

## **MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD**

### **Workshop meeting of November 13, 2019**

**WORKSHOP PORTION.** Ms. Murray called the workshop portion of the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

**1. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**2. RESOLUTIONS OF MEMORIALIZATION**

None

**3. MINUTES**

Motion to approve minutes of workshop meeting of October 2, 2019 was made by Ms. Pedde, seconded by Ms. Didzbalis and passed on roll call vote:

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

Abstained: Mr. Taylor

Opposed: None

**4. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

The Board discussed Ordinance No. 2019-12. Nick Dickerson Board Planner, from Maser Consulting stated he also reviewed the ordinance and did not feel it is inconsistent with the Master Plan. Board discussed MLUL 40:55D-26a and determined that it was not inconsistent with the Master Plan and had no further recommendations. A letter to the Township Clerk will be drafted by Ms. Lenahan stating the above.

Motion to recommend Ordinance No 2019-12 was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Dr. Chapman and passed on roll call vote:

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

Opposed: None

### **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 November 13, 2019 at 8:02 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  
Dr. Chapman  
Ms. Didzbalis  
Ms. Pedde  
Mr. Taylor

**Members Absent**

Mr. Cossa  
Deputy Mayor Dooley  
Ms. Feder  
Mayor Giblin

**Alternates Present:**

Mr. Walton

**Alternates Absent:**

Mr. Aschenbach

**Also present:**

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

**4. Application # PB-19-004**

**Food Truck Inc.**

**40-42 Jackson Drive**

**Block: 640 Lot: 6.01, Zone C-1**

**677-679 Raritan Road**

**Block: 640 Lots: 2 & 3 Zone NC**

**The applicant in this matter is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval, and multiple “c” variances and design waivers in order to construct an addition to an existing warehouse and operate a new technology/food delivery service from this location.**

Mr. Drill stated there was a revised zoning permit submitted to the Board members and the applicant's attorney.

Stephen Hehl, Esq. appeared on behalf of the applicant. He explained the application as a food distribution service, that it is unique and a good use for the building. Property is located in the industrial zone and does permit the use. They have received the departmental comments and have no concerns with any of the comments.

All witnesses testifying this evening for the applicant or Board experts, were sworn in at the same time. Mr. Drill asked everyone to identify themselves and their position. The following individuals were sworn in:

**For the Applicant:**

Victor Vinegra, Professional Engineer & Planner  
Logan Marhefka – Architect  
Michael Kipfer – Architect  
John Harter – Traffic Engineer  
Jay Naik - COO

**For the Board:**

Nick Dickerson – Professional Planner  
Jeffrey Fiore – Traffic Engineer  
Chris Dour – Township Engineer  
Jason Bottcher – Township Zoning Officer & Planner

Jay Naik – appeared. Stated he is the COO of Food Truck Inc.

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

They are a pre-launch food technology company. Their vision is to provide high quality cuisine using their on demand electric vehicles. Cuisine will be developed in the commissary. Will receive the food ingredients and package into kits and load onto vehicles for final delivery. Stated the mobile kitchen fleet is fuel efficient. Kitchens are noiseless, ventless, and greaseless. Will have a diverse cuisine. Cranford facility will also be the company headquarters along with commissary and will also have meeting spaces for employees. Discussed the importance of food and fire safety. Will need skilled labor and the employees will be permanent workers with benefits, not contract workers. Would like to adopt a hiring program for local employees. They did an exhaustive search and felt the Cranford Business Park was optimal for their needs. Their target market is Union County and would like to work with the Township with their sustainability.

Mr. Naik reviewed the process: customer will have an app and pick a cuisine. Hybrid vehicles will come to the door and prepare hot meals on the spot. Would cater to residents and the business community. Deliveries into facility will be two to five times a day. There will be approximately 5 vehicles at the launch and over 3 years to capacity of 50 vehicles.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

Shipments will come into the facility and be packaged into kits and loaded into the electric vehicles. Cooking is done in the vehicle at the delivery point. Will be using local produce. Delivery schedule will be based on the demand. The menu is still in the pre-launch state. Will have a variety of food and be similar to the *Sun Basket* concept but food will be cooked for you in the vehicle. Not sure if there will be a driver and a cook in each vehicle, it will be whatever produces the best quality food.

Chris Dour, Board Engineer asked Mr. Naik about the test kitchen and the venting.

Mr. Naik stated the kitchen will be vented and will make sure all codes for any plumbing necessary will be adhered to.

Nick Dickerson, Board Planner asked Mr. Naik about the types of trucks they will be using and the number of employees on the site.

Mr. Naik stated the trucks are hybrid and will minimize emissions and noise. Truck size will be a little larger than Sprinter vans. There will be approximately 250 employees total but on different shifts, each shift should have about 65 employees.

Mr. Drill asked about how many vehicles on the site at any time.

Mr. Naik stated a lot of employees will be taking mass transit and carpooling. The plans show they will be under the max parking spots at all times.

Jeff Fiore, Board Traffic Engineer asked Mr. Naik about the various shifts and the typical day.

Mr. Naik stated they will have several shifts. Most traffic will be at non-peak times. Shifts could be 9am to 5pm, 5am to 7am and will go till 11pm.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions of the witness, the following appeared:

Charles Honara – 140 Berwood Drive, Linden – Asked about exiting parking lot adjoining the Linden portion and about foliage barrier.

Mr. Hehl stated that area will be employee parking.

Victor Vinegra appeared His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert witness in the field of Engineering.

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

Majority of site is in the C-1 zone. The NC zone is along Raritan Road. Lots 2 & 3 are included in this application. The impervious coverage is being decreased. There is a 200 space parking lot there now. Applicant wants to modernize area and will put refuse

indoors. Stated they are proposing 100 car spaces – 10 in front (4 ADA spaces will be restriped) 90 in back (70 plus 20) and 67 spaces for truck parking for a total of 167. Decreasing the impervious coverage from 68.5% to 67; the zone allows up to 70%. There will be a sliding gate for food truck access to the loading docks. 13 loading docks are proposed with a queuing lane. Lane will be resurfaced and permeable pavers will be used. All driveways will remain. Entry lane for vehicles coming off Moen Avenue will be the main entrance. Will create a buffer area for future charging stations. Visitors to site would use the 10 spaces in the front to park.

Described the landscape as having 38 mature trees right now. They are adding 44 new 6 to 8 foot trees. Will also add 268 shrubs as fill-in. Any dead trees will be removed and replaced with a new ones. They will not be using existing light poles. Will be changing to modern LED's for parking lot.

Mr. Bottcher stated that Cranford does have a Tree Replacement Ordinance.

Mr. Drill asked if Board could determine replacement or repayment.

Mr. Naik stated they are committed to maintaining the upkeep of the landscaping on a regular basis.

Mr. Vinegra reviewed the comments from the Township professionals. There was no negative impact from Traffic & Safety, Health, Environmental Committee, Fire, or HPAB. Stated the Fire Department does not have an issue with the truck circulation at the site. Reviewed the Maser Engineering Review Letter dated November 7<sup>th</sup>. Some items not already discussed were:

- An easement would need to be placed on the storm inlet into Jackson Drive
- They are proposing 4 ADA spaces in front of building
- They will move back the electric gate for emergency vehicles
- Storm system to be cleaned
- Will provide maintenance plan for storm water system
- Will upgrade existing lighting if lumens test is not sufficient for ordinance
- Requesting variance for lighting spillage onto roadway
- Proposing 6-foot-high chain link fence around rear of site, with vinyl fence being eliminated
- Agrees to do a permeability test
- Agrees to performing an "as built"

Chris Dour Board Engineering, asked about emergency vehicles having access to the electric gate at any time. Also stated there should be no storage on the open space (lots 2 & 3). Discussed the lighting spillage on the entrance/exists should be 2 to 3 foot candle maximum. Recommended keeping lighting below 3500 kelvin and being Dark Sky Compliant. However, there should be no exception for the adjacent Lot 5 for light spillage.

Asked if there is only chain link fencing and no vinyl fencing and to note that on the plan. Also stated he needs more information to determine if the storm water runoff is adequate.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions of the witness, the following appeared:

Charles Honara - 140 Berwood Drive, Linden – Asked about a fence in the foliage area and what type would it be. Stated there are 4 trees that need to be removed. Asked about the additional trees in barrier.

Mr. Vinegra stated there would be a chain link fence and that 7-foot arborvitaes would be planted. Also stated they would be adding shrubbery.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

Lots 2 & 3 foundations and footings will be removed and will be only greenspace with grass and landscape. Normally there is no maintenance plan for vegetation. Linden border has arborvitaes and will fill-in with natural screen.

John Harter appeared. His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert witness in the field of Traffic Engineering.

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

He prepared an October 7, 2019 Traffic Impact Analysis. Stated it is a unique land use. Applicant is maintaining the same site access points as what is there today. There are three driveways on Moen Avenue and two driveways on Jackson Drive. They are making both driveways on Jackson Drive two way instead of one way. Food trucks would enter in on Moen Drive and exit by the Jackson Avenue driveway. Traffic counts were done in early June during commuter hours of 6:30 am – 9:30 am and 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Trip generation was based on the Food Truck Inc. various shifts. Food trucks shifts were 5:30 am to 11:00 am, 2:00 pm to 11:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 12:00 am. Trip generation was 30 trips in in the morning with no trips out and evening was 30 trips in and 60 trips exiting.

Mr. Drill asked about full build out for vehicles and parking spots.

Mr. Harter stated there could be 35 corporate employees plus 35 shift employees plus some shift overlap plus 50 food trucks.

Mr. Naik stated there would only be one person in each truck and the 50 trucks would be on shifts so that are not overlapping.

Mr. Fiore, Board Traffic Engineer stated he agreed with Mr. Harter regarding the trip generation provided.

Mr. Fiore asked about the 10 spaces in the front with 4 ADA and asked if the other 6 will be designated for visitors. Stated there could be inadequate employee parking based on

an email that was sent to Mr. Fiore today. Asked about the gated parking and will employees have access to both lots.

Mr. Naik stated the shifts will be adjusted to make sure the overlap does not go over the parking requirement. Also the employees will have access to the gated parking area.

Questions by the Board ascertained the following:

Business model is to try and utilize the trucks at all times in order to be successful. They do not want trucks idling or a large influx of trucks coming in or out of the site.

Discussion was held to determine if Board was comfortable making a decision without seeing the plan revisions.

Logan Marhafka appeared. He is a licensed architect in NJ. Michael Kipler also appeared. He is a licensed architect but is not licensed in NJ. Mr. Marhafka's credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert witness in the field of architecture and Mr. Kipler's credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert witness in the field of architecture design.

Mr. Kipler testified to the following through questions posed by Mr. Hehl:

Reviewed a rendering with current brick façade and windows at north corner. Proposing to do façade improvements with paint, windows will be refurbished and there will be no change to the loading docks on the west side. East side will have a roll up door and the new addition will have a roll up door for interior refuse and three loading doors for maintenance area. Refuse area will contain a compactor and recycling. Northwest side will have office area and bathrooms for employees.

Questions from the Board for this witness ascertained the following:

The color for the facade is white and there will be beet red stripes on the northwest corner on the areas facing the parking lot. The building side adjacent to residences will only be a white façade. There is up lighting shown on the rendering.

Nick Dickerson Board Planner asked about a logo and about a monument sign along Jackson Drive.

Mr. Kipler stated it will be thin applied signage either back or side lite. Stated the full signage package has not been developed yet.

Mr. Drill asked for a color copy of the building rendering to be provided to the Board.

Mr. Hehl stated no variances or exceptions have been requested for any signage and they will comply with all signage ordinances.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions of the witness, no one appeared.

Victor Vinegra appeared. His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert in Planning.

Mr. Vinegra testified to the following through questions posed by Mr. Hehl:  
Reviewed Nick Dickerson's report dated November 4, 2019 for variances requested by the applicant. Applicant is requesting "C" variances and exceptions:

C variance for rear yard setback where a minimum of 100 feet is required, and 62 feet is proposed.

C variance for a decrease of impervious coverage – combining all lots will be under the 70% and Lots 2 & 3 will remain as green space.

C variance for ground mounted generator in side yard for Public Service access.

Requesting an exception for sidewalks - there are no sidewalks now.

Requesting an exception for existing curbing – any new curbing will be granite block.

Requesting an exception for driveway aprons which are existing and new aprons will be concrete.

Requesting an exception from tree islands due to landscaping around perimeter.

Mr. Dickerson stated that all his comments were addressed by Mr. Vinegra.

There were no Board questions for this witness.

Ms. Murray opened the application to the public for questions of the witness, no one appeared.

Mr. Hehl waved his closing statements.

No one else appeared and this portion of the hearing was closed with the matter referred back to the Board.

- 5. DELIBERATION OF Application # PB-19-004  
Food Truck Inc.  
40-42 Jackson Drive  
Block: 640 Lot: 6.01, Zone C-1  
677-679 Raritan Road  
Block: 640 Lots: 2 & 3 Zone NC**

**The applicant in this matter is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval, and multiple "c" variances and design waivers in order to construct an addition to an existing warehouse and operate a new technology/food delivery service from this location.**



Board comments consisted of the following:

Love the project. There are still a lot of unknowns, not comfortable voting on final site plan, would vote on preliminary site plan. Board can vote on preliminary and final site plan based on and subject to all the conditions mentioned.

Mr. Drill discussed the off-street parking ordinance is §255-44 and reviewed the statute. Stated the applicant would need to provide 167 spaces with a new schedule showing the maximum of 89 employees parking at one time. This would need to be reviewed by the Zoning Officer and the Board Engineer for all conditions that were placed on the record.

Motion to grant approval for application # PB-19-004 was made by Dr. Chapman and seconded by Mr. Taylor with the following voting in favor of motion:

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

Opposed: Ms. Murray

## **8. PUBLIC PORTION**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 11:35 p.m.

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Donna Pedde, Vice Chair/Secretary