

MEETING MINUTES

TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MARCH 9, 2017
5:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

- ROLL CALL

Ben LoParo X Dan Collamer X Tina Wetter X

FLAG SALUTE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT – PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT, ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY PROVIDED BY SENDING COPIES OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING TO TWO NEWSPAPERS, THE ASBURY PARK PRESS AND THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY. THE NOTICE WAS POSTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE TOWNSHIP CLERK AND ON THE BULLETIN BOARD OF THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.

MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve of the Meeting Minutes September 8, 2016 and October 13, 2016 was moved by Deputy Mayor Collamer, seconded by Mayor Wetter.

Roll Call: LoParo: Abstain, Collamer: Yes, Wetter: Yes

REGULAR MEETING

RESOLUTION 2017-1

Resolution of the Ocean Township Redevelopment Committee Authorizing and approving a Redevelopment Plan for Block 41, Lots 42.05 and 42.06 DMK Development (Tractor Supply)

Motion to approve was moved by Deputy Mayor Collamer, seconded by Committeeman LoParo.

Roll Call: LoParo: Yes, Collamer: Yes, Wetter: Yes

NEW BUSINESS

- Divine Interventions, LLC – Block 62, Lots 3.02 & 3.03
- Storage Facility

Daniel Popovitch, appearing on behalf of the applicant, Devine Intervention LLC, discussed the applicant is prepared to present an application to the Redevelopment Committee, with the hopes it will be approved with a recommended change in the zone, for a proposed storage facility.

Mr. William Stevens, Professional Design Services, Engineer for the applicant. Mr. Stevens discussed he is a licensed Engineer and Planner in New Jersey. Mr. Stevens has appeared before this Committee in Waretown before.

Mr. Stevens discussed the applicant is here to discuss Block 62, Lot 3.02 and 3.03. The lots are located along Route 9. The applicant is looking to present a commercial development application for a self-storage facility.

Mr. Popovitch discussed all plans have been submitted with the application. These are drawings that were submitted to the Committee as part of this application. Sheet 2 is a phasing plan for what was shown. The intention is to construct a project in two phases, where Phase I would be located to the western side of the property. Phase II would be located to the east. The idea is to construct two buildings, which would be approximately three stories in height. The first building in Phase I, would contain an office, as well as some parking area. This building will require water services, which the applicant would like to provide except septic system and individual well, because there are no sewer systems currently on the property.

The intention is to create a driveway, which will come off of Route 9 and then a one-way drive, which will circulate around the building. The second phase the applicant intends to construct, once Phase I is done and operational, would be the same type of building. However this building would not have an office, but would have the same kind of layout as the first building. There would be access off Route 9 and one way around the building and back out. Without the office, it would not require water/sewer services in that building.

The first building is shown on Sheet 3 of the plan. This plan shows a little more detail than the general phasing plan. It shows the building itself, which will be a three-story building about 36,000 square feet, a two-way drive off of Route 9 and then a one-way drive located around the building with perimeter fencing encased to secure the facility. There would a gate located at the rear of the building off of Route 9, some parking located in front of that and then a one-way drive would come around for people to utilize to go back out. There are two refuse areas. One refuse is located near the office and one refuse is located at the rear of the building.

The architect has prepared a rendering of what the proposed building might look like. This is a blown up version that can be used as an exhibit to look at. The last exhibit is simply an area photograph showing the surrounding development in the area. The subject site is located in the middle of the plan along Route 9. Seminole Avenue is located just to the bottom of the map. Some of the existing commercial development is located here. There is a single lot between the applicant and the existing commercial development, which remains undeveloped. That is a quick overview of what the project is going to look like.

The applicant received review letters from T&M Associates and Taylor Design Group. The first page of the T&M letter gives an accurate description of what the project is. It is generally the same type of overview, except for the fact that it discusses this is a C-1 general commercial district and the proposed use is not a permitted use as part of that, which is why the applicant is here to talk about potential use of redevelopment to be able to build this project.

Mr. Popovitch inquired, in reference to bulk and yard requirements, how does that fit in with what is presently the C-1 zone area and is there a table.

Mr. Stevens discussed the C-3 shows for the Phase I project. It meets all the requirements of the C-1 zone saved for the use. The applicant is complying with the C-1 requirements. The applicant thinks this is the type of use meant to be in the Township's commercial zones. The applicant believes the plan fits and does meet the C-1 requirement requirements.

Mr. Popovitch inquired if Phase I and Phase II will also fall within bulk requirements.

Mr. Stevens discussed, yes.

Mr. Popovitch inquired how the parking and circulation works. It is a storage facility so not a lot of long-term parking is expected.

Mr. Stevens discussed generally at these types of facilities, customers visit them seldom. Customers will pull into a parking stall, visit the office, secure the space they are looking for within the building, and then come a second time to load their particular space. Customers generally come to load the space and to unload the space.

Mr. Popovitch discussed parking will be parallel to the building.

Mr. Stevens discussed the building will have garage doors around the perimeter where customers could load or unload material. There is a loading zone stripe around the building for customers to park, load and unload. There is access space in the center of the building for customers to load and unload the second and third stories upstairs.

Jason Worth, T&M Engineering, discussed the three-story structure and inquired how many units are in the building.

Andy Racz, R&R Luxury Enterprises, discussed to effectively use the property, the applicant is looking at about 390 units, per building.

Mr. Worth inquired if Mr. Racz testimony is appropriate, given the number of units, size of the loading zones and amount of loading zone areas to be utilized around the building.

Mr. Racz discussed he believes the site functions. There will be a staff manager. Typically self-storage customers are not here all the time. Parking demand is low.

Mr. Worth inquired if there is a typical number of users on any given day.

Mr. Racz discussed, six.

Mr. Rehr discussed broken down over the year, statistics say 68% of customers come once a year and put materials in and take them out, 17% come twice a year, 7% come 3-5 times, 4% come 6-10 times, 3% come 11-15 times and 1% come over 15 times. There are about 1,800 visits per year from the tenants. Broken down over 365 days per year, is 5 people per day.

Mayor Wetter inquired if the applicant is proposing 390 units per building.

Mr. Stevens discussed yes, that is the intention.

Mayor Wetter inquired what is the size of the units.

Mr. Rehr discussed the sizes range from 5x5 to 10x20.

Scott Taylor, Taylor Design, inquired if the applicant operates a storage unit in another location.

Mr. Rehr discussed, no.

Mr. Taylor inquired how contractors would be handled.

Mr. Racz discussed being a contractor and has the knowledge of the units as he has used one of these facilities and has a unit of his own. Mr. Racz operates his construction company out of a unit, as far as the equipment that is being stored. Mr. Racz would be categorized as a 1% visitor. In the three years Mr. Racz has had his unit, he has seen maybe 6 cars during the time of his visits.

Mr. Taylor inquired if the storage unit is Mr. Racz's office.

Mr. Racz discussed, no. It is strictly for storage of tools and various equipment.

Mr. Taylor inquired, is it specifically for contractors that have a designated office in a separate location.

Mr. Racs discussed, yes.

Mr. Taylor discussed there is a concern of landscapers keeping lawnmowers with gas cans in storage units. That cannot be contemplated from a fire standard.

Mr. Racz discussed in his instance, any kind of flammable or combustible items are not stored in the unit - no propane tanks, no gas tanks, no generators, no compressors no equipment that uses gas, even if the gas has been drained.

Mr. Taylor discussed it would not be contractors offices. It would only be contractor storage, where that contractor has a commercial facility rented elsewhere.

Mr. Racz discussed whatever rules are set forth onto the building, it is strictly an extra garage space.

Mr. Taylor discussed seeing storage units with a half dozen landscapers showing up every morning and has also seen storage units with people living in some of the units.

Mr. Racz discussed it is not contemplated to rent the storage unit as an office. That is not the purpose of it. It is strictly storage.

Mr. Worth inquired if the applicant can provide testimony relative to the operation of the site, including number of employees and hours of operation.

Mr. Stevens discussed there will be one employee on site to manage the office. Hours of operation would be your standard business hours 7am-6pm, Monday-Friday, with abbreviated hours on Saturday and closed on Sunday. The storage facility is intended to be a card-reader type facility, giving access to the units 24 hours a day.

Mr. Taylor discussed only the office would have business hours. The facility is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Mr. Stevens discussed if a customer wants to rent space, they will have to come during business hours. If you want to utilize your space, if the Committee is okay with it, it is the applicant's intention it would be a 24 hour facility that would be controlled with cameras and card readers.

Mr. Popovitch discussed traffic circulation has been covered, which addressed the turning template for the box truck, etc. and signage posting eliminating vehicle access larger than 26 foot trucks.

Mr. Stevens discussed the applicant has adequate access for emergency vehicles. Those templates can be provided to the Committee so they can see. It is not the applicant's intention to have tractor trailers delivering in and out of the facility. It would be limited to box trucks.

Mr. Popovitch discussed the limit of truck size can be done with signage. The template for fire truck access can be provided.

Mr. Stevens discussed the applicant would like to utilize a well and septic system for this facility. It is going to have very low flow, having one based employee in an office. There will not be a tremendous amount of water flow here. There is sewer located on Seminole. It is on the other side of Route 9 and would be very expensive to bring sanitary sewer to the site.

Committeeman LoParo inquired if there are external hoses for people to use.

Mr. Stevens discussed, no. There will be a manager there to manage the site to make sure it is kept clean. It is the applicant's intention to make a nice looking facility.

Mayor Wetter inquired if there will be bathroom facilities available for the public.

Mr. Stevens discussed, yes. There will be bathroom facilities. There will not be multiple bathrooms located on every floor.

Committeeman LoParo inquired if the customers would have access to the bathrooms 24 hours.

Mr. Stevens discussed, yes. Tenants are allowed into the building and will have access to the bathrooms 24 hours a day. There is a center corridor in the middle, where customers will be able to access the restrooms on the ground floor as well as the elevators and stairs to get to the upper storage.

Mr. Worth inquired if there is any fire suppression.

Mr. Racz discussed these building types are kept at a non-freezing/non-overheating temperature. The units are not climatized for living. Usually dry systems are used, with a dry piping and a tank. In the event of a fire, it is an immediate rush and it's done or various other chemical suppression systems can be used.

Mr. Worth inquired how large of a tank, per the construction code, would be required.

Mr. Racz discussed there are so many different types of setups. It could be segregated down to 10,000 square foot areas or 5,000 square foot area, which would be multiple tanks. If the applicant has the ability to tap into city water, a 6 inch feed would be run to the fire suppression, then you would have a standard sprinkler system throughout the building. It depends on what the code is going to require.

Mr. Worth discussed there are different elements that will require water supply. The Township's utility department will review any water/sewer applications and may want connection to the water/sewer of the Township.

Mr. Racz discussed that is the next phase of what will be desired. Even Code sometimes require something. The applicant can go above and beyond or whatever necessities are required by the Township.

Mr. Taylor discussed that gets based on the character of the material that is being stored.

Mr. Racz discussed if there are chemicals stored, the tenant is required to use chemical powder suppression system or halon gas.

Mr. Taylor inquired if the intention is to prohibit gas fertilizer.

Mr. Racz discussed, yes.

Mr. Worth discussed the stormwater management system for the site. It is mainly intended to be underground recharge piping. Mr. Worth inquired if the applicant performed soil borings or test pits to confirm the seasonal high water table is well enough to support the system as proposed.

Mr. Stevens discussed permitting a mixed-use development on the site many years ago. Mr. Stevens has been doing engineering work on this site for 14 years and is comfortable this is going to work.

Mr. Worth discussed the application does not propose any freestanding signs. Any onsite signage would need to comply with Township regulation.

Mr. Taylor inquired the applicant's plan with respect to boats and RV's.

Mr. Stevens discussed there will be no outside storage and no boats or RV's are permitted.

Mr. Taylor inquired if the distance was checked from the residential development to the rear.

Mr. Stevens discussed it is far. There is a narrow strip of land on Route 9 that is part of the commercial zone. Behind there is a piece of property off of Pancoast that was sold for open space. This is a conservation piece property between the applicant and Greenbriar.

Mr. Worth inquired if there are 600 foot blocks there. Maybe it is 1,200-1,300 feet back.

Mr. Taylor discussed a truck backup beeper at 3:00am. If the Township considers changing the zoning for the use, there may want to be some limitation on an absolute 24 hour operation. It may get extended until 11:00pm and be closed off from 11:00pm to 6:00am.

Mr. Racz discussed not limiting the hours too much. Some people may be coming and going later in the evening.

Deputy Mayor Collamer inquired if Mr. Racz is suggesting 6:00am until 12 midnight.

Mr. Racz discussed if the ordinance is going to look to 11:00pm then the applicant will live with that, too.

Mr. Taylor discussed from a use point, if the Committee was interested in moving this forward for a modified redevelopment plan, some significant effort would need to be made on the architecture to help break up that mass from the stripes and additional detailing, especially at the corners. The site is unfortunately long and not very deep. The profile of the building that you see is very long and it is hard to do much with it. If it were to move forward from a use standpoint, from a redevelopment plan, some of the design standards in the Town Center should be used.

Mayor Wetter discussed it looks like a box.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed it is not particularly attractive.

Mr. Racz discussed the use unfortunately lends itself to that shape. Architecturally, things can be done to break up the façade.

Mr. Stevens discussed the way these buildings are designed and engineered to be built, the applicant can add on anything in any sort of shape. An area could be columned or more visible to break up the solid square.

Mr. Taylor discussed something could be put over the door so it does not look like a utility transformer building. The use issue needs to be embraced, from an architecture standpoint, as well as the planting, lighting and fencing. If the Township were willing to move forward, even with the use issue, the outlook should be agreeable to whatever design standards the Township were to come up with.

Mr. Popovitch discussed that will not be an issue. Additional buffering, screening and landscaping and a detailed plan is probably more of a conceptual understanding. The purpose of appearing in front of the Redevelopment Committee is to present the use. The applicant is certainly willing to do whatever is necessary to enhance the project so it will be as attractive as possible.

Mr. Taylor discussed that puts the ball back in the Township's court, as this is specifically not included as one of the permitted uses.

Christine, T&M Engineering, discussed this is not a permitted use in the C-1 general commercial district. In 2000 the area was designated an area in need of redevelopment. If it is the opinion of this Township Committee, a site-specific redevelopment plan would have to be developed for this site. If the Township Committee does not recommend that, the applicant has the option to go to the Zoning Board and get a use variance.

Deputy Mayor Collamer inquired if a variance before the Planning Board or Zoning Board would be required anyway.

Christine discussed due to the C-1 commercial district has been designated an area of redevelopment, a site specific redevelopment plan would need to be created for this site. Then it would go to the Planning Board.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed at that point, the applicant would not need the variance.

Christine discussed, correct. Those are the two options going forward.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed having concerns with the circulation going around the building. There is an issue with the 26 foot box-truck template sheet, if a customer parks too close to one of the corners to unload. That is an issue for regular traffic flow and a bigger issue during an emergency situation.

Mr. Stevens discussed the applicant tried to maintain a 24 foot wide minimum driveway around the entire building, which typically, is the width of a driveway at any shopping center for two-lane traffic. This is one lane traffic. The applicant tried to leave a 12 foot clear path around the perimeter around the project to give trucks the largest turning radius as possible. The site is constrained by the lack of depth. It is short of 125 feet deep. It is hard to develop these kinds of sites. The applicant can provide additional traffic testimony. Devine Interventions LLC has a traffic engineer working on the project but was not brought here this evening, as the discussion tonight is regarding use of the site. The applicant will make the circulation comfortable, whether at Redevelopment or at the Planning Board level.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed the concern is the applicant doing what is required per the plan, regarding customer parking. The only solution to making more room is to make the building smaller.

Mr. Racz discussed one of the options is to reconfigure the central area on the plan, which has been left open. That can be used as a temporary parking for customers offloading. A 24 foot box truck would be the individual allowed to offload there. There's no harm in putting bollards, forcing a vehicle to park a little further back while offloading.

Mr. Worth discussed commercial shopping centers do have 24 foot wide lanes. In this case, that is provided, but 12 feet is for a loading zone, so now that emergency vehicle is trying to get around the building within a 12 foot wide lane and there is overlap at the corners where the truck is going to be maneuvering. The Township wants to make sure an emergency vehicle will have full access to the site and around the building without coming into conflict with any vehicles that may be there.

Mr. Racz discussed if the applicant provided bollards to restrict the ability of a customer trying to put a car there, now the applicant can maintain that 24 foot, especially coming around those turns. Those will be the critical points.

Mr. Worth discussed the Township could review the restricted loading zone areas in order to allow the emergency vehicles around the site. That is important and would have to be looked at.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed that is something that could be looked into deeper at the Planning Board level.

Mr. Worth discussed it could be, should the use be acceptable to the Township Committee.

Mr. Racz discussed the traffic expert could come in and explain and perhaps the bollards or some other solution will be workable in making sure that access is maintained for emergency vehicles. That is important. There is an area in the central of the building that is going to be open, where somebody with a larger vehicle can pull in and move items out. That will also help in terms of a customer coming in with an 18 foot pickup truck.

Township Attorney McGuckin inquired if the buildings to the south have public water or sewer.

Mr. Stevens discussed yes.

Township Attorney McGuckin inquired if there is a problem running a connection along that side of Route 9.

Mr. Racz discussed the buildings have a small pump station that connects back up into Seminole. The applicant could not tie into that to bring sewer here. There is existing sewer that starts here. It is possible to get there but the applicant would have to construct a sewer under Route 9 and it would be a large expense for a use like this. There is water located at the intersection of Pancoast. It is a little difficult to bring down due to a couple of easements that are missing in a particular area. It could possibly be done to bring water to the site.

Township Attorney McGuckin discussed it is understood the applicant does not have a large need. The Township has always envisioned water and sewer would be on that side of Route 9. It was the plan to have each developer provide their fair share of getting it developed. If the applicant receives approval without it, there will be a break in the chain, which the Township may never be able to breach or overcome somewhere down the road. Mr. Stevens had indicated other developments didn't work with mixed use.

Mr. Stevens discussed there was not a need for it so it ended up not working out.

Township Attorney McGuckin inquired how long ago was that.

Mr. Stevens discussed it was 7-8 years ago.

Township Attorney McGuckin inquired if there is any planning testimony as to why the Township should change the zoning on that side of Route 9 for this project and if there is any planning testimony as to how it integrates with the rest of the Town Center and is there any planning testimony as to why this would be a good idea for the Township.

Mr. Stevens discussed the applicant believes it is a good commercial use that fits into your specific commercial zone, albeit not specifically stated in the Township's C-1 commercial zone. The applicant thinks there is a need for this type of facility and it would be a benefit to the Township to construct a facility like that here. On this side of Route 9, there is a commercial development of auto mall stores in that particular area.

Township Attorney McGuckin discussed storage facilities on main highways is a decision for the Township Committee to make. It's not the best planning alternative for a state highway. There are other areas in the Township. The Township of Ocean has a large redevelopment zone. There is also potential commercial along Route 532. Township Attorney McGuckin would like to hear planning testimony as to why this is a good idea for the Township.

Mr. Racz discussed there are a number of storage facilities going up and down Route 37 in Toms River. The applicant thinks this is a fit for the type of Route 9 corridor highway that the property fronts on.

Mr. Stevens discussed there are other benefits to this type of use as well. The use itself is going to have a fairly low traffic count onto Route 9. This type of use is a good commercial use for the Township and a good commercial ratable with minimal negative impacts. It's a very quiet use. There isn't a lot of disturbance that comes out of a use like this. The project can be done in an attractive manner. If the Township Committee isn't in love with the building, the applicant can make changes and architectural additions, making it something the Township can be proud of.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed the point Township Attorney McGuckin brought up about utilities is a key issue, especially since other developments in that neighborhood have been held to that responsibility. Should the Township choose to go along with the zoning change, Deputy Mayor Collamer would want to see that on public utilities.

Mr. Worth discussed Township Attorney McGuckin is correct with the desired extension of the utilities along that side of Route 9, that has been and is what the Township is looking for along that commercial corridor.

Mr. Stevens discussed between Seminole and Pancoast, there are four lots that are in one way or another related to the applicant. If the proposed facility works out and the applicant ends up building Phase I and II, it would occupy two of the lots, so the two lots on the end, it would need water/sewer service. That is as far as the water/sewer service need would go on this side of Route 9. On the other side of Route 9, the undeveloped commercial properties have access to the sewer in Seminole. There is a sewer main that is built into this area with the easements to service these properties.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed the additional complexity would be for the applicant to find a way to get the service across Route 9.

Mr. Stevens discussed the sewer can be built across Route 9. Mr. Stevens has designed that in the past for other projects. It can be done. It is just a cost factor.

Mayor Wetter discussed not liking the building so close to Route 9 and does not like the way the building looks.

Mr. Taylor discussed the use is the biggest issue.

Township Attorney McGuckin discussed the applicant is willing to make changes to the building and will have to explore the utility issue, cost-wise. The key issue is the use.

Mayor Wetter discussed, personally, she would vote no.

Deputy Mayor Collamer discussed in the past, use variances are typically brought before the Zoning Board. That is the place for this issue.

Mayor Wetter agreed with Deputy Mayor Collamer.

Committeeman LoParo agreed with Mayor Wetter and Deputy Mayor Collamer.

A motion to not adopt a redevelopment plan for Divine Interventions, LLC to construct a storage facility as described by the applicant, located at Block 62, Lots 3.02 & 3.03

was moved by Deputy Mayor Collamer, seconded by Committeeman LoParo.

Roll Call: LoParo: Yes, Collamer: Yes, Wetter: Yes

Motion to open Public Comment was moved by Deputy Mayor Collamer, seconded by Committeeman LoParo.

Roll Call: LoParo: Yes, Collamer: Yes, Wetter: Yes

No public present.

Motion to close Public Comment was moved by Deputy Mayor Collamer, seconded by Committeeman LoParo.

Roll Call: LoParo: Yes, Collamer: Yes, Wetter: Yes


ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting was moved by Deputy Mayor Collamer, seconded by Committeeman LoParo.

Roll Call: LoParo: Yes, Collamer: Yes, Wetter: Yes

Signed and Submitted:


Diane B. Ambrosio, RMC
Municipal Clerk


Date