

## MINUTES - PLANNING BOARD

### Meeting of April 19, 2023

A public meeting of the Cranford Planning Board was called to order by Ms. Kellett on April 19, 2023 at 7:36 p.m. Ms. Kellett 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.

#### 1. ROLL CALL

**Members Present:**

Ms. Kellett  
Mayor Andrews  
Ms. Didzbalis  
Ms. Rappa  
Ms. Sen  
Mr. Taylor

**Members Absent:**

Mr. Nordelo  
Deputy Mayor Gareis  
Ms. Pedde

**Alternates Present:**

Mr. Leber

**Alternates Absent:**

Mr. Pistol

**Also present:**

Jonathan Drill Esq., Board Attorney, Kathy Lenahan, Board Administrator, Commissioner Prunty joined the workshop meeting to vote on the 750 Walnut application.

#### 2. MINUTES

A motion to adopt the closed session minutes of February 1, 2023 was made by Ms. Didzbalis, seconded by Mr. Leber and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Kellett, Mayor Andrews, Ms. Didzbalis, Ms. Sen, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Leber

Opposed: None

A motion to adopt the official minutes of February 1, 2023 was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Didzbalis and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Kellett, Mayor Andrews, Ms. Didzbalis, Ms. Sen, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Leber

Opposed: None

A motion to adopt the official minutes of February 15, 2023, as amended, was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Rappa and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Kellett, Mayor Andrews, Ms. Didzbalis, Ms. Rappa, Mr. Taylor,  
Mr. Leber

Opposed: None

**3. RESOLUTIONS:**

A motion to adopt the Resolution of Memorialization for 750 Walnut was made by Mr. Leber, seconded by Commissioner Prunty and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Didzbalis, Commissioner Prunty, Ms. Rappa, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Leber

Opposed: None

Commissioner Prunty thanked the Board, stating it was as tough application. Does not feel that the Board rubber stamped the application. There were many meetings where things were discussed and deliberated on. She understands the residents' concerns and knows it was a controversial application. Again, thanked the Planning Board volunteers for their service.

Commissioner Prunty left the meeting.

A motion to adopt the Resolution of Memorialization for 201 Walnut was made by Ms. Rappa, seconded by Ms. Didzbalis and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Kellett, Mayor Andrews, Ms. Didzbalis, Ms. Rappa, Mr. Taylor,  
Mr. Leber

Opposed: None

**4. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**5. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

None

**PUBLIC MEETING – Immediately following the Workshop – Council Chambers**

**1. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Ms. Kellett called a public meeting of the Cranford Planning Board to order on April 19, 2023, at 7:54 p.m. Ms. Kellett announced this meeting is in compliance with the “Open Public Meetings Act” as adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to 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. ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:**

Ms. Kellett  
Mayor Andrews  
Ms. Didzbalis  
Ms. Rappa  
Ms. Sen  
Mr. Taylor

**Members Absent:**

Mr. Nordelo  
Deputy Mayor Gareis  
Ms. Pedde

**Alternates Present:**

Mr. Leber  
Mr. Pistol – Arrived at 7:57 p.m.

**Alternates Absent:**

None

**Also present:**

Jonathan Drill Esq., Board Attorney, Kathy Lenahan, Board Administrator, Nicholas Dickerson, Board Planner, Kevin Boyer, Board Engineering, John Ruschke, Board Stormwater Engineer

- 3.** Application: #PB 23-001 – Continued from March 15, 2023  
Applicant: 108 South Ave E. LLC, 112 South Ave East LLC,  
Boffard Holdings LLC, VIBO Holdings LLC, 2 Chestnut St. LLC,  
& Iron Ore Properties LLC  
108-126 South Avenue East, 32 & 41 High Street & 2 Chestnut Street  
Block: 478 Lots: 2-6 & Block: 483 Lots: 17.01 & 18, D-C, D-B & D-T Zones

The applicant in this matter is seeking Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval to construct a four (4) story mixed-use building containing 55 residential units (9 affordable & 46 market rate), retail space on the first floor and parking within the South Avenue & Chestnut Street Redevelopment Area. The application is also for the expansion of Municipal Parking Lot #6, which is also within the South Avenue & Chestnut Street Redevelopment Area.

Jason Tuvel, Esq. appeared. Reviewed the testimony from the last hearing. Recalling Avelino Martinez to review the architecture of the building.

Mr. Martinez appeared and was reminded he was still under oath.

Questions from Mr. Tuvel to Mr. Martinez ascertained the following:  
Reviewed the Plan Set revised April 3, 2023. The project is for 55 dwelling units consisting of 46 market rate (30 one bedroom and 16 two bedroom) and nine affordable units (one- one bedroom, six two bedrooms and two three bedroom). Parking is in rear and screened with the retail and residential lobby. There are two separate retail components. Access is from residential lobby, including two elevators, mail and package room. There are 57 Parking spaces. Reviewed the floor plan for the upper level floors. Second floor has an amenity deck, a gym, fitness center and a club room, which is only for the residents. Third level also has a working space. Top floor of building is similar, but has a roof terrace along the front of the building. Only modification was to the unit distribution. There was a one-bedroom unit that was changed to a two-bedroom unit.

Reviewed Exhibit A-3, a color rendering of the building from South Avenue. Façade is varied in color and materials. Four stories with fourth story stepped back. Façade base is darker brick and lighter color brick for middle, cornice and top floor. There are two primary materials, which are cast stone and brick.

Presented Exhibit A-8 as Sheet A10 Amenity Deck Plan dated 4-19-23. Colorized plan of roof deck. Some of roof deck is accessible from the apartments. Presented pictures of furniture and lighting for the deck. Section A over A10 should be first floor concept plan and B over A10 should be third floor concept plan.

Presented Exhibit A-4 a view of the rear of the building. Amenity deck in the middle with parking on the first floor with same colors and materials.

Questions from the Board for this witness, ascertained the following:  
Expanded the building to allow for a two-bedroom COAH unit instead of a one-bedroom. The plan calls for a distribution of 20% between the two properties (201 Walnut and South & Chestnut). The letter from CGP&H confirms that it conforms with the Redevelopment Plan. UHAC are the regulations that govern the affordable housing in NJ. There are two access points to the roof top terrace. They have not thought about a time restriction yet. None of the front facing units are affordable housing units. There will

be a parapet wall. Wall would be wood framed with metal coping. Cannot commit to installing trees due to the size of the planter box that would be needed. There would need to be irrigation for the plants on roof top. Parapet to deck level is approximately 4 feet. Pavers will be for the walkway on the roof deck. There was no time limit set by the application for the rear amenity deck. Will need access to get out to the deck.

Discussion ensued regarding Mr. Levin's letters dated February 21, 2023 and April 18, 2023 regarding the affordable housing component of the project. A request was made to have Mr. Levin return to provide testimony or to update his letter.

Questions from Mr. Dickerson, Board Planner, for this witness ascertained the following: They will evaluate the solar feasibility on the building and get back to the Board. All the units will meet the accessibility requirements both State and Federal. A one bedroom with a den will not be permitted to be used as a bedroom.

Questions from Mr. Boyer, Board Engineer, for this witness ascertained the following: Height of barrier wall in the parking area to the rear will be 42 inches above the finished floor on parking side. Roof drains will be interior and will connect to a drainage system.

Ms. Kellett asked if anyone from the Public had questions for this witness, the following appeared:

Rita LaBrutto – 104 Arlington Road – Asked about occupancy limit in the lease. Asked about screening for parked cars in the garage. Asked about access to amenity decks.

Mr. Tuvel stated the building code would restrict occupancy. The amenity decks can lock at a certain time.

Mr. Martinez stated they are proposing screening on street facing side, not on the back side.

Bahram Farzaneh appeared and was reminded he was still under oath. He presented his qualifications and was accepted as an expert in civil engineering.

Questions from Mr. Tuvel to Mr. Farzaneh ascertained the following: Presented Exhibit A-9 as a colorized version of the Grading and Drainage Plan (Exhibit 2) (Sheet 4) dated 4-6-23. Also presented Exhibit A-10 as Site and Grading Plan Track 2, Sheet 6 of 16 dated 4-6-23. Stated the change on Exhibit A-10 was adding a Filterra unit at bottom of parking area which is a green infrastructure system approved by DEP for runoff of parking. Also providing approximately 970 square feet of privately owned public open space. Presented a photo of the Filterra system marked as A-11. Stated the change on Exhibit A-9 is they added a concrete box under the driveway, 2100 square feet, 3 feet deep and takes runoff from the roof and discharges it to the inlet at the corner of South Avenue East and High Street into the sewer system.

Questions from the Board for this witness ascertained the following:

The Filterra system is a planter box with filter units and mulch where you can plant a tree or a shrub. Treats the water and directs it to the street; treats the water for pollution.

The basin is sized based on peak flow and the drainage area. The only maintenance for the system is every year, remove the mulch and replace with new mulch. There will be a maintenance plan.

John Ruschke, Board Stormwater Engineer appeared and was sworn in.

Mr. Ruschke discussed what the Township is contemplating for this area. Stated it is an express sewer, installed independent of the local system. The system will capture water at a higher elevation and force it into the pipes. Stated these improvements will not prevent flooding once the river breeches, but will provide mitigation for the lower volume storms. The site is divided into two drainage areas. Referenced the Stormwater Report regarding a 100-year storm event and the direction of the flow. Express sewer will reduce the drainage to the South Avenue drainage system.

Questions from the Board for this witness ascertain the following:

Mr. Ruschke has worked for the Town for over 20 years. Has designed flood mitigation for the Town, he does not work for the developer. The express system is being initiated by the Town and the developer is contributing to the project. The applicant has to provide drainage calculations to the Town's professionals for their review. The calculations presented were satisfactory. It is his opinion, that it is a reasonable plan and they comply with the ordinance. The applicant met their obligation in having a reduction, but at a 100-year storm, there will still be flooding due to the infrastructure.

Mr. Farzaneh stated that Hurricane Ida and Hurricane Irene were slightly higher than the 100-year storm.

Mr. Drill read the provision of the Redevelopment Agreement regarding the contribution by the developer to the engineer solutions for flood mitigation and stormwater controls.

Michael Ash appeared and was sworn in. Stated he is the Redevelopment Attorney for Township. Stated the \$400,000 that the developer is contributing is for a bigger project for flooding in the general area. It is not tied directly to this development.

Kevin Boyer, Board Engineer, asked who would own and operate the Filterra System.

Mr. Tuvel stated he would find out for the next meeting.

Ms. Kellett asked if anyone from the Public had questions for this witness or the Town's Stormwater Engineer, no one appeared.

Mr. Tuvel stated at the next meeting, the applicant's Traffic Engineer and Planner would testify.

Mr. Drill stated this hearing is continued to May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 pm. with no need for further notice.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made seconded and passed. The meeting concluded at 10:09 p.m.

---

Molly Hurley Kellett, Chair