

MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD

Workshop meeting of October 3, 2018

WORKSHOP PORTION. Ms. Anderson called workshop portion of the meeting to order at 7:35 PM

1. COMMUNICATIONS

None

2. RESOLUTIONS OF MEMORIALIZATION

None

3. MINUTES

Motion to adopt minutes of the September 5, 2018 meeting was made by Mayor Hannen, seconded by Ms. Pedde and passed on unanimous voice vote.

4. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

A discussion was held to address the appointment of a commercial real estate consultant. Mr. James Brunette of Brunette Realty Commercial introduced himself and provided information on his experience and qualifications.

Questions from the Public were as follows:

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road asked when the public would be able to see the Affordable Housing Plan. Also asked who hired Maser Consultants for the traffic report and is there a possibility of getting another firm to look at project.

Mr. Rothman stated the Planning Board is not responsible for the Affordable Housing Plan and that question should be directed to the Township Committee. As far as Maser is concerned, the Board engages several professionals including Maser for consulting work. Stated he cannot discuss the report, but it is possible to have someone else take a look at it.

Frank Krause – 20 Pittsfield Street - asked about the site plan for this evening's hearing.

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

PUBLIC HEARING - ROOM 107

1. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Ms. Anderson called a public meeting of the Cranford Planning Board to order on October 3, 2018 at 8:12. 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. Anderson
Dr. Chapman
Ms. Feder
Mayor Hannen
Ms. Pedde
Mr. Taylor

Members Absent

Ms. Murray
Mr. Cossa
Deputy Mayor Dooley

Alternates Present:

Mr. Aschenbach
Ms. Didzbalis

Alternates Absent:

None

Also Present:

Mark Rothman, Esquire, Ron Johnson, Zoning Officer, Kathy Lenahan, Administrator/Scribe and Bill Masol, Engineer

4. Application #PBA-18-00008 208 North Avenue West LLC 208 North Avenue West Block 176 Lot 22, ORC Zone

The applicant in this matter is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval, and a C-2 variance for parking. Applicant is requesting parking in front yard along Orchard Street where no parking in front yard is permitted §255-2G.1(3)(a).

Gary Goodman, Esq. appeared on behalf of the applicant. He explained the application. Stated Mr. Peter Gensicke has purchased 208 North Avenue West. He is a long time CPA in town. He has relocated his accounting firm from Alden Street to 208 North Avenue. The request is to convert the existing one family residential house to a two family House fronts on North Avenue, but the accounting office and parking lot front on Orchard Street. Is in the ORC zone. Described the conditions for it to be a two-family. Property meets conditions for a two-family house. Asking for some design waivers and a variance for the parking. Has two fronts: North Avenue and Orchard Street.

Anthony Gallerano, appeared and was sworn in. 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. Goodman:

He was retained by Mr. Gensicke to prepare a site plan. Presented a colorized version of both existing and proposed conditions, marked Exhibit A-1. Left side shows existing conditions and right side shows proposed conditions. Existing condition is a 2.5 story building with a residential unit in back with one story, which has been converted to an accounting office. There is a one-story garage on left side which is accessed off of Orchard Street. There are six parking space with existing building. One space in garage, one in front of garage and four spaces that are striped. Proposed conditions will have no changes or expansion to footprint. Only change is two additional parking spaces along the east side of the existing building adjoining the property which was the former Kings produce market. These two spaces will be accessed off Orchard Street and will be in a tandem configuration. Ordinance requires seven spaces and applicant is proposing seven spaces. Four of the spaces will be in a tandem configuration – garage and space in front of garage will be for one of the dwelling units, and the two proposed spaces will be for the second unit. Additional four spaces will be for the commercial use. All accessed off Orchard Street.

All uses are permitted in the zone. Meets all conditional use requirements. Described the pre-existing conditions and the criteria for the professional and residential components. Stated there will be 778 sq. ft. of new impervious coverage. To mitigate that they are providing a seepage pit to collect additional runoff which will be located toward the front of the property on North Avenue. Described the design waivers. Stated the variances are C-1 variances. Described landscaping and lighting waiver. Property is landscaped and there are lighting fixtures on the building. There are wall mounted fixtures on entrances and spot lights on side of building.

Addressed Township engineer's comments regarding soil testing and would do soil testing subject to approval of the application. Will also address and comply with all comments from Engineer. There were no negative comments from any other Town professionals regarding the application.

Questions posed by the Board ascertained the following:

Driveway width is 18.4 feet. A minimum driveway width is generally 10 to 12 feet. Standard parking spots are 9 x 18. Applicant would like to go a little wider to be able to easily maintain. Area could be landscaped with a 3-foot planting bed with mulch and shrubs along the driveway and building.

There is a fence along the property line. If building remained single family, parking would be conforming.

William Masol, Township Engineer appeared and was sworn in. Asked about trash removal.

Mr. Gallerano stated they will have trash stored in cans in the back which will be picked up by a hauler.

Mr. Goodman stated the dumpster on the property now is for renovations for the accounting firm.

Ms. Anderson opened the application to the public for questions of the witness. The following appeared:

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked how many parking spaces were required. Asked about landscaping and who owns the brown board fence. Asked about how close the cars are to the building. Asked about cars parking on Orchard Street and that the 2 hour parking does not apply to residents.

Mr. Gallerano stated there are seven parking spaces required and they are proposing seven spaces. The fence is owned by the applicant and there is about five feet between the car and property line. Cars will not abut the building. Was requesting 18.4 feet for driveway, but has agreed to reduce to 15.4. feet. Stated there is some parking restricted between North Avenue and Holly Street. The three spots in back are for the accounting firm.

Mr. Goodman asked Ms. LaBrutto if more landscaping would be better than more parking.

Ms. LaBrutto stated that employees can park on Holly Street and the residents can park on Orchard Street.

Further questions from the Board members to Mr. Gallerano ascertained the following:
There is a sign that says “No Parking” on North Avenue to Holly Street on side where Citgo is. The rest of the street is 2-hour parking. Stated parking on site is more desirable and can use off street if one or two spaces were needed. Applicant is not exceeding the coverage. Will add some landscaping. Front of building has landscaping now. Landscaping will be on both sides. Will add shrubs on both sides.

There are two separate entrances in the front to access the two separate units. Also, there is an additional back door from first floor. Garage has a door that exits to front of building. Stated that it might be a little tight to use the gravel area for a parking spot. There is a commercial mixed-use building on the easterly side of the property. There is a fence along the Orchard Street side of the property.

Applicant can do 3-foot planting along the building, would have to relocate the fence and add 3 feet on other side and reduce driveway to 12 feet. Would keep tandem parking. Driveway has no

proposed curbing. Screening could be with a 4, 5, or 6 foot solid vinyl fence or landscaping with an open fence. Stated they will decrease the driveway to 12 feet, add a 4-foot planting bed along the foundation, and on Orchard Street there is a 3 feet setback, will add 2 feet and put planting bed with evergreen shrubs, a minimum of 4 feet. Just passed the air conditioning units shown on plan, nothing is proposed as far as landscaping, but they could do some landscaping along the end of the driveway for screening.

Mr. Rothman asked if the applicant is now proposing to make the stacked tandem on the westerly part of the lot angled parking.

Mr. Goodman stated that what they are hearing from Board is suggestions to take the tandem parking and replace it with two other spaces.

Debra DeCoits – 206 North Avenue West – Stated she is partial owner of the property and asked if applicant is aware that they are converting Kings Farm into a residential apartment. Stated they were before the Zoning Board and received approval to convert the space to a two bedroom, two bath unit on the ground floor. There is an apartment upstairs.

Mr. Goodman asked Mr. Gallerano about the guidelines for the Master Plan as it relates to a two-family in this zone.

Mr. Gallerano stated this is an ORC zone and the zone allows for two family dwellings and also professional offices. If consistent with the zone, then consistent with the Master Plan.

Mayor Hannen stated he is not sure the intention was to have a two-family and an office on the same lot.

Ron Meeks, appeared and was sworn in. His credentials were presented to the Board and he was accepted as an expert witness in the field of architecture.

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

He was retained by Mr. Gensicke to prepare architectural plans to convert a one family into a two-family dwelling. Currently is a single family with office in the rear. Requesting to change to a two family with office in the rear. No changes to the footprint of building or exterior. First floor unit is 1,200 sq. ft. with a rear entry and there is an entry off North Avenue. There is a one bedroom with kitchen, living and full bath on that level. Second floor has entry from North Avenue with stairs to the porch and entry to second floor. Hallway on second floor. Two bedrooms, kitchen in rear with living area, study and a walk-in closet off bedroom. Discussed the entry way for each apartment. The bay window on first floor bumps out 3 ½ feet and the porch bumps out 6 feet.

There are no requirements in the residential code for secondary means of egress other than the windows in bedrooms.

The access to the garage is from the porch, so either unit could have access to it.

Ms. Anderson opened the application to the public for questions of the witness.

There were no questions from the public.

Peter Gensicke, appeared and was sworn in.

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

He is the owner of the property. Purchased the property in January of 2018. He relocated his accounting office from 15 Alden Street where he had his office for about 28 years. His son-in-law has joined the firm and he is preparing for the future. Requesting to convert the one family to two family. He has one tenant who is a relative who will be staying in the unit. He does not live at the property. He has no problem doing the additional landscaping, reducing the driveway to 12 feet, adding two lines of landscaping on either side of tandem spaces, adding an evergreen section to screen lights from the adjacent property. Will need a foot path for walking from parking spaces on North Avenue side to access apartment. Would be agreeable to putting a fire escape or some means of escape if Board deems necessary.

Mr. Rothman asked about landscaping on the westerly side as well.

Mr. Gallerano stated the plantings will be on three sides of the proposed driveway.

Mr. Goodman asked what they could do regarding lights to help property owner next door.

Mr. Gallerano stated the evergreens will provide sufficient screening. They have no plans to do any landscaping on the westerly side of the property line. There is a stockade fence there now.

There were no further questions by the Board.

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

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked about the hours for the accounting office and how many employees the office has. Asked about the screening and what is the height requirement.

Mr. Gensicke stated he has one full-time and one-part time employee. Hours are by appointment only.

Mr. Gallerano stated it is 5 feet for the screening. Stated there is not high turnover of parking spaces and noise will be minimal.

Frank Krause – 20 Pittsfield Street – Asked about an alternative for the parking.

Mr. Goodman stated that if the Board asked them to put one space on the other side, they would comply.

Board member asked applicant's engineer if they could put the handicap spot where the tandem spaces are and free up spaces in the back to have more parking.

Mr. Gallerano stated you would need 16 feet for the handicap space: 8-foot space and 8-foot loading area. If you get rid of the tandem you lose the screening.

Board member stated they like the tandem with the screening.

Ms. Anderson asked if anyone in the public had any comments.

Debra DeCotis – 206 North Avenue West appeared and was sworn in. Stated she is concerned about the parking along side of King's Farm. Has pictures of what they will be doing with the renovations on their property. Stated the master bedroom windows will be next to parking area. The small piece of land in the back will be green space. Concerned about noise and the fumes from the cars. They are making a wall of green along Orchard Street. Investing a lot of money and will be living on the bottom floor, her brother lives on the upper floor. Is a rental property and does not want to live with cars on top of them. Stated shrubbery needs to be tall and that Leland Cypress grows over into other people's property. Asked about a fence. Stated fence would need to be 6 feet high.

Board member asked about the setbacks.

Mr. Goodman stated because parking is coming in from Orchard Street that creates a second front yard.

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road appeared and was sworn in. Stated looking for a workable solution and that parking needs to work. Shared spaces may be available for those coming to the business. There is parking for residents on Holly Street. Would rather see better esthetic on Orchard Street. Feels you can make employee park on Holly Street. Would prefer not to have tandem parking, but if you can make it work with neighbor, possibly one parking spot instead.

Board member suggested putting handicapped spot where the 9 x 8 is, put striping where gravel is, that makes one new spot, and one spot on side instead of tandem.

Board member asked why tenants cannot park in the back, and employees park in tandem spaces during business hours.

Board member stated they may be re-engineering the project. If people park in tandem spots during the day, it frees up the spots on weekend and does not interfere with neighbors.

Mr. Goodman stated they would change the plan as board member suggested. Will convert 9 x 8 spot to the handicapped spot, put striping on right of that spot, and reduce tandem spot to one furthest from the Kings and keep buffer.

Jay Mack – 206 North Avenue West appeared and was sworn in. Stated that he lives on second floor next door. Bedrooms face the back. It's a lot closer than you think. Putting up fence or bushes will not solve the problem. Wants parking spaces somewhere else. Back spot is the only green space. Area is 5 or 6 feet wide by 10 feet long. Feels will be right on top of them.

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

**5. DELIBERATION OF Application #PBA-18-00008
208 North Avenue West LLC
208 North Avenue West
Block 176 Lot 22, ORC Zone**

The applicant in this matter is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval, and a C-2 variance for parking. Applicant is requesting parking in front yard along Orchard Street where no parking in front yard is permitted §255-2G.1(3)(a).

Ms. Anderson reviewed the testimony.

Board comments consisted of the following:

Last idea was good idea to reduce the impact on the side and make use of the gravel area. Thanked applicant for being flexible to changes. Liked idea of employee parking in tandem spot so not to interfere in the evening with the neighbors. Great project. Should have a sign for accounting only parking spot. There is no need for a foot path.

Ron Johnson, Zoning Officer stated a six-foot fence is not allowed since it is considered a front yard. Asked about the site triangle if a fence were to be put up.

Mr. Goodman asked if they could request a variance for a 6-foot fence added to the application. They will put up a solid fence board on board. Will try and coordinate with the neighbor on fence and landscaping.

Motion to grant approval for application # PB-18-00008 with the following conditions: windows will be to code for fire escape, 12 x 20 single space where tandem was to be, landscaping on three sides with privacy fencing which goes to rear of office but does not intrude on site line, ADA spot in rear will be to the east with striping where gravel was, and balance will be buffered, was made by Mr. Aschenbach and seconded by Ms. Pedde with the following voting in favor of motion: Ms. Anderson, Dr. Chapman, Ms. Feder, Ms. Pedde, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Aschenbach and Ms. Didzbalis.

Mayor Hannen opposed the motion.

8. PUBLIC PORTION

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 9:54 P.M.

Donna Pedde, Secretary