



BOROUGH OF SOUTH RIVER PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 17, 2024 – 7:00 PM

Location: Criminal Justice Center, 61 Main Street, 2nd Level, South River

The Regular Meeting of the Borough of South River Planning Board was called to order by Chair Zammit at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. She read the following announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *In compliance with Chapter 231 of Public Laws of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting was given by way of Annual Notice filed with the Borough Clerk, the Home News Tribune, The Sentinel and posted and posted in the window of Borough of South River Municipal Building on January 17, 2024.*

The Planning Board may take formal action at this meeting.

Roll Call

Present: Monica Almeida, Richard Byrne, Mayor Peter Guindi, Nick Giannakopoulos, Jesse Hare (Alt 1), Cynthia Wilk, Donna Zammit

Absent: Councilman Matthew DeSantis, Shirley Dockery, Cynthia Urbanik

Also Present: Art Londensky, Administrator, Thomas Barlow, Attorney, Bruce Koch, Engineer, Todd Bletcher, Planner

Approval of Minutes: August 20, 2024

The motion to approve the regular meeting minutes dated August 20, 2024 as presented was first moved by Mr. Giannakopoulos, seconded by Ms. Wilk, all in favor by voice vote.

Resolution: None

Completeness

File PB-2023-06, Standard Waste Services

209 William Street Block: 82.01 Lot: 1.05

Application for site plan waiver to store trucks on site

George Pressler, Esq. represented the applicant. Mr. Pressler summarized the application. The applicant proposes to use the site to store trash collection vehicles, empty dumpsters and roll off containers only. Work will not be performed on this site, no vehicles will be washed on site, no employee vehicles on a regular basis and no public access. Applicant is requesting a waiver for the landscaping and lighting plans. Applicant will review tree replacement requirements. Mr. Barlow clarified that the application is for a site plan waiver; no variance requested. Mr. Koch asked about the two light posts; per Robert Benedetto, Engineer, the two light posts will be removed; no other new light fixtures will be installed. Mr. Bletcher addressed his report dated September 11, 2024; based on the information reviewed on the plans, he can do a complete planning review. Mr. Bletcher does not have an objection with the applicant's waiver request of the check list items; Board can grant the waivers. Mr. Bletcher provided a history of the site and its surroundings; majority of the property is woodland and wetland. Chair Zammit asked for questions from the Board. Ms. Wilk asked about the vehicles to be parked on the site; trucks will be parked onsite with overnight storage. Per Steve Fino, applicant, this site is strictly for truck storage. Truck repairs will be done on his property across this site. There will be no trucks dispatched from this site. Mr. Fino proposes to remove the pole barns on site and not replace them; the office building will remain. Mr. Koch addressed his report dated September 11, 2024; he has the same



comments as in Mr. Bletcher's report in regards to the waivers. He requested that the floodway limits be included; Mr. Pressler agreed.

The motion to deem *File PB#2023-06*, Standard Waste Services complete and to be carried to the October 15, 2024 meeting for Public Hearing was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos

Roll call in favor: Almeida, Byrne, Giannakopoulos, Guindi, Hare, Wilk, Zammit

Absent: DiSantis, Dockery, Urbanik

Abstain: None

File PB-2024-04, Port Plaza

7 Main St	Block: 150	Lot: 1	7 Main St	Block: 150	Lot: 4.03
Tide Waters	Block: 150	Lot: 1.01	1 Reid St	Block: 150	Lot: 5
11 Main St	Block: 150	Lot: 2.01	7 Reid St	Block: 150	Lot: 6
3 Reid St	Block: 150	Lot: 4.01	Reid St	Block: 150	Lot: 6.02

Application for site plan approval

Mayor Guindi and Chair Zammit recused themselves from this application. Ms. Wilk stepped up to chair the meeting.

Donna Jennings, Esq. represented the applicant. She stated that the applicant received the Engineer and Planner's reports dated September 11, 2024, recommending the application been deemed complete subject to additional comments. Addressing Mr. Bletcher's report, the applicant is requesting a wavier from check list item 14; Mr. Bletcher's report did not have an issue with the waiver. The three other comments from Mr. Bletcher's report has been provided to the Board Secretary. Ms. Jennings opined that the application is complete and ready for public hearing. Mr. Koch deemed the application complete. Mr. Bletcher stated that his comments have been addressed and deemed the application complete.

The motion to deem *File PB#2024-04*, Port Plaza complete and to be carried to the October 15, 2024 meeting for Public Hearing was first moved by Mr. Giannakopoulos, seconded by Mr. Byrne

Roll call in favor: Almeida, Byrne, Giannakopoulos, Hare, Wilk

Absent: DiSantis, Dockery, Urbanik

Abstain: Guindi, Zammit

Chair Zammit and Mayor Guindi returned to the dais. Chair Zammit presided over the meeting.

Public Hearings

File PB-2023-07, Main Street Investment

213 Prospect Street Block: 64 Lot: 1.07

Application to construct second dwelling on site.

Jay Weiner, Esq. represented the applicant. Mr. Weiner stated that the site is located at 215 Prospect St., a/k/a 213 Prospect St., Block: 64, Lot 1.032; the agenda lists the old lot number, 1.07.

Michael Goldstein, Engineer was introduced and sworn in. He provided his credentials and was accepted by this Board. Mr. Goldstein marked in *Exhibit A1, Minor Subdivision* dated September 20, 2023, revised June 18, 2024; this exhibit is in the application packet. The site currently has an existing single family dwelling. The applicant proposes to subdivide the property into two lots and construct a second



single family dwelling. Mr. Goldstein addressed Exhibit A1, described the site and its surroundings. He addressed the proposed lot as Lot 1.08; the existing house is on Lot 1.07. He marked in *Exhibit A2, Plot Plan*; area is zoned R75; applicant meets all setback requirements. Mr. Barlow addressed the assignment of lot numbers; for clarification Lot 1.08, when looking at the site, is the proposed lot on the right. Per Mr. Goldstein, if approved, the proposed subdivision will not create any side yard setback variances for the existing house. He addressed Mr. Koch's report dated September 12, 2024; they have no objections to his requests. They will file the subdivision by deed if approved. They have the Letter of No Interest from the Middlesex County Planning Board. Mr. Goldstein addressed Mr. Bletcher's report dated September 10, 2024. He agreed with 6B, zoning analysis; the existing and proposed dwellings will be zoning compliant. Mr. Goldstein addressed the design waiver for the turn around; there is not enough space to provide a turnaround for the driveway. There are houses surrounding this site that do not have a turnaround; cars back up onto Prospect Street to exit. Prospect Street is a County street with 25 MPH. Mr. Goldstein marked in *Exhibit A3, Slope and Tree Analysis* dated August 26, revised August 29, 2024; he addressed the trees on site; no trees will be removed for this application. Mr. Goldstein stated that the proposed disturbance will only be in the non-steep slope on site; the steep slope area will not be disturbed. Mr. Goldstein marked in *Exhibit A4, Steep Slope Analysis* dated August 26, 2024. He explained the slope analysis for the proposed site; this is an existing condition of the property and will remain the same. Mr. Wiener stated that they are seeking variance relief for the pre-existing condition for the existing 1.85 sf steep slope. Addressing *Exhibit A2*, Mr. Goldstein described the foundation limits.

Lukasz Grzech, Applicant was introduced and sworn in. Mr. Grzech confirmed that the existing house has a basement. Per Mr. Goldstein, the proposed dwelling will be very similar to the existing dwelling. The proposed house will have 29' front yard setback; same as existing house. Tree line is about 20' from foundation. Mr. Goldstein summarized his testimony. Lot size and house location meet zoning criteria; the rear yard provides adequate recreational space. Existing house does not have a hammer head driveway; design waiver request. Chair Zammit asked the professionals for any comments. Mr. Koch stated that he would like to see the proposed house look a little different from the existing house; Mr. Bletcher agreed. Per Mr. Grzech, there will be some variation on the façade and a different roof; the floor plans will be identical. Mr. Barlow asked if the applicant is agreeable to returning to this Board for site plan approval; this application is for subdivision, not site plan approval. Per Mr. Goldstein, the application is for a plot plan approval which is subject to zoning requirements. Per Mr. Grzech and Goldstein, the plot plan and architectural plans were submitted, so it should not be necessary. Mr. Goldstein explained why they cannot include the hammer head turnaround. Mr. Bletcher responded to Mr. Koch's comments regarding the look-alike differences between the house; he made recommendations on how the proposed dwelling could be substantially different from the existing dwelling. Mr. Barlow will develop proper wording for the resolution for the architectural difference. Mr. Bletcher recommended we get traffic study information for backing onto a County Road.

Christine Cofone, Planner was introduced and sworn in. She provided her credentials and was accepted by this Board. She testified that the site is zoned R75 and described the existing conditions. Ms. Cofone addressed the relief request for the design waiver from the hammer head driveway. She provided positive and negative criteria to approve this application.



Mr. Wiener summarized the application. Applicant agrees to include in the deed that there will be no further subdivision of the site.

The motion to open to the public was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Ms. Wilk, all in favor by voice vote.

Arthur Londensky, Zoning Officer

Mr. Londensky asked about the hammer head turnaround which is required by our ordinance. Mr. Barlow replied that it is up to the Board; he explained how the variance for this site and for the pre-existing condition on the existing house will be needed. The County indicated that it is excluded from their requirements. For clarification, Mr. Londensky had nothing to do with the first house, zoning wise, and the hammerhead should have been required. Mr. Bletcher stated that this Board will decide whether to grant the design waiver or not on the proposed lot. The Board is not considering any changes to the first lot.

Mr. Byrne is not passionate with the need for the two houses to be drastically different. Ms. Almeida asked about the restrictions to the exterior.

Seeing none other, the motion to close to the public was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos, all in favor by voice vote.

The motion to approve *File PB-2023-07, Main Street Investment* with the restrictions discussed, was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos

Roll call in favor: Almeida, Byrne, Giannakopoulos, Guindi, Hare, Wilk, Zammit

Abstain: None

Absent: DiSantis, Dockery, Urbanik

COMMENTS / DISCUSSION ITEM

Ordinance 2024-42 first reading for 55 Main St SR Urban Renewal, LLC for Redeveloper Agreement

Mr. Barlow described what businesses are contained in the 151 area. He explained that this ordinance had its first reading in the Council on September 9, 2024. Mr. Bletcher described the application and changes to the Amendments to Sub-Area 151 located at the former PNC Bank, 55 Main Street. This amendment allows for building of 4 stories in height and height dimension of 54'. Mr. Bletcher went over the plans and went over the six items for improvement. Chair Zammit stated that it is a lot of information and asked why this was not included in their packets; Ms. Moy received it the day of the meeting. Ms. Wilk expressed her concerns for the building being located next to the Police Station. When she was working, there was a general consensus of things that should be considered when building so close to a police station. Mr. Londensky stated that rules or regulations were not found; only suggestions. The Police Department had no objections to the construction. Mayor Guindi reported that they spoke to several outside Middlesex County agencies; Homeland Security responded with concerns for access to the Police cars and Officers' personal cars. The Redeveloper applicant has agreed to put up a security fence around the Police lot. Applicant must meet the RSIS parking requirements; the applicant proposes 45 2-bedroom units with 45 parking spaces. Applicant is required to provide the 45 spaces; the additional 45 spaces will be outstanding. They have to figure out how to provide the additional spaces. Mr. Bletcher went over the parking options the applicant has. Mr. Byrne commented about the parking



lot option. Mr. Barlow explained this Board's role in reviewing the ordinance; is it consistent with the Master Plan. The Council is the Redevelopment Agency.

The motion to open to the public was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Ms. Wilk, all in favor by voice vote.

Ed Trygar, Resident, 44 Ferry St.

Mr. Trygar expressed his concerns about the parking in the area close to the applicant's location. The Borough parking lot is sold out. He stated other towns look at parking first; South River is looking at units first then parking.

Seeing none other, the motion to close to the public was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Ms. Wilk, all in favor by voice vote.

The motion to request Mr. Barlow to respond favorably to the *Ordinance 2024-42* back to the Council was first moved by Mr. Byrne, seconded by Ms. Almeida

Roll call in favor: Almeida, Byrne, Giannakopoulos, Hare, Zammit

Abstain: Guindi, Wilk Absent: DiSantis, Dockery, Urbanik

Ms. Moy reminded the Members, the November Meeting Reminder will be held on **November 12, 2024** due to the League of Municipalities Conference the following week.

Public Comment

The motion to open to the public was first moved by Ms. Wilk, seconded by Mayor Guindi, all in favor by voice vote. Seeing none, the motion to close to the public was first moved by . Wilk, seconded by Mayor Guindi, all in favor by voice vote.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 9:10 pm was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Ms. Wilk, all in favor by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by:



Julie Moy
Recording Secretary

Adopted: October 15, 2024