

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 21, 2019**

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Goodwin at 7:30 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

**ROLL CALL**

Albrecht, C.  
Denning, M.  
Goodwin, M.  
Harwick, A.  
Hendry, D.  
Kirk, T.  
Mueller, A.  
Ryan, P  
Tropello, S. (left meeting at 8:30 p.m.)

Others Present:

Board Attorney Steven Warner, Esq.  
Board Planner Kendra Lelie  
Board Engineer John Hansen  
Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman  
Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Harwick moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to approve the February 21, 2019 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

PMG RETAIL LLC  
Appl# ZB 16-004  
Block 39 Lots 56 & 57 – Route 22 & County Line Road  
Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan and Minor Subdivision with Variances  
Quick Chek Convenience Store with Fuel

Lawrence Powers, Esq. was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Powers provided a brief overview of the application as follows: The applicant previously received use variance approval by this Board. The current application is for Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan and Minor Subdivision approval with variances to develop a 5,496 square foot convenience store with 5 fuel dispensing station on a portion of a 12.1-acre lot that already contains a child care center, a residential structure and a shared detention basin. The residential structure is proposed to be razed and the childcare center will remain. The minor subdivision would combine a .92-acre lot (lot 56) with an 11.15(lot 57) and create two new lots 57.1 and 57.12. Lot 57.1 would be 5.06 acres in size and is the lot where the existing child care center would remain. Lot 57.2 would be 6.89 acres and would be the lot that contains the proposed Quick Chek. Several variances are also being requested as part of the application.

Mr. Powers noted that because they received the review letters from the Township professionals very late, they would only be presenting three witnesses this evening and will complete the remainder of the testimony at the next meeting.

The following individuals were present for the applicant:

William Obara, PE, applicant's engineer  
Oliver Young, AIA, applicant's architect  
Douglas Polyniak PE, applicant's traffic engineer

Mr. Obara, Mr. Young and Mr. Polyniak were sworn in for testimony. Board Planner Kendra Lelie, Board Engineer John Hansen and Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman were also sworn.

Exhibits presented:

A-1 - Colored Rendered Elevations last revised 3/14/19  
A-2 - Material Sample Board  
A-3 - Updated letter from Fire Official dated 3/19/19

William Obara, PE was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Obara described the property and provided testimony as follows: The applicant is proposing a minor subdivision of the property. The existing day care facility will remain on a 5.06-acre lot. The existing dwelling on lot 56 will be removed for the construction of an approximately 5,500 square foot convenience store with 5 fuel pumps. The operation of the facility would be 24 hours. There is a large detention basin in the rear of the property that would be maintained by an agreement between the two property owners. The existing detention basin is adequate for the proposed development without any further modification. Some additional water quality structures are proposed on site. The site will be served by septic. The site will be accessed by a right in right out driveway on Route 22. There is also a full movement driveway proposed along County Line Road. 58 parking spaces are proposed and a designated loading area along the back of the building. A designated right turn only lane is also proposed in front of the property. Significant landscaping will be provided throughout the site. The lighting will consist of overhead canopy lighting in the fuel station and pole mounted lighting throughout rest of the site.

Mr. Denning questioned the buffer requirements for the site.

Mr. Denning questioned how the number of parking spaces was determined since there is seating inside the facility it can be considered to be partially fast food and would require more parking. It was noted that 28 parking spaces are required, and 58 parking spaces are proposed. Mr. Denning also questioned the number of parking spots that were at the new Quick Chek store in Raritan

Mr. Harwick questioned what other water quality structures are designed for the site. Mr. Obara noted that there was an underground stormwater piping system and two water quality structures that provide treatment in advance of discharging to the basin.

Mr. Mueller questioned the location of transformer. Mr. Obara noted that they do not have control over that because the power company JCP&L will not give them the exact location until they have signed plans.

Ms. Kirk noted that there should be visual shielding to the transformer as well as safety shielding.

Chair Goodwin opened the public portion of the meeting with questions of Mr. Obara. There were no questions from the public.

Oliver Young, AIA was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Young provided testimony as follows: The layout is a standard QuickChek layout. There are 10 seats in the building, and it is same size store as the recently constructed store in Raritan. A representative from Quick Chek met with the town professionals and representatives to receive feedback on the exterior elevations of the building. The building is predominately constructed of brick. The difference in the front elevation design from the standard design is that the expansive glass in the front has been broken up with brick columns and spano glass (actual glass that is not transparent) was added on the side elevations. The entire building will be brick with no EIFS (Exterior Insulation Finishing System) material used. The decorative cornice that is on the building has been added to the gas canopy as well to tie the two buildings together. Two building signs are proposed, one on the front elevation facing Route 22 and the other on the east side elevation facing County Line Road. Each sign is 104.25 square feet. The gas canopy signage is 22.6 square feet.

The Board questioned if the signs were lit. Mr. Young noted that they were internally lit.

Chair Goodwin questioned what historic features were used in the design of the building.

Richard Lamont, Real Estate Development Manager for Quick Chek was sworn and stated that he attended a meeting with representatives from the Township including a member of the Historical Preservation Commission regarding the proposed architecture of the building.

Mr. Harwick noted that he is a member of the Township Historical Preservation Commission and explained that the Historical Preservation Commission reviewed the architectural elevation plan that is being shown this evening and the Board voted favorably. Mr. Harwick had photos that were considered by the Historical Commission as examples of historic gas stations. These photos would be marked Exhibit B-1 (Board)

Board Planner Kendra Lelie questioned the location of outside utilities on the site. Mr. Young explained that all the utilities will be brought in at the rear of the building noting that the air conditioning units will be on the roof and will be screened from view by the parapet. Mr. Young also noted that there will not be a generator on site but in the event of a power outage, one would be brought to the site.

Ms. Albrecht questioned the structural safety of the canopy.

Chair Goodwin questioned if there was a similar building built in another location. Mr. Lamont noted that a similar building was built in Lake Grove, NY.

Chair Goodwin opened the public portion of the meeting with questions of Mr. Young or Mr. Lamont.

Lori Potter of 3 Tunis Cox Road was present and expressed concern about how quickly a generator can be brought to the site in the event of a power outage.

The Board encouraged the applicant to consider charging stations at the site.

Timothy Scoville of 19 County Line Road was present and questioned the size of diesel engine that would be required to run the generator if there was a loss of power. Mr. Scoville suggested the use of solar panels.

The Board took a 10-minute break at 9:10 p.m. and returned at 9:20 p.m.

Douglas Polyniak PE, applicant's traffic engineer was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Polyniak provided testimony as follows. Since the use variance approval, an updated traffic impact analysis was done using the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers). The comparison of the data that was collected in 2016 with the recently obtained data shows that there has been limited fluctuation in the traffic in the intersection of Route 22 and County Line Road over the past few years. The estimation for morning peak hours at the site would be 229 cars entering and exiting and during the evening peak hours it would be 191 cars. Traffic counts were also done at the recently built Quick Check in Raritan, NJ to check if the ITE projections matched up with the actual traffic on site. It was found that the numbers were very close. During the morning peak hours there were 35 fewer vehicles than projected and in the evening, it was almost exactly as projected which validates the ITE data.

Chair Goodwin questioned the length of time each car would be on site.

Mr. Polyniak noted that morning peak hours are 7 am to 9 am and in the evening it is 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Polyniak explained that the traffic study is also being reviewed by the DOT (Department of Transportation), noting that they had also met with them prior to the application submission and they are expecting a response from them very soon. Mr. Polyniak also explained that the proposal includes the addition of a left turn only lane that would go into the Fox Hollow development that is currently under construction and a right turn only lane onto County Line Road.

Mr. Denning expressed concern about backup of traffic on Route 22 during the morning rush hour.

Mr. Mueller questioned if any crosswalks were proposed across Route 22 and County Line with the new Fox Hollow Development. Mr. Polyniak stated there is a crosswalk that goes

across Route 22 but not one proposed across County Line Road. The Board expressed concern regarding pedestrian safety crossing County Line Road. The applicant agreed to further explore this issue with the DOT.

Mr. Harwick questions whether U-turns would be permitted for the left turn lanes.

The Board expressed concern about the backup of traffic on County Line Road during the peak hours for the vehicles exiting the site.

Jay Troutman, the Township's traffic engineer explained that due to the improvements to the roadways from the Fox Hollow development in Branchburg and the improvements that are proposed to the site as part of this application, the rate of traffic is expected to remain the same or improve.

Mr. Denning questioned the impact of vehicles other than cars such as box trucks and cars with trailers.

Mr. Harwick questioned whether the Fed Ex facility would have an impact noting that they release many vehicles on County Line Road at one time in the morning hours.

Mr. Polyniak stated that the circulation within the site will flow very well and efficiently.

It was noted that the Fire Official issued an updated review letter dated 3/19/19 noting that he had reviewed the plans and had no further comments.

Mr. Troutman stated that the industry has evolved over time and explained that this layout as proposed by the applicant functions very efficiently noting that the number of parking spaces that is being proposed by the applicant is the type of parking that is needed for this site due to the type of activity. Mr. Troutman reviewed his report.

Chair Goodwin opened the public portion of the meeting with questions of Mr. Polyniak.

Lori Potter of 3 Tunis Cox Road returned and asked for clarification on how the vehicles will be able to exit the site back onto County Line Road and onto Route 22.

Timothy Scoville of 19 County Line Road returned and questioned the safety on County Line Road with the increase in traffic and expressed concern about accidents.

Linda Cole of 1210 Magnolia Lane in Branchburg was present and expressed concern about the increase in traffic on County Line Road.

The application will be carried to the meeting on April 18, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. with no further notice required.

**OTHER BUSINESS**  
**2018 Annual Variance Report**

Board Attorney Warner noted some minor typographical errors that were corrected.

Mr. Ryan moved, and Ms. Kirk seconded, a motion to adopt the 2018 Annual Variance Report as amended. The roll call vote follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Not Eligible</b>
Denning			X				
Goodwin			X				
Harwick			X				
Hendry			X				
Kirk		X	X				
Mueller			X				
Ryan	X		X				
Albrecht (Alt #1)			X				
Tropello (Alt #2)						X	

Chair Goodwin asked the Board if there would be any objection by the Board members to video the meetings. There were no objections noted.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Hendy moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Marie Lehberger  
Zoning Board Secretary