

## **MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD**

### **Workshop meeting of October 17, 2018**

**WORKSHOP PORTION.** Ms. Murray called the workshop portion of the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**1. COMMUNICATIONS**

Letter was received regarding 116 Spring Garden Street.

**2. RESOLUTIONS OF MEMORIALIZATION**

None

**3. MINUTES**

Motion to adopt minutes of the September 12<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting, and the October 3<sup>rd</sup>, regular and executive session meetings was made by Mayor Hannen and seconded by Mr. Cossa, with Deputy Mayor Dooley abstaining, was passed on voice vote with all others in favor.

**4. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Discussion was held regarding Township Ordinance 2018-16. A motion was made to recommend to the Township Committee to act favorably on ordinance, was made by Mayor Hannen, seconded by Deputy Mayor Dooley and passed on unanimous voice vote.

- 5.** A motion was made by Mayor Hannen and seconded by Ms. Anderson to go into executive session with the following voting in favor of the motion: Ms. Murray, Ms. Anderson, Dr. Chapman, Mr. Cossa, Ms. Feder, Mayor Hannen, Ms. Pedde, and Ms. Didzbalis.

- 6.** A motion was made by Mayor Hannen, seconded by Deputy Mayor Dooley to return to open session with the following voting in favor of the motion: Ms. Murray, Ms. Anderson, Dr. Chapman, Mr. Cossa, Ms. Feder, Mayor Hannen, Ms. Pedde, Mr. Taylor, and Ms. Didzbalis.

### **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 October 17, 2018 at 8:14 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. Anderson  
Dr. Chapman  
Mr. Cossa  
Deputy Mayor Dooley  
Ms. Feder  
Mayor Hannen  
Ms. Pedde  
Mr. Taylor

**Alternates Present:**

Ms. Didzbalis

**Alternates Absent:**

Mr. Aschenbach

**Also present:**

Mark Rothman, Esquire; Kathy Lenahan, Administrator/Scribe, Bill Masol, Engineer

Ron Johnson, Zoning Officer was absent.

**4. Application # PBA-17-00004- Continued from September 12, 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 both Mr. Pehnke and Mr. Hughes were in attendance. Mr. Pehnke testified at the last meeting and was there to answer questions from the Board.

Mr. Rothman stated that Mr. Pehnke was still under oath.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

He has been involved in many projects that have spent millions of dollars for offsite improvements to address and measure traffic impacts. Gave example of a Fed Ex facility in Hamilton Township. He has always been a Traffic Engineer. He has testified at 50 to 100 appearances a year. Traffic study was done in October 2016 and supplemented in January and February of 2017. The site was not fully occupied at time of traffic study. There was never a traffic study done when the site

was fully occupied. Described Table 4 of the Trip Distribution as the regional distribution going to and from the site. Reviewed the arrival and departure distribution for the site. Stated that there are cars using the cut through on Lexington Avenue between Raritan Road and Walnut Avenue. Stated intention is not to promote access into that neighborhood. Discussed possible traffic signal at Lexington instead of Behnert and would explore that at time of site plan. Reviewed the car counts that were done on side streets at Mitchel, Behnert and Lexington. Morning peak was 7:30 am to 8:30 am and evening peak was 4:45 pm to 5:45 pm.

There were no counts done on pedestrian traffic. Study compares existing building traffic plus re-occupancy of the office building in the front.

Has not read the Fiscal Impact Study. Does not know how many school age children will be at the site. The Trip Generation does take in to account an active residential community but does not breakdown to level of specific communities. Went back to Hamilton project after about 4 to 6 months to review the data and they way over estimated the traffic. The independent variable is the number of units. Does not know how much of the data in the Trip Generation Handbook relates to N.J. The 10<sup>th</sup> edition has provided more source data. Trip generation data is separated out for single family and multi-family. He used multi-family data. "A lot" means about 10 or 20 trips.

During Phase One the northern most driveway would be used for commercial vehicle traffic. Traffic signal will be opposite Behnert at driveway two.

Reason for traffic signal at proposed driveway is to accommodate the safety of the left-hand turn onto Walnut Avenue. Projected 115 vehicles in the peak hour of 7:30 am to 8:30 am leaving the site. Does not know how many would be school trips. Right turns into site at peak hour of 4:45 pm to 5:45 pm would be a little over 100 vehicles.

There were no further questions by the Board.

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

David Pringle – 333 Walnut Avenue – Asked about the cut throughs and where the greatest traffic congestion would be at peak hours. Asked if he was aware of the traffic at Walnut Avenue School and the Raritan Road and Central Avenue intersections. Asked about having traffic lights at two driveways and about getting to the Parkway from the site. Asked about the reconfiguring of the schools by the Board of Ed. Asked about the traffic patterns for Clark Commons. Asked how many of the children would take a bus to school. Asked if he was aware there would be no busing for the children at the site due to the distance to the school.

Mr. Pehnke stated that most traffic starts at the driveways and then about 67% would be at the intersection of Raritan Road. Stated he is aware of the traffic conditions by the school and at the intersections. Stated Board is to consider what the impact of a residential development would be versus what the current zoning will allow. Discussed why Lexington Avenue might be a better option for the traffic light. Stated that possibly the traffic would go north to get to the south and

was not aware of the changes proposed by the Board of Ed. Also, not aware there was no busing for students at the site.

Matthew Ryan – 200 North Lehigh Avenue - Asked about the traffic analysis and if any of it was based on data from the County, Cranford Police Department or the residents regarding traffic accidents, traffic patterns or behaviors. Asked about data for any of the other roads in the corridor. Asked about the effect on mass transit and about the traffic that will affect the neighborhoods beyond the development.

Mr. Pehnke stated they researched the available data on the DOT website and did check with the County, but there was not a lot of available data. As for local data, they did collect information from the Police Department about accidents and the PD is involved in the application. Regarding the public input, that would be tonight. Stated growth rates are reflected in the analysis. Discussed the tools, such as Google Earth that they are starting to use to factor in real time traffic.

Marie Evaristo – 10 Behnert Place – Asked about the signal at Behnert Place and how it will work. Asked about the corner house on Behnert and the parked cars. Asked about the traffic at Behnert Place in the hour of 7:30 am and 8:30 am and about the 15 cars that she saw in one minute. Asked about the units on Valley Road in Clark.

Mr. Pehnke stated they would take those things into consideration at the time of the design of the signal. Stated they went to the Clark Planning Board and was told they had no significant residential development currently planned.

Christine Espostio – 11 Behnert Place – Asked how far the typical study area is. Asked about the good level of service for the traffic signal and about the timing of the traffic light during a one-hour period.

Mr. Pehnke stated the typical study area is site driveways and the next adjacent intersection, which would be Raritan Road. Stated they looked at Lexington and Walnut but not Chester Lang. Stated the traffic signal would benefit both the site and the side streets. Stated signal would be timed with signal at Raritan Road, which is on a 100 second cycling.

Judy Kupferberg – 34 Lenhome Drive – Asked why he did not use the NJ data for the traffic analysis.

Mr. Pehnke stated they are using up to date data. Feels using the whole data base is a good representation of traffic. Stated it is a new tool and not clear how good it is. They did come out and do traffic counts and projecting forward they used the data available.

Board member asked what days they came out to do the traffic counts. Asked if that is an appropriate analysis when you are looking to rezone the property and increase the population on less than 1% of the property by more than 8% of the existing population.

Mr. Pehnke stated they did traffic counts on one day. They do them on either a Tuesday, Wednesday or a Thursday. Stated that traffic patterns are relatively stable. They also put down an automatic traffic recorder for a period of a week and verified that data against the traffic counts. Feels the one day was enough to have a representative sample of the traffic flow.

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked about the day the traffic counts were performed and the supplemental date and what the information was used for. Asked about queuing in a neighborhood such as Behnert Place. Asked for clarification on the number of school age children and about making multiple trips with school age children. Asked about traffic on a Saturday or Sunday for office use. Asked if the left turn onto Walnut Avenue was included in the study. Asked about break down for shuttle and about traffic staggered if the site was a commercial or medical office use. Asked about a comparison to the site being built in Roselle.

Mr. Pehnke stated the information was used to supplement and verify the traffic counts they took on the weekday period. Stated the queuing would be longer on an unsignalized area. He deferred to the Planner regarding the question on the school age children. Stated there is not a specific number broken out for school trips or a shuttle. Stated there could be traffic on a Saturday for an office use. Stated the study included the left turn out of site onto Walnut Avenue. Stated it would depend on the business for the different operating hours. Stated a medical office generates traffic all day. Stated the Roselle site used the same traffic data base and his office prepared that report.

Board member asked about the automated traffic recorder and why they choose those dates/times.

Mr. Pehnke stated they hired a professional traffic counting firm and that was when they could install the system. Stated that it was a week's worth of data.

Board member asked how many tubes were used for the traffic counts. Asked where the data is for Behnert Place and Mitchell Place.

Mr. Pehnke stated there were two tubes with counter. Also stated he would have to go back and look for the data for Behnert and Mitchell.

TJ Elgin – 13 Pershing Avenue – Asked why is there a need for 3 entrances and questioning the alignment of the driveways. Asked about shuttle service and stated the Woodmont shuttle picks up and drops off approximately 30 people per week.

Mr. Pehnke stated the driveways were aligned with the streets to provide better traffic planning. Stated the exit and entrance on the southernmost driveway will be limited to right turn in, right turn out. Stated they did not reduce any traffic on site for the shuttle service.

Board member asked about the Mitchell and Behnert numbers and that they are exactly the same.

Mr. Pehnke stated he will go back and look at the numbers, they may have estimated for Mitchell Place.

Angela Leary – 4 Behnert Place – Asked what the advantage is to the neighbors of Indian Village to aligning the driveways to those streets. Asked about flow of traffic into Indian Village. Asked if the study showed how many cars were stopped at stop sign on Behnert, Lexington and Mitchell.

Mr. Pehnke stated the advantage is not having driveways coming out to existing residences, also consolidates points of conflict, and is more appropriate to signalize a public street. Is however, open to discussing with the Township professionals. Stated they need to be sensitive to the traffic going into Indian Village if they move forward. Stated they did not do observations on the cues for those streets.

Delia Collins – 72 Georgia Street, Clark – Asked about the study radius. Asked about Chester Lang being a cut through. Asked if he was aware that in Clark's Master Plan they had proposed a traffic light at the corner of Lexington and Raritan. Asked for solutions for timing of light to make it easier for the residents. Asked about circulation for the school on Walnut Avenue and the effect on the side streets. Asked about restrictions for right turn from Raritan Road onto Lexington Avenue to avoid the light.

Mr. Pehnke stated they started the study along the frontage of Walnut Avenue between Raritan Road and Lexington Avenue. Did not go to Chester Lang. Stated it was the hours of 4:45 pm to 5:45 pm. Was not aware of the proposed Clark traffic light. Stated you could provide some progression for the timing of the light and the Governing Body would have to recommend the light restrictions for Raritan Road.

Joe Colangelo – 310 Prospect Avenue – Asked how many trips will be added as a result of the development and if those numbers are acceptable for this project. Asked what number of trips per day would be too many for the area.

Mr. Pehnke stated that he testified at last meeting, the comparison is what could be generated with the existing site versus the proposed residential site. Stated that it is a wash. Projected traffic at full build out would be 400 trips in the morning and 400 trips in the evening. Stated this is a rezoning application and you can mitigate it with the improvements that would be made. Stated it is information for the consideration of the Board. The Board needs to weigh the credibility of the information and will also have advice from their consultants.

Board member asked what the maximum number is that the area could handle.

Mr. Pehnke stated he did not know the number and not sure how you would do that kind of an analysis.

Board member asked if there are standards or guidelines to determine a number for the amount of cars that are acceptable for this development. Asked how much it costs to put down a traffic

strip and asked for clarification of some of that data collected. Also asked about the video camera cost.

Mr. Pehnke stated they have not done that kind of analysis. It costs \$500 to \$600 for one week of the traffic strip to collect data. It costs about \$600 to \$700 to take and process the video.

Board member asked who prepared the information and what percentage of the work product did he actually draft. Asked who was the draftsman.

Mr. Pehnke stated he has staff but is involved on a daily basis. Stated he did not crunch the numbers, it is a collaborative effort. An engineer drafted the report, but it was done under his direction.

Lori Chang – 48 Clark Street – Asked about the commercial driveway and will the residential cars have access to that driveway. Asked about cutting through the development to avoid the light and about Phase Two and the commercial driveway.

Mr. Pehnke stated they will be able to use that driveway during Phase One but would restrict the lefts out of the development. Stated the current plan is to signalize the central driveway.

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked about the site having 120 single family homes and the volume of traffic that would generate or having 55 and older with 300 units and that volume of traffic. Asked about the traffic for Saturdays and Sundays in a commercial development versus a residential development.

Mr. Pehnke stated there would be less traffic with 120 single family homes and that age restricted communities have a different traffic pattern. Stated critical periods for traffic analysis are am peak and evening peak. Discussed medical office and warehouse use at site and traffic patterns.

David Pringle – 333 Walnut Avenue – Asked about the traffic increasing over the weekends due to the site being residential. Asked if he is aware of traffic calming attempts on Walnut Avenue over the last several years and about the history of the speed limit on Walnut Avenue.

Mr. Pehnke stated there would be more traffic at the site due to it being a residential development. Stated he is not aware of traffic calming attempts on Walnut Avenue or history of the speed limit.

Matthew Ryan - 200 North Lehigh Avenue – Asked what impact the introduction of this development would have on the surrounding area. Asked how many hours were spent in the field counting traffic and how many hours the automated technology was in place. Asked about having the individuals who wrote the report testify. Asked about further study on the streets in the neighborhood such as Chester Lang which was not included in the study.

Mr. Pehnke stated traffic counts are done mechanically and it was a one-day count. Stated it would be inappropriate to have the individuals who worked on the report testify. Stated they would provide the data if requested.

Christine Esposito -11 Behnert Place – Asked about traffic light for Walnut Avenue and Behnert Place and is it for the residents to make a left going into development from Raritan Road. Asked about traffic backup on Walnut Avenue from Raritan Road for the residents who are trying to make a left into the development. Asked about residents going through Indian Village to get to the development.

Mr. Pehnke stated the light is to accommodate all moves into and out of the site. Stated the analysis did not show there would be a backup on Raritan Road and some traffic might go through Indian Village. Will need to be sensitive to and discuss at time of site plan, possible design solutions.

Board member asked about the traffic light and volume of cars on Walnut Avenue. Stated on Figure 2 shows 760 cars heading north bound in the pm hours and asked how far back traffic is going to accumulate.

Mr. Pehnke stated they did not see that type of queuing but will go back and look at the models again. Stated traffic was flowing with little cue.

Delia Collins - 72 Georgia Street, Clark – Asked about pedestrian issues and about people walking to and from school. Asked if there will be an increase in pedestrian traffic on Walnut Avenue and about doing a study on pedestrian traffic. Asked about signage for the northern driveway with no traffic light.

Mr. Pehnke stated traffic engineering does include pedestrian activity and motor vehicles. Stated there could be an increase in pedestrian traffic on Walnut Avenue and you could do an evaluation of the path for proper signage and crosswalks. Stated there would be a stop sign controlled with handicapped striping. Stated Walnut Avenue is a county road.

Tom Kaercher - 36 Harvard Road – Asked what is the linear distance between Behnert Place and Mitchell Place and about how many cars can it accommodate.

Mr. Pehnke did not know linear distance but stated a typical left turn lane is about 150 to 200 feet in length.

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked if Page 5 of the report needs to be revised.

Mr. Pehnke stated he will review the report and provide the information to the Board.

Matthew Ryan – 200 North Lehigh Avenue - Asked about Public Safety resources needed due to increase in vehicles.

Mr. Pehnke stated that would be in the fiscal impact analysis.



Board member asked about the volumes on Walnut Avenue at nighttime hours, and if Figure 15 was for the Phase One build out. Asked how many cars will be returning to the site after Phase One in the pm and about the traffic data bank.

Mr. Pehnke stated the projection is 166 returning vehicles during a one-hour period in the pm. Broken down to 33% to the north and rest coming from the south. Stated it varies every day. Stated he will cross check the data.

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

Mr. Rothman asked if this witness is available to come back to the next scheduled meeting for public comments.

Mr. Rhatican stated the next appearance will be November 28<sup>th</sup> and both Mr. Pehnke and Mr. Hughes are not available. Stated the site engineer, architect and Mr. Reese are available on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

Board member asked about the EIS and when will it be available.

Mr. Rhatican stated the engineer would discuss the EIS and he expects to have it well before November 28<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Rothman stated there are two Planning Board meetings scheduled in December.

Mr. Rhatican stated he will consult with his witnesses and get back to the Board with their availability.

## **8. PUBLIC PORTION**

Matthew Ryan – 200 North Lehigh Avenue - Stated he thinks there should be additional studies done. Feels the information is not sufficient. Discussed the Public Safety issue.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 11:04 pm.

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Donna Pedde, Secretary