

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
October 4, 2023

The Regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 6:32 pm by Chairman Karp in Meeting Room A in the Municipal Building.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting’s date, time, location and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the township bulletin board and filed with the Municipal Clerk on September 26, 2023.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Michael Karp, Chairman, Class IV
Curtis Hoberman, Vice-Chairman, Class IV
Hemant Marathe, Mayor, Class I
Linda Geevers, Councilwoman, Class III
Sue Appelget, Class IV
Simon Pankove, Class IV (departed meeting at 10:00 pm)
Allen Schectel, Class IV
Pankaj Patel, Alt. #2

ABSENT: Jyotika Bahree, Class II (entered meeting @7:00 pm;
departed at 7:04 pm)
Anis Baig, Class IV
Robert Loverro, Alt. #1

TOWNSHIP CONSULTANT STAFF PRESENT

Gerald Muller, Esq., Attorney, Law Offices of Gerald Muller, PC
David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis & Associates
Ian Hill, PE, Engineering Consultant, Van Cleef Engineering
Quazi Masood, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer, Arora & Associates
Tim Lynch, Chief, West Windsor Township Emergency Services

Sam Surtees, Land Use Manager and Zoning Officer

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on non-agenda and non-pending application items. He reminded the Board members if they had any typographical/non-content related changes, to give them to the Recording Secretary.

ANDREA MANDEL, 46 Ellsworth Drive, West Windsor Township Council President, former Planning Board member: Ms. Mandel invited everyone to the West Windsor National Drive Electric week on Saturday, October 7, 2023. She thanked the forward-thinking Planning Board members, including former Chairman Gene O’Brien, who have been on the forefront of EV ordinance adoption and installation throughout West Windsor Township. She has also been asked by Sustainable Jersey to speak about electric vehicles at a forum at the League of Municipalities Conference next month.

RESOLUTIONS:

PB23-03 West Windsor Arts Council
Minor Site Plan & Bulk Variance
952 Alexander Road
Block 75, Lots 6. 118 & 119

Attorney Muller gave a summary of the resolution.

Mr. Pankove made a motion to approve Planning Board Resolution PB23-03; seconded by Councilwoman Geevers.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Pankove, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman

Nay: None

Abstain: Schectel, Karp

Absent: Loverro, Baig, Bahree

Not Voting: None

APPLICATION a):

PB20-09 HSC West Windsor, LLC
Preliminary/Final Site Plan
Phase 1 & Preliminary Site Plan
Phase 2 with Waivers
Block 8, Lots 17, 24, 30, 3496-3500 US Route 1
Property Zoned: B-2 District
MLUL: N/A
REQUEST FOR 1 YEAR EXTENSION OF APPROVALS

John Wisniewski, Attorney, Wisniewski and Associates, was present to represent the applicant. He explained that they were requesting the 1-year extension because they were waiting for NJ DOT approvals.

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on the application. There were no comments.

Ms. Appelget made a motion to approve application PB20-09 for request for 1 year extension; seconded by Mr. Schectel.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman, Karp

Nay: None

Abstain: Pankove

Absent: Loverro, Baig, Bahree

Not Voting: None

APPLICATION b):

PB23-05 **400 Steps**
Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan
Preliminary Major Site Plan – Phase 2
15 Cranbury Road; Block 5, Lots 19 & Part of 20
Property Zoned: RP-12 District
MLUL: 10/11/23

Owner/Applicant seeks preliminary and final site plan approval for development of one hundred and eighty (180) apartment units, including thirty-six (36) affordable units on premises located at 15 Cranbury Road, Princeton Junction (near the intersection of Princeton-Hightstown Road and the Northeast Corridor rail line). The units would be contained in one 4-story residential building above at-grade garage parking. The building has a footprint of approximately 53,800 square feet. The applicant has been named as the Redeveloper of Lot 19, which has a lot area of 3.85 acres. Vehicular access to the site is by an existing driveway from Cranbury Road through lot 20. Two hundred and twelve (212) parking spaces are proposed, including surface and garage spaces. Included in the parking total are nine (9) ADA spaces and twenty-seven (27) EV make-ready spaces.

Attorney Muller confirmed that the proof of publication and service are in order and the Board has jurisdiction.

Peter Licata of Sonnenblick Mehr & Licata, attorney representing the applicant, introduced the professionals that would be testifying.

The Professionals were sworn-in by Attorney Muller and the professionals were qualified as expert witnesses.

Ingrid Kohler, LLA, Landscape Architect
Robert Korkuch, Engineer
Laura Staines-Giardino, Architect, L & M Design
John Rea, Traffic Engineer, McDonough & Rea Associates
Michael McCloskey, 400 Steps, LLC

Ms. Kohler gave a description of the project and reviewed the site plan. Parking, parking garage, possibility of solar panel installation, trash, fire safety, sound, and trash were all discussed by the professionals.

The Township's Planning Board Professionals were sworn-in by Attorney Muller. Sam Surtees was also sworn-in. Reports were submitted and reviewed as follows:

David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis Associates, report dated September 14, 2023
Quazi Masood, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer, Arora & Associates, report dated September 22, 2023
Ian Hill, PE, Engineering Consultant, Van Cleef Engineering, report by Francis Guzik dated September 27, 2023
Tim Lynch, Chief, West Windsor Township Emergency Services, report dated September 27, 2023
Dan Dobromilsky, LLA, Township Landscape Architect (not present), report dated September 26, 2023
West Windsor Affordable Housing Committee (not present), report dated September 27, 2023

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on the application.

ALISON MILLER, 41 Windsor Drive: Ms. Miller commented about bicycle storage space and said she does not think that hanging bicycles is a good solution. She can't reach and does not have upper body strength. The applicant said residents were not permitted to keep them in their apartments. She asked where the electric bikes will be stored (since they are potentially a fire hazard). The applicant responded they will go in the bicycle enclosure. Ms. Miller comments that EV station parking spaces will need to be increased as necessitated. She asked what hours staff will be available. The applicant responded 24 hours per day.

DAVE GALOS, 40 Cranberry Road: Mr. Galos commented on the crowded traffic situation. He said there are few places near there to access either by bike or on foot because of the traffic. Mr. Rea responded that the ITE supplies the traffic data.

BRISHA LYNN ANDERSON, 40 Cranbury Road: Ms. Anderson would like to see access to ladders in the apartments in case of a fire. She asked about the 24 hours off-site manager. She commented on traffic and said that cars have been parking in the commercial area and on the side of the road. She said she did not think apartments are a good fit, but would rather see a walking park-like area.

LOUIS PETITJEAN, 112 Lowell Court: Mr. Petitjean suggested a one-way road at the entrance to accommodate bike lanes. He said he thinks 34 slots for bicycles is inadequate. He asked about the chargers for the bicycles and if a significant amount will be provided. Mr. McCloskey responded that there are charging stations in the shed, and can be altered/increased when necessary. He also said this also applies to adding more space for bicycles, if needed.

The applicant agreed to a condition to include a banked area designated for additional bike shed space on the site plan.

JACOB SCHWARTZ, 42 Cranbury Road: Mr. Schwartz said he is in support of developing this lot. He urged that solar panels be added to the roof.

IGOR KAGANOVICH, 35 Cranbury Road: Mr. Kaganovich said there are no bicycle lanes on the roads and commented on the excessive amount of traffic. It would be very dangerous for bicycles. He expressed concern how all the cars will enter and exit the small property size. He also asked where the children will go and play.

GEORGE BARONE, 19 Berkshire Drive: Mr. Barone said the original discussion on the project has changed since he first heard about it. He asked questions about the notice letter he received. (19 Berkshire is more than 200 feet.) He asked about the traffic congestion and how it will affect school buses and the future day care center. Mayor Marathe announced that he will respond to his questions at the end of public comment.

RYAN KENNEDY, STEVENS & LEE representing Ellsworth Realty, the development on the front of the project: Mr. Kennedy thanked the applicant for working with them. They are excited for restoring the front of the property for the neighborhood.

MAYOR MARATHE: Mayor Marathe said the park at the end of the road is still there/going to be built. In regard to the cars parking at the end of street, they are parked illegally and they are dealing with this. Traffic is the most often complaint, but the Township is required to build these homes and they have to trust the traffic study.

CHAIRMAN KARP: Chairman Karp read Township Landscape Architect Dan Dobromilsky's comments into the record. The applicant agreed to include a banked area designated for additional bike shed space on the site plan.

BRISHA LYNN ANDERSON, 40 Cranbury Road: Ms. Anderson said she is concerned that she did not receive notification, and she will be impacted by the traffic. The Board members looked at the distance from her house and it was over 200 feet.

10:00 PM – Mr. Pankove left the meeting.

There was no further comment from the public. Mayor Marathe made a motion to close the meeting for public comment; seconded by Mr. Schectel. Passed by voice vote.

Ms. Appelget expressed her concern for the public safety of the residents. Her concerns were the layout with no driveway access to the northernmost portion of the building for emergency vehicles. Chief Lynch said the site is unique with the under building parking and having a single entrance in and out. He added that they cannot get their firetruck with the 100-foot ladder to circulate around the proposed building, but there is nothing in the Township or Fire Code that prohibits this. Solutions for truck circulation were discussed. The fire suppression system meets the Township's ordinance.

Mayor Marathe made a motion to approve application PB23-05 with the many conditions and waivers discussed and recorded by Attorney Muller and that the applicant has agreed to; seconded by Mr. Schectel.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Schectel, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman, Karp

Nay: Appelget

Abstain: None

Absent: Loverro, Pankove, Baig, Bahree

Not Voting: None

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairman Karp adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:28 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Dziura, RMC/CMR
Recording Secretary