

RARITAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

July 24, 2019

7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Edward Gettings called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were read into the record by Attorney John Belardo.

3. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Chairman Edward Gettings

Mayor Jeff Kuhl

Karen Gilbert

Judi DiGiandomenico

Michelle Cavalchire

Lisa Fania

James Miller, Alternate

Scott MacDade, Alternate

Members Absent:

Vice Chairwoman Donna Drewes

4. ALSO PRESENT:

Antoine Hajjar, Township Engineer

Jessica Caldwell, Township Planner

5. APPEARANCES:

MESSRS. McELROY, DEUTSCH, MULVANEY & CARPENTER

1300 Mount Kemble Avenue

P.O. Box 2075

Morristown, New Jersey 07962-2075

Attorney for the Planning Board

By: JOHN P. BELARDO, ESQ.

MESSRS. NEHMAD, PERILLO, DAVIS & GOLDSTEIN

4030 Ocean Heights Avenue

Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

Attorney for Walmart Stores, Inc.

By: TRACY A. SIEBOLD, ESQ.

MESSRS. SCHOLL, WHITTLESEY & GRUENBERG, LLC

1 East Main Street

Flemington, NJ 08822

Attorney for M&P Retirement Plan and Sanatana Dharma Foundation, Inc.

By: STEVEN P. GRUENBERG

6. MINUTES: The minutes of July 10, 2019

A motion was made by Judi DiGiandomenico to approve the minutes from July 10, 2019, seconded by Mayor Jeff Kuhl.

(On roll call, all eligible members voted in the affirmative.)

7. CITIZENS PRIVILEGE: None.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

a. Walmart Stores, Inc.

SP-675-M

Minor Site Plan

Block 16.01, Lots 35, 36 & 38 – 152 Route 31 North

Attorney Tracy Siebold of the Nehmad, Perillo, Davis & Goldstein Law Firm appeared on behalf of Walmart Stores, Inc. for a minor site plan with no variances. The existing Walmart in the PC zone received final approvals in 2006. The applicant wished to construct a 1,300 square foot addition to be used as a storage room in connection with their online shopping order pick-up program.

Ms. Siebold presented Civil Engineer Rob Stryker of Bohler Engineering and Architect Les Tribble of Buckman Architectural Group as witnesses.

Mr. Stryker presented his engineering testimony first, highlighting the minimal impact to the existing site. He submitted two exhibits: A-1 is an aerial photograph taken on July 24 and A-2 is a site plan prepared by Bohler Engineering.

Mr. Tribble explained the online shopping pick-up process and also highlighted the seamless design approach from the current structure.

Michelle Cavalchire made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Karen Gilbert.

(On roll call, all eligible members voted in the affirmative.)

b. M&P Retirement Plan

S-1435-M

Minor Subdivision

Block 13, Lot 12 – 118 Featherbed Lane

Attorney Steven Gruenberg of Scholl, Whittlesey & Gruenberg, LLC appeared on behalf of M&P Retirement Plan for the continuation of an application for a minor subdivision with variances. The applicant wishes to divide an 18.686-acre lot into two lots – one being 9.04 acres and one being 9.228 acres. A front yard setback variance would be needed for an existing home on one of the lots and a lot width variance would be needed for both lots.

Karen Gilbert stated on the record that she was not present at the March 27, 2019 meeting to hear the beginning of the application, but that since then she had read the transcript and signed the voting eligibility waiver.

Mr. Gruenberg presented Jeff Tareila of Jeff Tareila Environmental Consulting and Planner Jeffrey Doshna as witnesses.

Mr. Tareila testified to the wetland delineation on the site and stated that farmers are allowed to cross over wetlands if needed without permit. He stated that they should use a path which would cause the least amount of disturbance, which would be better for the wetlands than creating a straight, permanent path.

Mr. Doshna compared the M&P Retirement Plan application to the Kaufmann case with regard to proposed lot width and stated these new lots would be more conforming with other existing lots in the immediate surrounding area.

After the testimony from the two witnesses, several board members and the Board Engineer asked questions.

Chairman Edward Gettings called any members of the public to ask questions and Attorney Belardo sworn in said residents to give testimony. Township Resident Joseph Ziegler stated to the Board that lot size regulations were smaller many years ago when the neighboring houses were built and also testified to the requirements for Farmland Assessment. He believes that it would be difficult to traverse the wetlands on the property with large farm equipment. Resident John MacKay testified that the wetlands on the property are not as dry as Jeff Tareila made them seem.

Attorney Gruenberg summarized the application and confirmed that two front yard sheds will be demolished as a condition of approval and a third shed and chicken coop will be demolished as a condition of obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy. Karen Gilbert made a motion to approve the application, seconded by James Miller.

(On roll call, five members voted in the affirmative and two members voted negatively.)

c. Sanatana Dharma Foundation, Inc.

SP-680-APF

Amended Preliminary and Final Site Plan

Block 40.04, Lot 37 – 14 Barley Sheaf Road

Attorney Steven Gruenberg of Scholl, Whittlesey & Gruenberg, LLC appeared on behalf of Sanatana Dharma Foundation, Inc. for an amended preliminary and final site plan. Approval had

previously been granted for a Hindu temple with a priest quarters. This amended application is proposing a larger priest quarters with a study hall.

Mr. Gruenberg presented Engineer Eric Rupnarain, Sanatana Dharma President Suritanarayanan Subramanian and Architect Malathi Ananthkrishnan as witnesses.

Mr. Rupnarain referred to a colorized version of sheet 3 of the submitted site plan, which was subsequently marked as exhibit A-1. He testified that the proposed priest quarters would have a 5,050 square foot footprint with two stories of living space and first-floor study hall with a very high ceiling. The amended site plan will also include four additional parking spaces.

Mr. Subramanian attested to the proposed use of the study hall space. This study hall would be more informal than the multi-purpose room in the temple building and would be used for meetings, community service activities, a library, discussions in spiritual discourse, etc.

Ms. Ananthkrishnan reiterated the proposed design of the building and assured it will complement the rest of the site plan from a design perspective and will also be fully compliant with the site.

Attorney Gruenberg summarized the application. Judi DiGiandomenico made a motion to approve the application, seconded by James Miller.

(On roll call, six members voted in the affirmative and one member voted negatively.)

9. **RESOLUTIONS:** None.

10. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

11. **DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

a. Township of Raritan Recreation & Open Space Plan

Planner Jessica Caldwell summarized her draft of the Recreation and Open Space Plan and explained that we will be having a public hearing on this matter.

12. **COMMENTS AND REPORTS:**

(a) **Chairman's Report:** None.

(b) **The Board's Comments:**

Mayor Jeff Kuhl announced a successful settlement hearing for Fair Share Housing and Attorney Belardo explained the process of this agreement.

(c) **Engineer's Comments:** None.

(d) **Planner's Comments:**

Jessica Caldwell noted that the Planning Board will be hearing Housing Element within 120 days.

(e) **Attorney's Comments:** None.

13. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

The next meeting is scheduled for August 14, 2019, followed by August 28, 2019.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.



Amy Fleming

Planning Board Secretary