

MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD

Workshop meeting of February 5, 2020

A public meeting of the Cranford Planning Board was called to order by Ms. Murray on February 5, 2020 at 7:31 p.m. in Room 108 of the Municipal Building, 8 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, New Jersey. Ms. Lenahan announced in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Open Public Meetings Act, the Westfield Leader and the Star Ledger have been notified and the agenda posted in the municipal building as required. Formal action may be taken.

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Ms. Murray
Ms. Pedde
Dr. Chapman
Mr. Cossa
Ms. Didzbalis
Ms. Feder
Mr. Taylor

Members Absent:

Mayor Giblin – recused himself
Deputy Mayor Prunty - recused herself

Alternates Present:

Ms. Kellet
Mr. Walton

Alternates Absent:

None

Also present:

Jonathan Drill Esq., Jason Bottcher, Zoning Officer, Kathy Lenahan, Board Administrator

2. Resolutions

None

3. MINUTES

Motion to adopt the minutes of the November 13, 2019 meeting was made by Ms. Pedde, seconded by Dr. Chapman and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Murray, Ms. Pedde, Dr. Chapman, Ms. Didzbalis, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Walton

Opposed: None

Motion to adopt the minutes of the December 4, 2019 was made by Ms. Pedde, seconded by Mr. Taylor and passed by roll call vote:

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Affirmative: Ms. Murray, Ms. Pedde, Dr. Chapman, Mr. Cossa, Ms. Didzbalis and Mr. Taylor

Opposed: None

Motion to adopt the minutes of the executive session of January 15, 2020 was made by Mr. Cossa, seconded by Dr. Chapman and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Murray, Ms. Pedde, Dr. Chapman, Mr. Cossa, Ms. Didzbalis, Mr. Taylor, Ms. Kellet and Mr. Walton

Opposed: None

Motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the January 15, 2020 Reorganization meeting was made by Mr. Cossa seconded by Ms. Didzbalis and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Murray, Ms. Pedde, Dr. Chapman, Mr. Cossa, Ms. Didzbalis, Mr. Taylor, Ms. Kellet and Mr. Walton

Opposed: None

4. COMMUNICATIONS

None

5. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Motion to go into Executive session was made by Ms. Feder, seconded by Mr. Walton and all members present voted in favor of the motion.

Purpose of executive session is to obtain attorney client privileged advice regarding the standards the Board must consider in reviewing a minor site plan application where confidentiality is required for the Board attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer, the minutes of which will be released at some time in the future at the discretion of the Planning Board.

Motion to go back into Open session was made by Mr. Cossa, seconded by Ms. Didzbalis and all members present voted in favor of the motion.

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 February 5, 2020 at 8:07 p.m. 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
Ms. Pedde
Dr. Chapman
Mr. Cossa
Ms. Didzbalis
Ms. Feder
Mayor Giblin
Mr. Taylor

Members Absent:

Mayor Giblin – recused himself
Deputy Mayor Prunty – recused herself

Alternates Present:

Ms. Kellett
Mr. Walton

Alternates Absent:

None

Also present:

Jonathan Drill, Esquire; Jason Bottcher, Zoning Officer, Kathy Lenahan, Board Administrator

**4. Application # PB-19-003
Mona Bia Corporation
111-115 North Union Avenue
Block 191 Lot 5, D-C Zone**

The applicant in this matter is seeking minor site plan approval and c(2) variances and exceptions.

Joshua Koodray, Esq. appeared and explained the application. Stated the subject property has been vacant for about 10 years. Applicant proposed a one-story commercial building which will be a welcome addition to the Downtown. At this time, there are no tenants for the building, but the applicant will market it to permitted land uses. Applicant is seeking one variance for front yard setback and some design waivers. Also in receipt of the DRC memo from Mr. Bottcher and the Township professionals' review memos.

All witnesses who will testify this evening were sworn in at the same time.

For the applicant:

Michael Soriano – Architect
Pathik Tanna – Officer of the Corporation

For the Board:

Jacqueline Dirmann – Engineer
Nick Dickerson - Planner
Gabe Bailer – Director of Downtown Corporation

Mr. Soriano appeared and his credentials were presented to the Board. He was accepted as an expert in the field of Architecture.

He testified to the following as posed by Mr. Koodray:

Presented A-100 and A-200 as the proposed floor plans. Project is an infill retail building made of steel and masonry. It will be a one-story space on North Union Avenue. There are stairs proposed for a possible addition in the future. There will be a basement for storage and site will be divided into two separate tenant spaces. Each tenant will have their own entrance into building, a storage area and their own bathroom facilities with each having an exit out the back. Building is unique because the land slopes from back to front. There will be stairs that go out the back of building to reach grade. Drawing A-200 is a rendering of front of building and shows buildings on left and right. The proposed materials are brick masonry, aluminum, glass windows and an awning over the entrance door and an awning over the proposed door going to the second floor. Presented a color drawing marked Exhibit A-1. The front is designed with a clay brick color consistent with other buildings on North Union Avenue. Applicant will use clear glass for windows and doors. Awning is cable supported. Each store has a double door and refuse will be stored in the back. Deliveries will be through the front door. The doors are flush on North Union Avenue to keep as much rentable store space as possible. The spaces are 958 sq. ft. and 962 sq. ft. The canopy will meet the ordinance and will be no deeper than 4 feet from the façade of the building. Signage shown is not proposed signage, it is just showing where signage would be mounted. Tenants would need a zoning permit for signage.

Questions from Mr. Bailer for this witness ascertained the following:

He is not familiar with Chapter 355 of the SID guidelines. The height of building is due to trying to create a flat surface for a possible second floor. Building will provide a 4-foot parapet screen for the HVAC equipment. Also provides a party wall. Described some of the buildings near the proposed building. Building on left has brick façade and one on the right has shingle and stone façade. Not showing any proposed lighting. Lighting would be over the signage. Applicant is willing to install surface mounted gooseneck lighting over signage. Reviewed Mr. Bailer's letter dated January 27, 2020 as to the following:

Number 4 -no condition;
Number 6 - yes;
Number 2 – yes;
Number 3 – yes;
Number 5 – strike;
Number 7 – applicant requests double door;
Number 8 – applicant does not want to give up floor space.

Applicant would like to keep double door and door to be flush not recessed. Mr. Bailer stated he would like to see door recessed. Numbers 9, 10, 11 in the report are in the future. Number 1 is a future stair for a future second story, but the stairway will be built and there will be a roof hatch.

Questions from the Board ascertained the following:

Full glass was to maximum the store front. Lighting will be the same on both sides. Stack bond is proposed. Running bond is on the other buildings. Color of brick has not been chosen yet. Stairs are going up and are to scale. Roof is a flat roof. Structure is flat for future development. Building is to be made of non-combustible material. Minimum ceiling height is 8 feet. There is approximately 36 inches between ceiling and roof. Building will be at zero lot line in front and match up with two adjacent buildings. The building directly across the street from proposed building is not recessed. This building will fit in with the Downtown character. HVAC equipment will be lifted if there is a second story. The brick will try and mimic the adjacent buildings. The interior wall is nonbearing, could be eliminated. Applicant agrees that running bond could be done. Front doors meet existing elevation and meet requirements for ADA compliance; rest rooms will also be ADA compliant. Roof down spouts are interior drains tied into the storm sewer. Roof hatch is not on the plans. Site plan should have a roof plan. Parapet and HVAC units can be shown on the roof plan. Building to right has a door that is not utilized by existing tenant. Basement follows footprint of building on site plan.

Ms. Murray asked if the Public has any questions for this witness, no one appeared.

Jacqueline Dirman, Board Engineering asked about the side walls.

Mr. Soriano stated it will be the same material as in the front of the building.

Wayne Ingram appeared and was sworn in. His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert in the fields of Engineering and Planning.

Mr. Ingram testified to following as posed by Mr. Koodray:

Described a colorized version of Sheet 2 of site plan marked Exhibit A-2. Described existing conditions as North Union Avenue with the brown shaded area with adjacent structures on either side of building and parking area in Northeast corner. Building was removed 10 years ago. Site has a lawn area and rear of site has a retaining wall on an

adjacent property which holds up the parking lot at a higher elevation. There are some issues with the site. Stairs inside the building are necessary to adjust to the grade. Need to maintain structural integrity of rear wall which is not on their property. Looking to use existing utility lines. Trash enclosure will be 4 x 6 in the rear. Will look to try and get an Access easement from rear parking lot owner. Storm water will be through infiltration drain. Agreeable to do soil testing and dig system as deep as they can. Concerned with putting anything underneath the structure.

Questions from the Board ascertained the following:

Does not know if adjacent buildings have basements. Will do some recharge. Does not show the interior leaders on plans. Could use a 24-inch diameter pipe to provide additional capacity, but cannot make trench wider. Has not done soil testing yet. The previous building occupied about two thirds of the lot.

Mr. Drill asked Mr. Koodray what relief is the applicant requesting from §364.

Mr. Ingram stated it is a partial exception. They will be providing a storm water system and will provide some of the changes requested. Stated Sheet 2 shows a 40-foot trench drain and reviewed the proposed storm water system for the building.

Ms. Dirmann reviewed Maser's engineering report with Mr. Ingram. The following was ascertained:

The storm water calculations will not meet the discharge conditions as it exists today. The site is an infill development. Can dig trench deeper and increase diameter of the pipe. There is a basement under the structure. Does not feel a pump is the best option. Reviewed the different types of storms and rate of runoff for each storm. Calculations do not meet the ordinance. Increasing the impervious coverage over 1000 sq. ft. triggers a major development. Would like to see a report with other options that have been considered. Applicant will comply with all conditions on all the other comments.

Mr. Ingram will provide the soil testing and expand the underground system in the rear yard. Applicant will address all comments under the storm water section and will provide documentation.

Mr. Drill stated the Board should decide whether they want to have a continuance or do they have enough information to render a decision.

Ms. Murray did a straw pole with the consensus being the Board would like to request a continuance.

Mr. Ingram was also testified as a Planner. Reviewed the variance & waivers requested: variance is for front yard setback; waivers are for street furniture and off-street loading.

Nick Dickerson, Maser Consulting– Board Planner appeared.
Stated all comments were addressed and answered.

Questions from the Board for Mr. Ingram as the Planner ascertained the following:
Outside furniture cannot fit with its limited frontage.

Ms. Murray asked if there were questions from the Public, no one appeared.

Mr. Soriano was recalled with regard to a question from Mr. Bailer's memo regarding question #4. Feels building & windows should align with the two adjacent buildings. Asked about moving HVAC to back of building. Reviewed the SID Ordinance Chapter 355-3 C – General Standards. Requesting that the applicant lower the height of the building to align with the building to the right. Stated the brick should be similar design as the adjacent buildings.

Mr. Soriano stated the finished roof is for a possible future second floor. Lowering the windows will increase the massive look. If lowering to the same as adjacent building, there would be no room for screening or insulation. If HVAC is in the back it will not be seen. Could potentially lower it 2 feet. Showed Exhibit A-3 which is a copy of 22 photos taken by Mr. Soriano in late May and accurately depict the conditions of the street. Showed photo number 10 as the Mizu Shushi building. That building is taller than the adjacent building. Showed photo number 12, two doors down from the site, building would be similar in height. Photo number one shows both adjacent buildings. Stated the applicant does not want to redesign the building.

Questions from the Board for this witness ascertain the following:

There is nothing in the SID ordinance that says there cannot be a two-story building in the Downtown. The standards are design guidelines. The zoning code restricts the height. Reducing the height would not change the storm water requirements and could make it more difficult. Would have to lower the windows if lowering the height of the building. Could possibly lower and add some architectural feature on the façade. Building will be attractive with a lot of light. Building may be a two-story building in the future.

Mr. Tanna stated the staircase is for a possible future second floor. Waiting to see if a tenant might need space upstairs.

Ms. Murray asked for a straw poll related to the architectural design and any changes to

height of building and windows. The consensus is that the design should stay as.

Board members asked for a brick sample and a drawing showing the lighting that was discussed.

Discussed the scheduling of next meeting. Meeting is scheduled for March 18th.

The following items are requested by the Board to be presented prior to the next meeting:

Drawing of proposed gooseneck lights;
Roof Plan – drains, hatch, parapets and HVAC location and height;
Revised site plan – interior leaders from roof and hook up into underground pipe
Revised storm water plan - soil testing, expanded underground system and alternative options not feasible;
Site line drawing;
Brick sample can be brought in night of the meeting.

Board requests all documents be in to the Zoning Office by March 6th.

Applicant stated they will consent to an extension till April 30th.

5. PUBLIC PORTION
None

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 10:45 P.M.

Kathleen Murray, Chair