

MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD

Meeting of May 17, 2017

WORKSHOP PORTION. Ms. Murray called workshop portion of the meeting to order at 7:49 P.M.

1. COMMUNICATIONS:

Review of proposed ORDINANCE NO. 2017-06 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD, CHAPTER 136 LAND DEVELOPMENT, ARTICLE IX, SECTION 72 TO IDENTIFY THE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT FOR THE TOWNSHIP'S REHABILITATION PROGRAM.

Explanation presented, Township must administer the affordable housing requirements which includes rehabilitation element to renovate deficient housing units occupied by low- and moderate-income households such that, after rehabilitation, these units will comply with the New Jersey State Housing Code. Ordinance designates agency to perform such duties and act as Township's agent for entire rehabilitation program.

After discussion, a motion to recommend that the Township Committee adopt ORDINANCE NO. 2017-04 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD, CHAPTER 136 LAND DEVELOPMENT, ARTICLE IX, SECTION 72 TO IDENTIFY THE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT FOR THE TOWNSHIP'S REHABILITATION PROGRAM as written was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Pedde with the following voting in favor of the motion: Ms. Murray, Ms. Steinbach, Mr. Chapman, Commissioner Dooley, Ms. Pedde and Mr. Taylor.

2. MINUTES:

CARRIED

3. RESOLUTIONS OF MEMORIALIZATION

NONE

4. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Workshop portion adjourned at 7:54 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING - ROOM 107

1. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Ms. Murray called a public meeting of the Cranford Planning Board to order on May 17, 2017 at 8:00 P.M. In Room 107 of the Municipal Building, 8 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, New Jersey. Ms. Della Serra announced that this meeting is a regularly scheduled meeting as contained in the annual schedule adopted by the Planning Board and published in the designated newspaper. In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Open Public

Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting's agenda has been provided through publication specifying the time, place and matters to be discussed/heard with the agenda having been filed with the Township Clerk and posted on the municipal bulletin board where such notices are normally posted as required. Formal action may be taken.

2. FLAG SALUTE

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Ms. Murray
Ms. Steinbach
Mr. Chapman
Commissioner Dooley
Ms. Pedde
Mr. Taylor

Members Absent:

Ms. Anderson
Ms. Feder
Mayor Hannen

Alternates Present:

None

Alternates Absent:

Mr. Aschenbach
Ms. Didzablis

Also present:

Mark Rothman, Esquire; Ruthanne Della Serra, Interim Administrator/Scribe, Ron Johnson, Zoning Officer, Madeline Colandro, Interim Assistant

- 1. Application # PBA-16-00009:**
Riverside Condominium Association, Inc., Applicant
4-8 Riverside Drive
Block: 266, Lot: 1, R-8 zone
Applicant is seeking amended site plan approval to eliminate two on-site parking spaces and locate a recycling shed and dumpster in said parking spaces

Ms. Murray announced for the benefit of the public Application #PBA16-00009 was carried at the request of the applicant to June 19, 2017.

Ms. Murray explained the protocol, purpose and procedure that will be followed during the hearing.

- 2. Application #PBA-17-00003:
National Christmas Products, Inc. d/b/a National Tree Company, Applicant
70 Jackson Drive
Block 627 Lot: 6.01 Zone: C-1
Site plan approval to permit interior renovation, install/reactivate loading doors and reconfiguration of the parking lot with the following waivers: less than the minimum required front yard setback (136-23.7(3)(a); no granite block (136-23.7(8)(g); no loading allowed in the front yard (136-23.7(7)(12)(b); sign not located were permitted (136-23.10(4)(c)(4); exceed the maximum allowable building coverage (136-30); and to exceed the maximum allowable lot coverage (136-30)**

Robert Finestein, Esquire appeared on behalf of the applicant. Represents both JRS Properties (owner) and National Christmas Products d/b/a National Tree Company, Applicant. Both entities are owned by same individuals. Property purchased last year and applicant is seeking preliminary and final site plan that includes, interior renovation, reconfiguration of the parking lot and reactivation of the loading doors. No changes are proposed to the building coverage and will address to relieve neighboring property owner's concerns.

Joseph Pulio, President and Partner of owner, appeared and was sworn in. Both entities are family owned businesses. Distributors of artificial Christmas trees and seasonal products as well as internet business. Currently located at 2 Commerce since 1992 and will remain at that location. Purchased 70 Jackson Drive to maintain warehouse space nearby. Majority of space will be used by National Tree. Operation between 7:00AM to 5:00 PM although some variations. Approximately 5 to 6 trucks per day, mostly UPS and FedEx with some tractor trailers.

Monument sign is for ability of truck deliveries to identify the property.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

Remaining space unoccupied by company will be used by existing tenants, under lease renewals by Anderson Laboratories and exterminating company (month-to-month tenancy). Experience increase in truck traffic as the season progresses. 5-6 on average, can go up to 8 to 10 during the Christmas season. Space will be strictly warehouse use by applicant. Currently loading docks in rear are in use, all others that were existing had store front windows installed and applicant is seeking to reactivate. Other tenants have loading docks.

There were no further questions by members of the Board.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions, with no one appearing and the matter was referred back to the Board.

Chris Szymczik, Upheld Design Group (Architects), appeared and was sworn in. His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert in the field of architecture.

Mr. Szymczik explained thru questions posed by Mr. Finestein.

Photo Board marked as Exhibit A-1 - depicts pictures of street side of building from Jackson Drive, one story structure in portion proceeding on to two stories. Four overhead doors are currently in use, four that were closed and replaced storefront by previous owners. Performed work on building for previous owners with portion of doors closed up since to 1994. Plan is to reactivate all overhead doors (six) and install four additional doors.

Back of building (elevation 1 in submission Exhibit A-3) various other overhead doors, two in alcove and several others depicted in drawing. Drawing ZO-2 (Exhibit A-2) depicts first floor plan – existing doors are marked as existing, storefronts are labeled as new doors as well as four on bottom, totaling four new doors with six reactivated.

Change is office to warehouse conversion. Warehouse currently is approximately 58,000 square feet and office 123,000 square feet. Modifying to much heavier warehouse use of 145,000 square feet and 17,500 office space.

Proposed signage is 25.6 in length and height is 12.5 feet and complies with ordinance requirements. Monument sign 84 inches and less than 3 feet in height also meets requirements. Building signs will be externally light.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

Question posed as to 14 overhead doors being labeled as new on plans – clarified appears to be old plans – newer ones were submitted. Application is for a total of 10 doors. New is 4, reactivated is 6, existing is 4 on same wall. 10 for National Christmas Tree only, others are used by remaining tenants. Trucks cannot be driven into the building, UPS drops off and picks up when bays are full, have their own trucks with other container truck deliveries that take several days to unload. Bays will be numbered above the doors at 70 Jackson, currently are not numbered. Sign by the street will be similar to one at 2 Commerce.

There were no further questions by members of the Board.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions, with no one appearing and the matter was referred back to the Board.

Michael Lanzafama, Professional Engineer, Land surveyor and Planner appeared and was sworn in. His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert in the field of professional engineer, land surveyor and planner.

Mr. Lanzafama thru questions posed by Mr. Finestein.

Colorized version of site plan referred to sheet number 3 dated May 3, 2017 revision #3 marked as Exhibit A-4. Depicts revisions into the loading docks. Provides additional information in response to DRC meeting regarding landscaping, only substance would be to eliminate doors. Property details relayed and is located in the C-1 district, permitted use, property 7.15 acres, lot width over 595 feet along Jackson, unusual lot configuration as made up of several vacated paper streets. With regard to bulk standards, building is fully compliant with all front, side and rear setbacks as well as height. 2-story addition was built in the 1970s. Existing building coverage exceeds current ordinance requirement of 35% (is 37% and was compliant when built); lot coverage permitted is 70%, existing is 82.1%; due to reconfiguration allows for improved access and eliminates some impervious surface which is down to 82.05% and is improvement. FAR permitted is 1.5 and exists .521; conversion allows for elimination of parking spaces, as well as traffic into the site, due to reduction of required parking for office space. Proposal allows for applicant to operate safely and efficiently on the site, no modifications to any other facades except for Jackson Drive. Loading in front yard not permitted and was an existing condition, although abandoned for number of years, with applicant seeking permission to reactivate. Need for number of doors is driven by warehouse space. Benefit is decreasing activity on the site, but must add loading doors for safe use of site. Will re-establish the evergreen stream along Jackson Drive to provide for complete shield and minimize view of loading operation together with trees in rear and southwest corner of the site (red Maple and white Oaks). No plan to modify lighting on the site. In loading area, experiences some flooding and the area will be regraded with detention basins provided to allow for safe function. Only other modification to plan, pertains to adjoining property owners' concerns: refuse area along common boundary will be relocated toward the rear of the site joining the existing refuse area; area between the parking lot and boundary line will remain clean and is augmented by additional plantings. Other existing conditions reviewed in detail. Removing 90 spaces reduces nonconformity. Monument site location explained with need to be seen past the evergreen screen. Relocating the refuse area may change the parking with loss made up by introducing spaces in vacated area. 107 spaces required, exists at 325, reducing to 195 that still exceeds requirements in case of change in tenancy.

Waivers are justified under C-2 criteria: existing structure that limits placement of loading dock doors; no negative impact on front which is further away from residential area; significant positive criteria, intent and purpose of Master Plan and Zone Plan is not being impacted.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

Areas of asphalt removal shown on exhibit thereby reducing impervious surface. Truck entrance and site circulation. Exhibit A-5 marked was prepared for DRC and tonight's hearing, depicts is how trucks will maneuver into the site, into position of loading door and then exit the site. W-50 style truck used to prepare exhibit. Benefit all doors will be on south side of the property away from the residential boundary. Evergreens will be 6 to 8 feet high at time of planting, mature height would be up to 20 feet. Existing arbor vitae are in deteriorated state and will be replaced. Existing shrubbery along the building will remain. Has not had any trucks after 7:00 PM and would be UPS. Number of businesses throughout the park have loading docks in the front yard. Mixed species plantings used in area next to the residential boundary which is preferred. Wish to match the existing curb which is concrete, and not proposing granite block, however, could install granite block along Jackson Drive, but not in fill areas. Front area is in significant disrepair. Prior owner had large amount of office space in the building and not sufficient parking on site. The lease to the additional area (All State Legal) has been relinquished. Can look at centralizing the address (on one-story side), however, may not be able to do so, possibly incorporate the address into the building or monument sign. Exhibit A-1, shows current location of the address which is almost on the southeast corner of the building, and can move. Trash compactors were removed. Detention basin is gravity basin type and works well, but requires maintenance, predates maintenance plans. Will design a maintenance plan for the entire stormwater management system. Site is not conducive to office building and Traffic and Safety believed proposal far improves the site.

There were no further questions by members of the Board.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions, with no one appearing and the matter was referred back to the Board.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions, with the following appearing:

Bruce Jacob, appeared and was sworn in. His property abuts 70 Jackson Drive, was here when the previous owner sought to expand the parking lot. Currently dumpster is over the top with bags and is a concern. Spoke to the applicant who will relocate the dumpster, however, trash blows over and is also a concern, asking that the dumpster pick-up hours be enforced, to maintain the property, install screening along back of 70 Jackson Drive, and maintain the landscaping planted. Anything that will assist in reducing the noise and the building be maintained. The tenants also must comply with noise ordinances. New location for dumpster backs up to a property that the applicant already owns.

No one else appeared and the matter was referred back to the Board.

Mr. Pulio, in response, stated he intends to clean the property and is already making plans for the property to be renovated into a building they can be proud of, everything in the dumpsters is bagged. Natural hill on side property that abuts residential properties. To his knowledge all truck traffic is from the front, job trucks use the sides of the buildings, more

natural for large trucks to stay on west side of the building. Anderson's dumpster is already in the location additional one is proposed to be relocated, and he will speak to the tenants as their landlord regarding hours of dumping.

Mr. Lanzafama advised the area along eastern side of the site, from Jackson to corner, landscaper has already gone to maintain the property. Cannot give specifics as to landscaping plan, as some landscaping can be save, however, will be a variety of blue Spruce, Pine 6 to 8 feet high and will be integrated with the existing vegetation. Can submit revised plan for engineer to review and confirm that they are meeting conditions of approval. Landscape contractor will be under a maintenance plan.

Mr. Finestein presented his summation.

DELIBERATION OF Application #PBA-17-00003:

**National Christmas Products, Inc. d/b/a National Tree Company, Applicant
70 Jackson Drive**

Block 627 Lot: 6.01 Zone: C-1

Site plan approval to permit interior renovation, install/reactivate loading doors and reconfiguration of the parking lot with the following waivers: less than the minimum required front yard setback (136-23.7(3)(a); no granite block (136-23.7(8)(g); no loading allowed in the front yard (136-23.7(7)(12)(b); sign not located were permitted (136-23.10(4)(c)(4); exceed the maximum allowable building coverage (136-30); and to exceed the maximum allowable lot coverage (136-30)

Ms. Murray reviewed the testimony presented.

Board comments consisted of the following:

Motion to grant site plan approval Application #PBA-17-00003 was made by Mr. Taylor with the following conditions:

1. Will install granite block along Jackson Drive;
2. Will evaluate moving the address on the building westward;
3. Will design a maintenance plan for the entire stormwater management system;
4. Will relocate the dumpster near the residential area to location of existing dumpster;
5. Will submit maintenance plan as well as landscaping plan.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dooley with the following voting in favor of the motion: Ms. Murray, Ms. Steinbach, Commissioner Dooley, Ms. Pedde, Mr. Chapman and Mr. Taylor.

5. PUBLIC PORTION

NONE

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There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 9:26 P.M.

Ann Steinbach, Secretary