

## **MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD**

### **Workshop meeting of August 1, 2018**

**WORKSHOP PORTION.** Ms. Murray called workshop portion of the meeting to order at 7:33 PM

**1. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**2. RESOLUTIONS OF MEMORIALIZATION**

None

**3. MINUTES**

None

**4. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Spencer Robbins, Esq. was introduced to the Board. He will be filling in for Mark Rothman, Esq. this evening. Discussion was held regarding Township Ordinance Nos. 2018-13 & 2018-14. A motion to favorably recommend Ordinance 2018-13 to the Township Committee was made by Ms. Didzbalis, seconded by Ms. Pedde and passed by unanimous voice vote. A motion to favorably recommend Ordinance 2018-14 to the Township Committee was made by Ms. Didzbalis, seconded by Ms. Pedde and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Discussion was held regarding the property at 322 Walnut Avenue. Applicant wishes to rescind the subdivision approval.

Discussion was held regarding the guidelines of the Planning Board for decision making on applications that come before the Board.

Bill Masol, Township Engineer went over his engineering letter and reviewed §255-24D. Stated in his review letter he has requested an environmental impact study to be done on 750 Walnut Avenue.

### **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 August 1, 2018 at 8:14 PM in Room 107 of the Municipal Building, 8 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, New Jersey. Ms. Lenahan announced this meeting is in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act" as adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by publishing of the Board's annual schedule of meetings in the Westfield Leader and the Star Ledger with the agenda specifying the time, place and matters to be heard having been posted on a bulletin Board in the Town Hall reserved for such announcements and the filing of said agenda with the Township Clerk of Cranford. Formal action may be taken at this meeting.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

**3. ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:**

Ms. Murray  
Dr. Chapman  
Mr. Cossa  
Deputy Mayor Dooley  
Ms. Feder  
Mayor Hannen  
Ms. Pedde  
Mr. Taylor

**Members Absent**

Ms. Anderson

**Alternates Present:**

Mr. Aschenbach  
Ms. Didzbalis

**Alternates Absent:**

None

**Also present:**

Spencer Robbins, Esquire; Ron Johnson, Zoning Officer; Kathy Lenahan, Administrator/Scribe, Bill Masol, Engineer

**4. Application # PBA-17-00004- Continued from July 18, 2018**

**Hartz Mountain Industries**

**750 Walnut Avenue**

**Block: 541, Lot: 2, C-3 Zone**

**Applicant is seeking to rezone the subject property to eliminate the office and warehousing uses in favor of multi-family residential use (§136-13).**

James Rhatican appeared on behalf of the applicant. Stated that there will be two witnesses this evening - a civil engineer and a traffic engineer. Stated they have prepared a conceptual plan and it has not yet been fully engineered.

Jeffrey Martell appeared and was sworn in. His credentials were presented to the Board and after various questions by the Board, he was accepted as an expert witness in the field of civil engineering.

He testified to the following through questions posed by Mr. Rhatican:

He was tasked with designing a site that would fit within the parameters of the ordinance. Described the overall site plan – Phase one, marked Exhibit A-6. Prepared a set of zoning plans, which included: site plan, grading plan, drainage plans, utility plan, lighting plan, landscaping and tree replacement plans. Gave an overview of the project. Stated that they are removing 86 trees which requires replacement of 309 trees. Plans show 363 replacement trees and 25 different species. Site plan will be more detailed. His task was to try and design the plan without increasing the impervious coverage on the property. Described the proposal of Phase One introducing the residential and clubhouse and Phase Two will be more residential and another clubhouse. Net result is a reduction in impervious coverage.

Stated that the site layout for safety and circulation is critical. His main purpose was to ensure that the onsite circulation was designed for passenger vehicles, emergency vehicles, Fed Ex, UPS, and potential for school buses. Consulted with water and sewer authorities to confirm there is adequate water supply and sewage treatment infrastructure. Reviewed the Township Engineer's review letter and will address all comments at time of site plan. Stated property can accommodate the proposal with regard to safe site circulation, storm water management, supporting water and sewer. Sees no negative environmental impact and feels it is a safe design for residential and emergency vehicles.

Described Phase One site plan as three proposed buildings with the structure in the back to remain. Building on right is Building A – four stories with a parking garage. Parking is accessed from the rear. There will be two lobbies and drop off areas. Has surface parking and recreation areas. Will be heavily planted. Dotted lines show storm water basins. There will be a clubhouse close to Walnut Avenue with a 50-foot setback. Building A has a 150-foot setback. Pool faces inward. Building B is five stories with parking. Will have a patio area above the parking on surface level. Phase One does introduce three driveways. All truck traffic will use the northern driveway. Driveway to south is near interior circle and access for passenger cars. The main entrance is in the center on Walnut Avenue and a traffic signal is proposed. Southern driveway is a right in, right out driveway. For circulation of emergency vehicles there is a brick paver emergency access road around Building B.

Board member asked Mr. Martell if he designed this plan since it looks similar to the one from the architect.

Mr. Martell stated he worked with the architect and the plans are meant to be consistent. There is a lot of collaboration between the architect and the engineer.

Described Exhibit A-7 as Phase Two site plan sheet. Introduces four new structures: three residential buildings and one clubhouse. Building C is five stories with ground floor parking. Building D is similar to Building B with same design. Emergency paver road now extends around Buildings C and D and wraps to an asphalt parking area. Last building is Building E - four stories with a garage, it is shaped a little different than the others. There is also a second clubhouse with a second pool.

Mr. Rhatican asked if parking is consistent with RSIS standards.

Mr. Martell stated it is consistent with RSIS standards. They looked at parking independently for Phase One and Phase Two. Stated RSIS is calculated on the number of bedrooms.

Mr. Rhatican asked Mr. Martell to discuss the landscape plan.

Mr. Martell described Exhibits A-8 & A-9 as the Landscape Plan. Described the tree replacement plan. Site plan will be much more detailed. There will be a large number of plantings along the basin on Walnut Avenue, trees lining entrances and various trees throughout the site. Would work with township professionals if it goes to site plan. There are two berms to remain in front of Building B and the clubhouse. Plan shows some of the plantings in front of Building A to be replaced. If plantings were to be kept along Walnut Avenue, they would need to remove the detention basin and relocate it to an underground facility.

Board member asked about the environmental impact study the Township Engineer asked for in his review letter. Also asked what is the basis for his testimony that the project has no environmental impact.

Mr. Martell stated it is based on the reduction in impervious coverage, compliance of storm water management and the absence of any impact on wetlands or endangered species.

Mr. Rhatican stated the Board has discretion on requesting an environmental impact study (EIS). The application was filed a year ago and the Board has not ask for one.

Mayor Hannen asked if the applicant is aware at one time this was a pharmaceutical site.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Dooley to request an environmental impact study, seconded by Dr. Chapman with the following voting in favor of the motion: Mr. Aschenbach, Mr. Taylor, Ms. Pedde, Mayor Hannen, Ms. Feder, Deputy Mayor Dooley, Mr. Cossa, Dr. Chapman and Ms. Murray.

Mr. Rhatican stated the application was deemed complete, but will provide the EIS.

Mr. Johnson stated the EIS is not a completeness item.

Questions from the Board ascertained the following:

The design standards used were RSIS standards for the parking. The State has requirements for storm water management. General site engineering design standards and vehicle templates for fire trucks were used. Looked at Cranford ordinance. Stated that the parking spaces are 9 x 18 as shown on sheets C-6 & C-7. He is aware that Cranford's ordinance is 10 feet, but used the RSIS standards. Plan is entitled a site plan. Is aware the Cranford ordinance states there must be a break after every 12 parking spaces. To put in breaks, it would take up some of the parking spaces. All of the surface parking is 9 x 18. There are some breaks along Walnut Avenue and behind Building A. Stated that 60 to 70% of parking complies. Size of parking spaces in garages are also 9 x 18. The square foot difference is over 9000 square feet.

The impervious surface reduction would be negated by the 9000 square foot difference. Could approach design in a different way and would work with the team to try and come up with the 9000 square feet. There are 860 parking spaces in Phase One and 915 parking spaces in Phase Two. The site could not house another parking garage without changing other elements.

What is meant by "accommodate" is to design a site that is accessed safely and is compliant with RSIS standards. He is not aware of the ladder height or the amount of stories Cranford's fire trucks can reach. The request was to support the team in developing a site plan for the applicant and the architect's efforts. He was given a lot of verbal direction in design meetings. He was not given direction regarding density. He did not establish the density. His role was a supporting role to team for site design. Location of driveways was done by the traffic engineer. He designed the widths of the driveways. The total parking spaces are 1775. They will change the map to show Norfolk Southern not NJ Transit. Fire roads are 20 feet. Subsurface for the brick roads has a stone bedding. There are construction details that are not on the current plan. He did not perform an analysis to determine the ladder truck and angle of exposure to reach a second or third story building.

There is nothing on the plan to show snow storage and the trash is in the interior of the buildings. He did not design the trash, but stated there are chutes and compactors and it is rolled out and a private hauler collects from the bins. Trash haulers would use the spaces marked for move in vehicles. Stated that he does not know what the tree height would need to be for the homeowners on Walnut Avenue to have a completely obstructed view of Building A. Complete obstruction of view was not what they were looking to do. If that directive is given, they would have to do a different planting design. Stated this is a macro landscape plan. Described the grading plan both with the berm retained and with the berm removed. Berm area in concept plan would actually be a detention basin in the front of Walnut Avenue. Approximately 60 to 70% of berm would be retained based on the concept plan presented. Plan is only informative. Plan does not show underground storage, but if they eliminate basin and plan was approved, they would have to meet certain parameters for ground water recharge. This plan has been put forth as a feasible project.

Mr. Rhatican stated that if the rezoning is approved, the applicant would do what it could to reduce the visual impact from the street regarding the landscape. Also the ordinance for a rezoning application does not require this level of detail and they are going beyond what they are required to do. If the rezoning is passed, the applicant will still need to come before the Board for approval of a site plan application.

Board member stated that the calculation for additional parking spots is 177.5 for the 31,950 square feet.

Board member stated that they have presented a plan with drawings that has opened the door to the questions that they are asking. The questions are related to the drawings that have been presented.

Mr. Rhatican stated that the questions are more detailed then the ordinance requests.

Mr. Robbins, Esq. stated that the questions being asked by the board members are legitimate questions and they are allowed to ask those questions.

Board member asked if the detention basin can accommodate the project with 905 units in the five different buildings.

Mr. Martell stated that there is a large parking lot that could have underground detention. A storm water management plan has not been developed yet. Has a letter from the RVSA stating that there is capacity for the design flow and has an email from the water authority. He has heard of the Clark project, but has not done any research on that project.

Board member asked about water usage for fire protection vs. potable usage.

Mr. Martell stated that the fire assessment is performed differently and that would be addressed in the site plan. He will seek clarification on the fire portion.

Mr. Martell stated that the plan shows more green space than there is now for possible snow removal. Showed areas of green space depicted on the plan and feels there is adequate green space for snow placement. Would be stored on site or if removed would be an operation of the site.

Board member asked where the sewer main is.

Mr. Martell stated it is on the property and will go into Walnut Avenue. Sewage will be gravity feed. There is no need for a pump station.

Board member asked is there are any existing conditions on site that have a negative impact on the area.

Mr. Martell stated he is not aware of any.

Mr. Masol, Township Engineer, asked Mr. Martell questions and ascertained the following: His set plans are dated 3-21-17 and the ones being viewed tonight are dated 5-24-17. Applicant will submit revised plans to the Board. The site plan is accurate concerning the total number of parking spaces. The clubhouse square footage is correct on the architectural plans. There have been no geotechnical tests done on the site and no soil testing has been done.

Board member asked Mr. Martell what is the basis for his testimony that the site can accommodate this project.

Mr. Martell stated that he is not aware of any unique geologic situations that would prevent construction of the project.

Lydia Allen – 751 Walnut Avenue – Asked how large the detention basin is and how close is it to the street. Also asked why they want to put it in front of the street,

Mr. Martell stated there will be a sidewalk along Walnut Avenue. The south side retention basin will remain, the one on the north side will be eliminated and new detention facilities will be created. They are retaining about 60% and the portions that are removed would be for driveways.

Norma Anstatt - 33 Georgia Street – Asked about traffic light and what considerations were given to the residents of Georgia Street and that community regarding noise and lightening. Asked about roof top spaces.

Mr. Martell stated the traffic engineer will address the traffic light.

Mr. Rhatican stated the roof top spaces will be on top of the parking deck on the second story.

Aldo Ramondelli - 729 Walnut Avenue – Asked if anyone has checked with the police department about accidents between Lexington and Walnut Avenue.

Mr. Martell stated he deferred all traffic questions to the traffic engineer.

David Pringle – 333 Walnut Avenue – Asked about the maintenance of the storm water system. Asked if they considered the history of flooding in Cranford. Asked if a change in the density is required based on the flooding. Asked about the Clark Commons and the parking spots there compare to the proposed parking spots.

Mr. Martell stated the operator/owner of site would be the responsible party. There are safeguards when designing a system. Does not feel there will be a negative impact since there are local ordinances that are required to be followed. Not aware of the parking spots at Clark Commons.

Board member asked what year storm did they developed the project for.

Mr. Martell stated that the storm water management plan has not been developed. Would be developed at the time of site plan. Feels applicant can develop a fully compliant storm water management system.

Christine Esposito - 11 Behnert Place - Asked about existing driveways vs. what is being proposed and why they are adding/shifting the driveways. Asked if project could work without moving the driveways.

Mr. Martell stated that the southern driveway is moving approximately 150 feet north and the northern driveway is moving approximately 100 feet south. Stated the traffic engineer could answer in more detail and yes the project could still be built without moving the driveways.

Mike Bogdan – 18 Oak Lane – Asked about keeping or reducing the impervious coverage. Asked if fire lane was considered impervious. Asked about additional parking based on the added square footage needed and about studies on landscaped lawn and soil. Asked how much less imperious coverage will there be and what is largest number of units he has designed.

Mr. Martell stated that it was the teams' directive to try and keep that parameter for impervious coverage. His information came from a survey. Stated that the permeable pavers are used in the

fire lanes. Not aware of any studies and the landscape plan would include a mix of lawn, mulch and vegetation. Stated it is a few thousand square feet less of impervious coverage and he has designed a project in Roselle for 1200 units.

Board member is requesting the members receive the survey Mr. Martell used to determine the current impervious coverage on the site.

Board member asked if they were using the amenities deck in the impervious calculations.

Mr. Martell stated yes, they were using the deck in the calculations.

Frank Krause – 20 Pittsfield Street - Asked the Planning Board what their role is.

Ms. Murray stated this is an application to rezone the property. If the Board views this application favorably, they would make a recommendation to the Township Committee. The Township Committee would take action to rezone. Or, they could make a recommendation not to rezone the property and refer that to the Township Committee. It is not the Planning Board's role to rezone a property.

Mr. Robbins, Esq. stated there is an application before the Board to rezone for a certain density. It is either to accept the application or reject it.

TJ Elgin – 13 Pershing Avenue – Asked is it necessary to have that many driveways and could there be only one driveway in and out of the property.

Mr. Martell stated he has not assessed the traffic impact.

Patricia Gallagher – 15 Alan Okell Place – Asked what is the percentage of lighting for parking lots, sidewalks, etc. Asked if there would be more lighting then what is there now.

Mr. Martell stated there are certain standards in the ordinance. There would be no light spillage across to Walnut Avenue.

Board member asked to see the lighting plan.

Mr. Martell described sheets C 12 & 13 as the lighting plan. Light fixtures will be 16 feet high and would line the parking lot and driveways. Is compliant with the ordinance.

Cristian Lupp - 330 Walnut Avenue – Asked about Walnut Avenue being a county road and needing approvals. Asked if there were safety considerations given based on a freight rail being next to the property. Asked if there are any environmental issues related to the adjacent golf course.

Mr. Martell stated he is not aware of any requirements that changes the application before the Board. Is aware of the issues at golf course but did not perform an analysis.



Tom Roettker – 347 Union Avenue S. – Asked about the Roselle project and how many acres it is. Also asked about turning radius for a fire truck.

Mr. Martell stated that the project is about 50 acres and there is enough room for a fire truck to turn around.

Jennifer Smolanoff - 303 Union Avenue S. – Asked about the drainage and fencing.

Mr. Martell stated that currently there is no fencing proposed and the drainage is about 5 feet deep. Does not know how deep the ground water table is at the site. Stated the “L” on the plan is an easement from PSE&G.

Mark Zucker – 19 Pershing Avenue – Asked about the RSIS standards and housing types to calculate parking spaces. Asked about definitions for garden apartments vs. townhouses. Asked about number of occupants and who would be able to provide that information.

Mr. Martell stated he used garden apartments as the housing type. Did not know the number of occupants.

Mr. Rhatican stated the Planner would be the person to answer the questions about occupants.

Board member asked what the FAR (floor area ratio) was for the project. Also asked about FAR for the Roselle project.

Mr. Martell stated he did not have the figures.

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked about the Maser report dated May 15, 2018 which is a traffic report but also has site plan comments. Asked about #15 on report and emergency vehicles. Asked if an ambulance could get under the parking deck and how many visitor parking spots there are. Asked if there was a park or playground on site. Asked if a colored drawing showing the green space could be brought in for the next meeting. Asked if this plan has gone to the Union County Planning Board and asked about security on the site.

Mr. Martell stated there was a template submitted. Stated that the hammerheads are met with the paver emergency roads. Will need to clarify with Maser. Stated there is height clearance for an ambulance. There is no distinguishing between resident vs. visitor parking. Used RSIS calculations of .5 spaces per unit. Based on the number of bedrooms, ranges from 1.8 to 2.1 spaces with the .5 spaces is included. Stated that a playground has not been development yet. Stated nothing has been sent to the Union County Planning Board and he is not aware of any proposal for additional structures for security.

Board member asked about the turning circles that the Fire Department requested.

Mr. Martell stated that after the DRC meeting they revised the set of plans.

Marlena Schmid – 20 Georgia Street – Asked what experience Mr. Martell has in designing a project where the project is next to a freight line. Asked about a derailment and County HAZMAT reaching the site. Asked about plantings for sound buffering.

Mr. Martell stated that all projects are different. Does not know if he has designed a project like this with a freight line. Stated there is nothing that prohibits an emergency response. Described the access roads.

Don Smith – 21 Oneida Place – Asked what the elevation of the rail line is. What storm water design features do they have to comply with for being so close to a rail line.

Mr. Martell stated the property line is higher than the rail. He is not aware of any design features they have to comply with regarding the distance of the rail line.

Phyllis Howard - 5 Burnside Ave – Asked what is the current square footage of the buildings on the property right now and what will the square footage be when Phase One and Phase Two are completed.

Mr. Martell stated they would have to add them all up to determine the square footage. Stated that he did have the FAR calculations - for Phase One it is 0.905 and for Phase Two it is 1.041.

Board member asked that they provide the information regarding the total square footage of living area at the next meeting.

Don Stiles – 244 Hillside Avenue – Asked if they will look at neighboring properties when doing the environmental impact study.

Mr. Martell stated they will comply with the requirements of the analysis.

Kurt Decker – 27 Grove Street – Asked if they provide cost estimation surveys and how much more would it cost to do the changes for underground storage. Asked if they need to increase the garage space and if the impervious paver could withstand the weight of the fire trucks.

Mr. Martell stated the increased cost would be 5 to 20%. Stated there are countless options regarding increasing the garage space and Hartz would need to comply with the ordinance. Feels that the pavers could hold the weight of the fire trucks.

Board member asked about the RSIS calculations for garden apartment vs. townhouse for parking. Feels a mistake was made in the calculations of the parking based on the category.

Mr. Martell stated he does not think they are townhouses.

Board member stated he does not think they are garden apartments.

Mr. Rhatican asked if the Township Engineer made a distinction between a garden apartment and a townhouse.

Board member asked if this witness is subject to recall at the next meeting.

Mr. Robbins stated yes, he can be recalled. Also stated that the revised plans need to be submitted to the Board along with the EIS report.

Mr. Rhatican stated the EIS report will not be ready for the next meeting. Stated they would need about 6 weeks for the EIS report.

Board is requesting the May 24, 2017 plans which the testimony was based on this evening, along with a colorized version of the green space and the calculation of the total building coverage.

Discussion was held about the date for the next meeting and a possible special meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Rhatican stated that the Planner will be testifying at the meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup> and the Traffic Engineer is available on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

David Pringle – 333 Walnut Avenue – Thanked the Board. Felt they were very fair and thorough. Stated that people thought the Traffic Engineer would be testifying tonight. Requested any changes be communicated to the public as soon as possible.

Christine Esposito - 11 Behnert Place – Requested that the meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup> be held early, since it is the night before school starts.

Marlena Schmid – 20 Georgia Street – Suggested that after Board receives the EIS, hiring a consultant to review the work that was submitted.

Jim Hodgkins – 42 Keith Jeffries Avenue – Stated the Hartz proposal is to maximum their assets. They are a sophisticated owner. Applicant could still do warehousing which might cause more traffic. Asked if Board could do a study of the highest and best use.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 12:11 P.M.

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Donna Pedde, Secretary