

READINGTON TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
April 18, 2019

The Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Harwick 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.
Harwick, A.
Hendry, D.
Kirk, T.
Mueller, A.
Ryan, P
Tropello, S.

Board members Absent:

Goodwin, M.

Others Present:

Board Attorney Steven Warner, Esq.
Board Planner Michael Sullivan
Board Engineer John Hansen
Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tropello abstained. It was noted that there were some typographical errors.
Mr. Mueller moved, and Ms. Kirk seconded a motion to approve the February 21, 2019 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

T-Mobile Northeast LLC

Appl# ZB 19-005

Block 61 Lot 5.02 – 527 Route 31

Site Plan Waiver Request for Installation of a Back-Up Diesel Generator at an Existing Telecommunications Facility

Frank Ferraro, Esq. was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Ferraro explained that the applicant was seeking a waiver of site plan for the installation of a new emergency backup generator at the existing wireless telecommunications facility

The following individuals were present for the applicant:

Sheri Weber, P.E, applicant's engineer

Ms. Weber was sworn in for testimony and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Board Planner Michael Sullivan and Board Engineer John Hansen were also sworn. Ms. Weber provided testimony as follows: The generator will be installed inside the existing fenced compound area adjacent to T-Mobile's existing ground equipment. It will be placed on the existing gravel at the site. No new signage is proposed. The proposed generator is a 5-kilowatt diesel generator with a built-in 160- gallon diesel tank that would be placed on a four-foot by eight-foot concrete pad. The purpose of the generator is to

provide power in the event of a power outage. Testing of the generator would be done approximately two times a month during the day.

Board Planner Mr. Sullivan noted that there is a small gap in the landscaping buffer near the driveway along Route 31 where three additional trees could be planted to close off the gap. The applicant agreed to plant the additional trees.

Mr. Tropello questioned the distance to the closest residence. Mr. Ferraro noted that it was approximately 600 feet.

Mr. Mueller questioned how the generator will be powered. Ms. Weber stated that the generator connects directly to the equipment cabinets and confirmed that the generator would only be used in the event of a power outage.

Ms. Kirk noted that there should be no additional landscaping placed near where the wires are coming out of the substation

Mr. Denning questioned if there were any co-located antennas on the tower. It was noted that Verizon was also on the tower and that they have their own generator.

Ms. Hendry asked if the generators could be shared. Mr. Ferraro explained that due to technical differences between carriers, the generators could not be shared

Ms. Albrecht questioned if any additional lighting was proposed. Ms. Weber confirmed that there was not.

Vice-Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Ryan moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to approve the T-Mobile Northeast LLC application with conditions. The roll call vote follows:

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

The Board took a short break at 8:00 p.m. and returned at 8:05 p.m. with all members present.

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 gave a brief recap on the status of the application noting that this was a carryover from the March 21st meeting. Mr. Powers noted some of the items that the applicant had addressed since the last hearing as follows:

- Solar panels cannot be added to the site
- A radio tower pad site cannot be accommodated due to site constraints
- The proposed outdoor seating area will be relocated as requested by the Board Planner
- An access driveway will be provided for the detention basin as requested by the Board Engineer
- Two universal electric vehicle charging stations will be added as suggested by the Board

Mr. Denning asked about the number of parking spots at the Raritan location. It was noted that there are 80 parking spots at that location.

The following individuals were present for the applicant:

William Obara, PE, applicant's engineer

Douglas Polyniak PE, applicant's traffic engineer

John Madden, PP, applicant's planner

Exhibits presented:

A-4 - Colored Rendering of Landscape Plan dated 3/15/19

A-5 - Colored Rendering of Landscape Plan dated 4/3/19

A-6 - Sections of Readington Township Ordinance (2 pages)

A-7 - Photo Simulation dated 4/16/19

William Obara, PE was previously sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Obara explained that based on the comments that were raised by the Township professionals, some changes were made to the plans. Mr. Obara gave an overview of the changes and provided testimony as follows: The lighting levels for the entire facility were lowered and the air and vacuum stations have been relocated. A berm for plantings has been more clearly shown between the parking lot and the roadway to meet the buffer requirement. Seven additional street trees have been added in between County Line Road and the proposed building. A swale was also added along the southern portion of the property line that captures any runoff that runs below the proposed facility and directs it to the detention basin. The slope and shape of the berm along the southern property line has been softened. Mr. Obara reviewed the report of the Township Planner updated April 9, 2019 noting the variances and exceptions that are being requested as follows:

- Minimum Lot Size
- Minimum Buffer to State or County Road Right -of -Ways
- Parking in the Front Yard
- Parking Stall Size (Exception)

- Fence Height
- Loading Area Size (Exception)
- Maximum change in Elevation
- Sidewalk Provision (Exception)
- Topographic Modification Setback
- Parking Lot Planting Height (Exception)
- Freestanding Sign Area
- Freestanding Sign Setback & Height
- Façade Sign Area & Quantity

Mr. Obara continued his testimony as follows: The parking stalls are proposed at 10 x 20 to provide safer more efficient access at a high turnover facility. This is the same size parking stall that is at the Raritan location. The applicant will work with the Township Planner as to the location of the bicycle rack . A crosswalk will be added along County Line Road. The applicant will agree to preserve some of the existing trees within the frontage buffer along County Line Road while still allowing some visibility to the site. The applicant will also provide an exhibit at the next hearing to clearly depict the topographic changes that are proposed on the site.

Board Planner Mr. Sullivan requested that the species of the trees that are proposed to be removed be identified on the plan so that it can be determined what trees should be recommended to be preserved.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the landscape buffer required.

Ms. Albrecht noted that she would like to see the applicant use native plantings.

Board Planner Mr. Sullivan will meet with the applicant and their professionals prior to the next hearing to come up with a landscape plan so that the Board can see what is being proposed.

Regarding signage, Mr. Obara explained that the applicant is seeking variances for the size of the freestanding sign as follows: 120 square feet is proposed where 35 square feet is permitted. The location of the sign is proposed to be set back 10 feet from the roadway where 50 feet is required. The height of the proposed sign is 25 feet where 8 feet is permitted

Ms. Kirk questioned if all three sign variances were needed.

Ms. Albrecht asked if there was another nearby location that had the same size sign.

Mr. Obara explained that the proposed sign size will allow better visibility and better reaction time for vehicles to safely enter the site.

Ms. Kirk questioned if the sign would be visible to the residences in the back. Mr. Obara noted that it would not.

The Board noted that the proposed sign appeared to be much larger than most of the other business signs on the Readington side of County Line Road.

Mr. Mueller questioned if it was the standard sign package for Quick Chek.

Ms. Albrecht questioned if there were any other corporate sign packages available.

Mr. Mueller had a photo of an alternate Quick Chek freestanding sign. This photo would be marked as Exhibit B-2 (Board)

Mr. Harwick questioned if the applicant would consider additional spaces for future charging spaces if they are needed.

Mr. Obara reviewed the report of the Board Engineer.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Obara. There were no questions.

Mr. Denning questioned whether this site should be classified as a fast food use expressing concern about there being adequate parking.

Mr. Polyniak was previously sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Polyniak explained that for these type of sites, 50 parking spaces is what is generally proposed and is more than enough for the site to operate efficiently. Mr. Polyniak stated the he anticipates that the 58 spaces being proposed for this site will be well in excess of what is required.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Polyniak. There were no questions.

The Board took a short break at 9:45 p.m. and returned at 9:55 p.m. with all members present.

John Madden, PP was previously sworn and was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Regarding the variance the applicant was seeking for parking in the front yard, Mr. Madden explained that it was difficult to avoid since there are two front yards on the site and because the rear yard on the site is adjacent to a residential use. He also noted that this type of parking is very common for this particular use because the parking stalls are located closer to the front door making it more convenient for customers entering and exiting the store.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Madden. There were no questions.

The application will be carried to the meeting on May 16, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. with no further notice required.

OTHER BUSINESS

RANDAZZO

Block 95 Lot 2 – 730 Route 202

Appl# ZB-18-006- Appeal of Zoning Officer Decision – Billboard Sign
Request from Applicant to Withdraw Application without Prejudice

It was noted that the Board received a letter from the applicant's attorney requesting the

withdrawal of the application without prejudice.

Ms. Hendry moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to approve the withdrawal without prejudice for Randazzo. The roll call vote follows:

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

WHITEHOUSE CENTER LLC

Block 39 Lot 65 – 3555 Route 22

Appl# ZB-18-014- Appeal of Zoning Officer Decision – Storage Containers

Request from Applicant to Withdraw Application without Prejudice

It was noted that the Board received a letter from the applicant’s attorney requesting the withdrawal of the application without prejudice.

Ms. Hendry moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to approve the withdrawal without prejudice for Whitehouse Center LLC. The roll call vote follows:

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,
 Ann Marie Lehberger
 Zoning Board Secretary