Riley, Bach Associates
S. McCart, Secretary

Mr. Mancini welcomed Mr. Walton to the board. He also welcomed Mr. Keenan who will be filling the Class I position appointed by Mayor Hall.

MINUTES: Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Hall to approve minutes of December 5, 2023. All Ayes. Ms. Lomanno and Mr. Keenan abstained.

REORGANIZATION:

Chairman:

Mr. St. Maur nominated Mr. Mancini for Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Mr. Morello. No other nominations.

Roll call vote: Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Ms. Lomanno, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Ms. Campbell, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Chicalo, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes.

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. St. Maur nominated Mr. McGovern for Vice Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Hall. No other nominations.

Roll call vote: Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Ms. Lomanno, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Ms. Campbell, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Chicalo, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes.

Secretary:

Mr. St. Maur nominated Sharon McCart for Board Secretary. Seconded by Ms. Campbell.

Roll call vote: Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Ms. Lomanno, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Ms. Campbell, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Chicalo, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes.

Resolution 2024:01 2024 Meeting Dates

November and December meetings will be a joint meeting with meeting time to be determined. Motion by Mr. McGovern and seconded by Mr. Hall to approve Resolution 2024:01. All ayes.

Resolution 2024:02 Robert's Rules of Order

Motion by Mr. Keenan and seconded by Mr. McGovern to approve Resolution 2024:02. All ayes

Resolution 2024:03 Official Newspaper

Motion by Mr. Hall and seconded by Ms. Lomanno to approve Resolution 2024:03. All ayes.

Resolution 2024:04 Appointment of Board Solicitor

Mr. St. Maur nominated Anthony Costa as the new Board Solicitor. Seconded by Mr. Morello. All ayes.

Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Morello to approve Resolution 2024:04.

Roll call vote: Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Ms. Lomanno, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Ms. Campbell, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Chicalo, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes.

Resolution 2024:05 Appointment of Board Engineer and Planner

Mr. St. Maur nominated Steven M. Bach and Bach Associates. Seconded by Mr. Keenan.

Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Keenan to approve Resolution 2024:05

Roll call vote: Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Ms. Lomanno, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Ms. Campbell, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Chicalo, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes.

Resolution 2023:06 Rules of Procedure

Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. McGovern to approve Resolution 2024:06. All ayes.

NEW BUSINESS:

Velocity Venture Partners, Block 62, Lot 2, 222 S. White Horse Pike, Proposed Warehouse Preliminary and Final Site Plan

Amy Farrell with Kaplin Stewart representing the applicant, Velocity Venture Partners. Steve Bach, Craig Riley, Robert Stout, Engineer, James Kyle, Professional Planner, Andrew Feranda, Traffic Engineer, John Fiore, applicant, were sworn in by Mr. Costa.

Ms. Farrell stated this is the proposed redevelopment of the eight-unit existing building. It has been vacant for forty years. The applicant will be modernizing the interior and exterior of the existing building. There will be no addition to the building, using the existing structure. There are several variances that will be required based on the township's engineer's review.

Robert Stout explained what was the existing site looks like. It is a 22-acre site. The application is for the old Bradlees which is 119,300 square feet. Exhibit 1A is a 2020 arial view of the site. Exhibit A2 is the site plan. One of the first variances that we have is the ordinance requirement that frontage should be oriented toward existing streets. Since the condominium being redeveloped doesn't touch the White Horse Pike, it does not comply.

There was a small bump out in the front, which was the entrance to the Bradlees, that has been removed and the front facade will be rebuilt. There are five loading docks on each side of the building. These will be dug into the ground with a retaining wall on both sides.

There is a large parking area. We have 41 parking spaces where 40 are required. There are ada parking spaces as per ordinance requirement. We have a trash enclosure. The set back is ten feet of the condo line. That was added in after discussions with Engineer's office. We are landscaped on both sides.

We have connectivity to the site by adding sidewalks all the way out to the front of their property. We have added landscaping along the front and along the sides to give buffer. You have to have

25' of landscaping around building, to the West and South it is heavily wooded and wet lands, to the East is the existing building. The only we have left is the front. That is ten feet in width. We ask for the waiver for the ten feet. The reason is to give the tractor trailer moveability when they come into the warehouse. There will be new lights, box style lights that will be 25 feet in height and LED lights along the front. There will also be building mounted lights so that the entire area is lite up.

Storm water management, in this case we are reducing paving by about 1% on their parcels.

There already is storm water management that runs through the front and runs through to the back and discharges out the back. We are going to maintain that.

Exhibit A3 is an architectural rendition of the front façade. This is to entice new tenants giving them an option of layouts. The front section has been reworked which was the original bump out.

Two other variances that are needed according to the ordinance. One you are looking for open space. This is an existing building. There is no other area we can use for the open space. The second one the façade needs to be addressed all the way around. Two sides are encased in woods. Our plan is to fix the façade and paint a matching color that would compliment the façade.

There are six facades that the tenant would choose from. This is to attract different tenants.

Mr. Fiori stated what we are proposing here is in anticipation of two tenants. We are anticipating two entrances. The material will be stucco. The bottom will be a more durable product. We are trying to use as a marketing tool. The choice of façade will all happen when they come in for a building permit. We are asking for reasonable flexibility to move the entrance where it makes sense for the tenant.

Mr. Chicalo stated you would see air handling equipment. Mr. Stout stated right now we don't have any air handling design. They are existing. The only time we would have air handling on the roof is if there is an office on the inside. It would depend on the size of that. We can go with a split system. Warehouse users would want heat but to air condition this building would be extremely expensive. We just scraped the entire roof and put a new roof on it.

Mr. Bach stated this is subject to a redevelopment zone so there will be a redevelopment agreement so your final architectural will be subject for review by Mayor and Council's Redevelopment.

Mr. Mancini stated the building is pretty old. Did you have the engineers go through to see if structurally sound? Mr. Fiori stated the inside is solid. We have structural engineers designing this piece because there is angled iron impeded in the brick that prohibits putting front in. So, all that iron has to come out.

Mr. Mancini stated what are these? Mr. Fiori stated the loading dock doors. These are drive in loading docks. They are four feet below grade. There are also drive in doors and they are at grade.

Mr. Mancini asked you will be going into a downward slope. Mr. Fiori stated yes. Mr. Chicalo asked is there drainage set up so that it stays dry. Mr. Fiori stated there is trench drain across slope.

Mr. Mancini asked if they knew what type of supplies would be stored? Mr. Fiori stated they did not. Mr. Mancini asked if we need another meeting of what is being stored in there? Mr. Bach stated ordinance prohibits some uses. If prohibited, they would not be able to do it. Mr. Chicalo asked if we are approving just the concept? Mr. Bach stated we are approving preliminary and final site plan. They are asking for the engineering approval to build the site. If they are successful this evening, then under the redevelopment plan, they would proceed with Mayor and Council and the Redevelopment entity. They would not be coming back here. From there they would get all outside agency approvals and building permits.

Ms. Farrell stated there are a couple of other variances that needed to be pointed out. Mr. Stout stated the parking requirement is 10' x 20', we are proposing 9' x 18'. Because there are not shopping carts this meets the ITE standard for parking. The drive aisle width is 24' feet where 25

feet is required. We are cutting down on impervious. We are taking black top off and making more green space.

Mr. Bach stated I see this rendering has the additional sidewalk. Do you have a sidewalk on the east as well. Mr. Stout stated not on plans. Mr. Bach stated but you will so that each tenant will have the ability to go from the building to the common aisle between the Dollar General and this facility. Mr. Bach stated we have gone over both review letters, dated January 17 and January 24. Is there anything that you are not in agreement? Mr. Stout stated the Storm Water was the biggest issue and the engineer and I have worked through that. Mr. Stout stated we can work with your engineer and get everything to his satisfaction. Mr. Bach stated to clarify they had some new storm water lines going in that would trigger a major development storm water review. If they keep all their storm water from out front to an existing connection point, they would not have to get NJ DEP approval.

Mr. Fernanda, traffic engineer, stated infill to the existing shopping center. This is 119,300 square feet that is going to be used as a warehouse. There are five loading docks on one side and five loading docks on the other side and 41 parking spaces. There is a reduction in parking spaces that's because the intensity of a warehouse is much less than a shopping center. Even though it is a warehouse, it is a smaller warehouse. The am peak would be forty trips and the pm trips are 45 trips. There are 35 employees and 41 parking spaces. Of the forty trips in the morning there would be two truck trips and there would be four out of 45 in the pm. They also have access to multiple driveways.

Mr. McGovern asked can ingress and egress goes to the light as oppose to where Royal Farms. The concern is the active shopping center. The traffic is funneled into the ring road. All the trucks will go directly to traffic light.

Mr. Mancini can signs be put up to prevent trucks from going to other exits? Mr. Bach stated you can provide these signs but cannot restrict, not enforceable. Mr. McGovern asked if it was possible to put directional signs up within the unit? Ms. Farrell stated yes within the unit area.

Mr. Bach asked would you be agreeable to request of putting additional signage on remaining properties. If they agree, do you agree to put them in. Ms. Farrell stated yes, if they don't object. Mr. Bach is asking that this section of the road on the Y for the signage of the truck traffic.

Mr. Bach addressed the Do Not Block the Box. Mr. Fernanda stated the Do not Block the Box that you are requesting is on DOT portion of the ramp. Typically, DOT does not like them. Mr. Bach stated the concern is the jug handle ramp has six to eight cars every morning during the peak hour. If just two tractor trailers completely block the jug handle. I understand the straight movement has the right of way, if you have Do Not Block the Box, that jughandle can release cars into the other lane. Can you ask? It is not conditional of approval that you must get it. Mr. Fernanda stated can ask and it would be just stripping. Do Not Block the Box is stripping and signage. Ms. Farrell stated it is not that we won't ask it's about the timing for it. We don't want to end up in a lengthy DOC application. Mr. Bach stated you have submitted a letter of no interest. Mr. Fernanda stated he went to the DOT requested a letter of no interest. There is less traffic, no additional access points, no changes. They issued a letter of no interest on November 30. Mr. Bach asked what was submitted as part of the letter? Mr. Fernanda stated trip generation and we have a letter that shows all their eight to ten requirements, and we go item by item. Mr. Bach stated the DOT has already approved the entrances as submitted. What I am asking the applicant to do is make a request for the Do Not Block Box. If unsuccessful, it would not be a condition of approval. Would you make the request and if successful will you install the traffic pavement markings and whatever appropriate signage is? This should not hold up any occupation if approved tonight. Ms. Farrell stated would need to get condo association approval. Mr. Bach stated they have a major access permit for the development. If their approval of the Do Not Block the Box, would be yes but you must go modify your major access permit, I believe that would be an owner's requirement on this developer. Mr. Costa stated not going to make a difference, not going to hold up your project.

Mr. Jim Kyle, Professional Planner, reviewed his qualifications. Mr. Kyle stated we are asking for Variances for the design elements of the redevelopment plan. They are driven by the condo lot in a larger lot. The parking dimensions of 9' x 18' as opposed to 10' x 20', and the drive aisle of 24' where 25' is required. The overall design requires a variance for perimeter buffer landscape buffer is required around property. Twenty-five feet is required and we are providing roughly ten feet on the parking lot side. There is also a requirement for a court yard. These would be more pedestrian oriented. Since this is an industrial warehouse facility, we are not providing that. There is a requirement for streetscape as well as trees along the White Horse Pike. Our lot ends well into the back of the property, so we do not have the ability to provide street trees. There is also the set back for the trash enclosure. We are going to place the trash enclosure, new since plans were submitted to the board, in the corner of the property. The set backs are required to be set back 15 feet. It will be five feet on the west and ten feet on the north. The final variance is for lot frontage. Municipal code thirty-five, say the building must abut the street. It is called the Coah 65 Variance. It states that we must have adequate access for emergency vehicles. Mr. Bach stated just for clarification, this is not creating a new lot. This is creating a new condominium parcel so just need relief from frontage on White Horse Pike. Ms. Farrell clarified overall comment number 10c, the façade treatment around the building. Mr. Bach stated that is technically a variance as well. The west and south side will just be repainted. Mr. McGovern asked prevents pedestrians walking from shopping center to warehouse. Mr. Kyle stated there is curb landscaping. It will separate the drive aisle from other parking stalls and provides a physical barrier.

Mr. Morello asked if there were no fence on that side? Mr. Kyle stated it is not proposed. Mr. Morello asked if the fence can be extended? Mr. Bach asked if the fence could run on both sides of the mini drive aisle? Mr. Kyle stated that can be done. Mr. Morello stated from a security stand point, there is a small homeless encampment out back. You may want to put fencing on that side for security purposes.

Mr. Chicalo asked if a security fence were to be needed in the back, would you need to come back? Mr. Kyle stated the property line is the building. Mr. Bach asked would you consider fencing in just your parking lot? Mr. Bach asked would you put it on the plans as an option so they are vested in the approval? Mr. Fiori stated yes.

Mr. Costa asked Mr. Bach in your letter on page 11, do they need a waiver for the environmental report? Mr. Kyle stated we are actually reducing impervious, so we do not expect that there will be any environmental impact.

Mr. Bach stated the master deed that shows the condo areas is also one block and lot as the condo area. You will make sure that the appropriate master deed is corrected. The current deed does not match what you are submitting.

Ms. Farrell asked what do we need a variance for the fence? Mr. Bach stated no.

Mr. Morello stated there are two existing bays in the rear. Are they going to be used? Will they make twelve bays?

Mr. Fiori stated they are loading dock bays. They could be in use.

Mr. Mancini stated if that is the case there would have to be road access. Mr. Fiori stated the road is owned and maintained by the association.

Mr. Costa asked would the applicant agree to not use these? Mr. Fiori stated we did not include because they were existing; they were not part of application.

Mr. Costa stated the application does not say you are adding ten to existing bays. Mr. Bach stated that is not listed in your application that you would be using back bays. There is no indication in your application that there will be additional traffic behind the facility.

Mr. Costa asked would the applicant agree as a condition to approval that you are not going to use them. Mr. Fiori stated he was not willing to commit to not using the bays.

Mr. Mancini stated it would need different access to back bays coming from Good Will. Mr. Bach stated I evaluated the front. I have no information for the rear pay. Can it be used for tractor trailer? Land use has to be everything that impacts your application. I cannot answer the board as to the impact.

Mr. Mancini called for a brief recess.

Ms. Farrell stated what we would suggest tonight, we would ask that the application be considered without the use of the back loading docks. If there is a tenant that comes forward in the future, we would come back and amend the plans.

Mr. Bach discussed the supplement review letter, dated January 24, 2024. He stated there is a limitation on how much commercial can be in the eight acres. If approved 7.61 would be commercial use. There is only a fraction of an acre that can be used for this redevelopment plan and the rest would have to be residential.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. McGovern to open to the public. All ayes.

Mr. John Gentless, 111 Union Avenue. He had a question for the traffic engineer. The rendering doesn't show the connecting road coming from the back of the University. Does that change your traffic numbers? Mr. Fernanda stated will add some traffic but we are substantially reducing traffic. Mr. Gentless asked the engineer to the north what is line. Mr. Stout stated that is the tree line. Mr. Gentless disagreed and stated it was wet lands. Mr. Stout stated that is the canopy. The wet lands are back further. Mr. Gentless asked what would be the ideal business. Mr. Stout stated supply warehouse. Mr. Gentless asked would work wait until you have a tenant. Mr. Stout stated we would start renovations before a tenant is secured.

Mr. Tony Santoro, 236 Winding Way. He stated it is a good use for town, no impact on school and services. If they don't come back for a variance, the loading docks should be boarded up. Tenant doesn't leak pallets or other materials outside the building. They should stay within the building. They have delivery trucks and this is still a residential neighborhood. The Ordinance for Warehouse states they can be doing manufacturing and they can be doing treatment here. That would bring chemicals in play. This could cause problems for neighborhood.

Mr. Costa stated they are here only for warehouse use, not open ended for any other use.

Motion by Ms. Lomanno and seconded by Mr. McGovern to close the public portion. All ayes.

Mr. Costa stated the application is for all variances in testimony and in review and one waiver. The parking stall, drive aisle, buffer, court yard setting, street scape, trash enclosure. Façade, (10c in Bach letter), frontage of this development area does not abut White Horse Pike. One waiver is the environmental impact. The one condition is not to use two back bays. The request of Do Not Block the Box by the DOT, not to hold up application.

Motion by Mr. St Maur and seconded by Mr. Hall to approve application for Velocity Ventures.

Roll call vote: Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Ms. Lomanno, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Ms. Campbell, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Chicalo, yes, Mancini, yes. Motion pass.

BOARD COMMENT: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Morello to open to the public. Hearing none. Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Chicalo to close the public portion. All ayes.

COMMUNICATION/ORGANIZATION: Next meeting is February 22, 2024 at 6:30 pm

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Chicalo to adjourn. All ayes.