

PLANNING BOARD
January 26, 2016

The Mountainside Planning Board met on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at the Mountainside Municipal Building, 1385 Route 22, Mountainside, NJ 07092.

In compliance with Chapter 231 OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT in the State of New Jersey, adequate notice had been given to all members of the Planning Board and the newspaper that had been designated to receive notice, The Local Source.

REORGANIZATIONS MEETING:

PRESENT for 2015: Mayor Mirabelli, Messrs. Disko, Garran, Jakositz, Matlin, Parker, Tomaine, Younghans, Zawislak, Attorney Loughlin and Secretary Rees.

The minutes of the December 22, 2015 meeting were approved as presented.

MEMORIALIZATIONS – 2015:

Menza and Beissel Communities, 1350 and 1360 Route 22, Block 15.I, Lot 48.A and 48.B – Site Plan and development for the construction of a 23-unit residential townhouse development with five buildings, nineteen market-rate units and four affordable housing units. Attorney Loughlin explained to the board that amendments and revisions had been made to the resolution and explained what the revisions were. A motion was made a seconded to approve the resolution with the revisions. All were in favor.

North Jersey Laborer's Local 3 – 1121 Bristol Road, Block 7.M, Lot 35 – Installation of a wall sign. A motion was made and seconded to approve the resolution. All were in favor.

NG Construction, 1131-1139 Route 22, Block 23.C, Lots 8.H – 18.B – Site plan for the installation of canopies and a vehicle wash pad on a commercial building. A motion was made a seconded to approve the resolution. All were in favor.

End 2015:

Mr. Tomaine reviewed his year-end report.

OATH OF OFFICE:

Attorney Loughlin issued to Oath of Office to the following members:

Councilwoman Wendy Fech-Caccamo - Council Liaison
Jon Younghans – Regular Member
Steve Matlin – Regular Member
Thomas Parker – Regular Member
Thomas Jakositz – 1st. Alternate
Will Ford – 2nd Alternate

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Mr. John Tomaine was re-elected Chairman of the Planning Board and Mr. Theodore Zawislak was re-elected Vice-Chairman of the Planning Board.

Attorney Vincent Loughlin was again appointed as Board attorney.

The board approved Resolution 01-2016 for Board attorney.

PRESENT 2016: Mayor Mirabelli, Councilwoman Fech-Caccamo, Messrs. Disko, Ford, Garran, Jakositz, Matlin, Parker, Tomaine, Younghans, Zawislak, Attorney Loughlin and Secretary.

NEW BUSINESS:

Informal presentation for the Watchung Stables horse pavilion improvements located at 1160 Summit Lane.

Mr. Steve Merman, Esq., Assistant Council for the County of Union, represented the Watchung Stables.

Mr. Atkinson representing the equestrian facility explained what improvements were to be made.

There would be new fencing around the existing riding rings.

There would be a new grading system, storm water run-off management and drainage system.

There would be new improvements to the horse paddocks as well as expansion of the existing paddocks in order to give the horses more space.

There would be a new indoor riding arena.

The proposed new riding arena would be located behind the existing stables. The building would be fully enclosed.

Mr. Atkinson described the proposed new riding facility and what materials would be used on the building.

Mayor Mirabelli inquired if the new facility would withstand a major snow load and high winds. Mr. Atkinson assured him that the building would be able to withstand both high snow loads and high winds.

Due to this new indoor facility, the stables could be used during the winter months instead of just April through November.

Mr. Tomaine opened up the floor to the audience for questions or comments. There were none.

Having no further discussion, Mr. Zawislak made a motion to approve the application and all were in favor.

Uncle Bob's Self Storage LLC, 1129 Route 22, Block 23.C, Lot 2.02 – Applicants proposed a site plan and development for a new self storage building. Two buildings currently exist and a third was proposed. Existed variance includes the location of the storage facility within one-half mile of another storage facility. New variances include a use variance, height over 25 feet where 29.7 feet was proposed, foundation area over 25 percent where 33.2 percent was proposed, lot coverage over 50 percent where 71.9 percent was proposed, and outdoor activities/storage.

Mr. Gary Goodman, Esq. of Cranford, NJ represented the applicants for preliminary and final site plan approval for a new self-storage building.

There was a use variance associated with this proposed building due to the fact that the site did not conform to certain conditions.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Richard Pasturneck of New York as the senior project manager for Uncle Bob's. He gave his credentials to the board.

Mr. Pasturneck stated that they were proposing to build a 193-unit building, ranging in size from 5' x 5' to 10' x 30'. The proposed new building would be state-of-the-art, climate-controlled and fully sprinklered. There would be access doors and a security system for the new building.

Parking: No new parking spaces would be added. Parking had never been a problem.

There would be no retail sales on site.

The company would hold auctions from time to time.

All the oversized vehicles, such as recreational vehicles, boats, etc., that were currently parked in the rear of the property would be removed.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. John Chadwick as the board's planner and Mr. Gordon Meth as the board's traffic experts for the year 2016.

Mr. Meth inquired if Uncle Bob's Self Storage had any N.J.D.O.T. access approvals. The site and driveway may be non-conforming. Mr. Meth stated that they would need to send plans to the D.O.T. for approval

The first resolution was dated in 1999 and the company received approval for an access code at that time. Mr. Meth stated that research needed to be made as to whether or not the access permit was still valid and/or if they would be allowed to add to the access code. Mr. Chadwick inquired if the permit had ever been renewed. Mr. Meth also wanted assurance that the permit was still valid.

Mr. Chadwick suggested that the company obtain D.O.T. approval before the application went any further.

Mr. Younghans inquired if they were going to install solar panels onto the proposed building. Mr. Pasturneck stated that there were no plans yet to install solar panels.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Anthony Gallerano of Harbor Consultants. He gave his credentials to the board.

Mr. Gallerano stated that a D.O.T. permit was issued in 1999.

Exhibit B-1: Plans showing the proposed storage facility, the two existing buildings and a future building that were presented in 1999.

The number of cars going into and out of the proposed site would be negligible. There may be only ten to twelve trips per day.

Exhibit A-1: Aerial view of the site. Mr. Gallerano described the vacant lot, the existing site, Buildings A and B, and the proposed lot.

Mr. Gallerano reviewed the variances.

Mr. Gallerano again stated that the long parking spaces for large vehicles would be eliminated.

Mr. Gallerano reviewed the existing and proposed lighting.

The proposed building would be two stories and approximately 31,000 square feet. It would be smaller and lower than the building that was proposed and approved in 1999. The one that was proposed in 1999 would have been 46,800 square feet and three stories high. This building would be 31,031 square feet and only two stories high. Mr. Disko stated that the proposed building would be nine feet lower than the previous one.

Exhibit A-2: Aerial views of the other self-storage facilities in Mountainside. All the self-storage facilities have been in Mountainside for many years.

Mr. Gallerano spoke about the positive and negative criteria. He felt that there would be no impact to the surrounding properties and there would be no detriment to the Master Plan. He mentioned that the proposed building would be an expansion to the existing facility and not a brand-new facility.

No hazardous material would be allowed to be stored in the buildings.

Mr. Gallerano stated that there was a need for self-storage facilities and that their facility was almost fully occupied.

When Mr. Gallerano stated that the buffer area would remain unchanged, Mr. Chadwick inquired if they would consider planning additional evergreen trees. Mr. Gallerano agreed to that.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Gregory Waga of Rahway. He gave his credentials to the board.

Exhibit A-3: Color rendering of the proposed building.

Mr. Waga stated that the colors of the building would blend in with Echo Park which is located right behind the property. The walls would be tan and the roof would be bronze, the new building would be more neutral than the existing buildings, however, it would complement the existing buildings.

Mr., Matlin inquired if the applicants had considered reducing the size of the building. It had not been considered due to the fact that they would need the 193 units.

Mr. Tomaine opened up the floor to the audience for questions or comments. There were none.

Attorney Goodman gave his summation to the board.

CONDITIONS:

- Evergreen trees to be planted along the park side of the property
- Eliminate the six over-sized parking spaces in the rear of the property
- DOT access must remain valid
- Only passenger-type vehicles would be allowed to park in the parking spaces; no recreational vehicles, buses, vans, etc., would be allowed
- No retail sales would be allowed
- No residential apartments would be allowed
- Only a limited number of auctions would be allowed per year

Having no further discussion, Mr. Garran made a motion to approve the application and Mr. Zawislak seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Disko
Mr. Zawislak
Mr. Garran
Mr. Matlin
Mr. Parker
Mr. Younghans

NAYS: Mr. Tomaine

MOTION: Approved

Wajkunski/Palchik, 1144 Maple Court, Block 5.P, Lot 8 – The applicants were not present for this hearing. Mr. Tomaine made the announcement that they would be heard at the February meeting and that no new notices would be required.

At 9:45 the board took a short break and resumed the public portion of the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Stage House Tavern 3 LLC, 1099 Route 22, Block 23.C, Lot 12 – Applicant proposed a site plan, interior renovations, and ground sign from a former restaurant and catering facility to a full-time restaurant. Existing variances included lot coverage over 75 percent, front yard parking, parking space requirements, and aisle width. New variances included retail sales and a use variance.

Mr. Richard Cohen, Esq. of Schiller and Pittenger in Scotch Plains, NJ, represented the applicant for the site plan and renovations.

Attorney Cohen informed the board that this location was formerly the L'Affaire Catering Hall and that Mr. Thomas Britt, owner of the Stage House in Scotch Plains would like to convert the old catering facility into a full-time restaurant.

There would be no exterior changes to the building at this time, however, there may be exterior changes in the future.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Thomas Britt of Matawan, NJ as the owner and manager of the Stage House Inn in Scotch Plains and Somerset, NJ.

Mr. Britt stated that he is in the process of purchasing a liquor license.

They would be open seven days a week from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.

Mr. Britt stated that the existing ground sign would remain the same, except for the name of the restaurant, however, he would like to add a bottom portion to the sign that would be changeable. Mr. Britt was informed that he could not have any form of advertising, such as telephone numbers, email addresses, etc. on the ground sign.

There would be no changes to the existing lighting in the parking lot.

Mr. Britt described what interior changes would be made to the proposed restaurant and bar area, such as new booths, new bathrooms, new storage areas, skylights, pizza oven for family dining, etc.

There would be total of 470 seats, including the bar area. The rest of the area would be used for storage.

There would be approximately 40-50 employees. The employees would park along the rear of the parking lot.

There would be no deliveries during peak hours. There would be small deliveries six to seven days a week.

The Dumpster would be located on a concrete pad and screened. They would have trash pick three days a week by the same hauling company that services the Scotch Plains and Somerset sites.

Mr. Britt informed the board that he would not use any off-site locations for parking.

The board discussed an existing easement that goes to Mill Lane.

There may be entertainment on Friday and Saturday nights from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 or 1:30 a.m., however, there would not be a dance floor.

Mr. Britt described the new storage area in the proposed restaurant that was formerly a dining area.

There would be approximately seventy seats in the bar area.

Mr. Britt informed the board that he would like to construct an outside raised patio in the future, and that he knew that he would have to come back before the board for approval. Attorney Loughlin advised the board regarding any future expansion of the restaurant.

Signs: Mr. Disko reviewed the proposed signs. They would be allowed one ground sign and two wall signs. The existing awning signs would be removed.

Although there would be no changes to the D.O.T. access, Mr. Meth advised the applicant that the D.O.T., should issue a new access code due to the new restaurant and tavern. Attorney Cohen stated that he would contact the D.O.T. to see if there would be any restrictions or limitations to the access code.

The easement to Mill Lane as again discussed by the board. Mr. Britt felt that access onto Mill Lane would be a good thing due to the fact that it would reduce the numbers of drivers going onto Route 22. The D.O.T. would have to agree to this.

Mr. Tomaine opened up the floor to the audience for questions. There were none.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Michael Kauker of Wyckoff, NJ. as the applicant's Professional Planner. He did not have to give his credentials to the board.

Mr. Kauker described the proposed use variance, the existing building, site and parking lot, and Route 22.

Only interior changes would be made at this time. There would be no re-development to the site.

Mr. Kauker described the positive and negative criteria. The restaurant would be appropriate use to the area.

Mr. Tomaine opened the floor to the audience for questions. There were none.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Richard Regold of New Vernon, NJ. as one of the associates in L'Affaire Restaurant and Catering and one of the operators of the business.

Mr. Regold described the current family-owned business.

Mr. Regold also discussed the access easement that currently exists in order for vehicles to be allowed to turn onto Mill Lane instead of Route 22. He believed that it creates a good traffic pattern.

Attorney Cohen gave his summation to the board.

CONDITIONS:

- Access code is still valid
- No more than 470 seats
- Awnings to be removed
- Chairs to be removed in the patio area
- No advertisement on the sign
- Only one ground sign and two wall signs allowed
- Driveway in the western side to be "entrance only" "Do Not Enter" on sign
- "Do Not Enter arrow to be placed near driveway

Having no further discussion, Mr. Garran made a motion to approve the application and Mr. Zawislak seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Disko
Mr. Zawislak
Mr. Garran
Mr. Matlin
Mr. Parker
Mr. Younghans

NAYS: Mr. Tomaine

MOTION: Approved

At 11:20 the board went into executive session.

At 11:30 p.m. the board resumed the public portion of the meeting and having no further business, the meeting was duly adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Ruth M. Rees.

