

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
June 20, 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.
Goodwin, M.
Harwick, A.
Kirk, T.
Mueller, A.
Tropello, S.

Board Members Absent:

Denning, M.
Ryan, P

Mr. Harwick moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to excuse the absences of Board members Denning and Ryan. The motion carried unanimously.

Others Present:

Board Attorney Steven Warner, Esq.,
Board Planner Andrea Malcolm
Board Engineer John Hansen
Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman
Board Environmental Consultant Jack Szczepanski
Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Goodwin abstained. Mr. Harwick moved, and Ms. Kirk seconded a motion to approve the April 18, 2019 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

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

Ms. Kirk noted that the wording of Condition # 2 should be revised to include that the plantings should be a species that at mature height would not interfere with the power lines.

Mr. Harwick moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution for T-Mobile Northeast LLC as amended. The roll call vote follows:

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

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 gave a brief recap of the status of the application noting that this was a carryover from the April 18th meeting. Mr. Powers noted that since the previous meeting, the applicant has worked to revise the plans to address the concerns of the Board and its professionals. Mr. Powers stated that applicant will agree to all the comments and recommendations in the letters prepared by the Board’s professionals with the following three exceptions:

- The applicant proposes to construct an 8-foot-tall fence instead of an 8-foot brick wall at the rear of the property.
- The proposed directional entrance and exit signs will be reduced in size to comply with the Township Ordinance however the applicant would like to keep the Quick Chek logo on the signs.
- The applicant would prefer not to disturb the already existing wooded area by planting additional trees in that area.

Board Planner Andrea Malcolm noted that because the signs include the logo, they are freestanding signs, not directional signs, and require variances from freestanding size number and setback regulations.

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-8 - Colored rendering of Landscape Plan dated 5/8/19

A-9 - Colored rendering of Land Formation Plan dated 6/18/19

A-10 – Colorized rendering of the existing and proposed improvements

A-11 - View of the Property looking westbound

William Obara, PE was previously sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Obara outlined the changes that were made to the plans since the last hearing as follows: A detention basin access drive was added for maintenance purposes and there will be a lockable fence to limit access to the basin. Two EVgo charging stations were added on the right side of the parking lot. A potential location for the pole mounted transformer was added toward the southern portion of the site.

Ms. Kirk questioned the use of a pole mounted transformer with trucks traveling through the site. Mr. Obara explained that the service would be underground

Mr. Obara continued his testimony as follows: Approximately 0.388 acres of existing woodlands would be retained including a large existing 24” tree that will be saved. The building mounted signage at the east side of the building that was originally proposed will be removed. As a result of these changes some of the grading disturbance on the site will be minimized.

Mr. Harwick questioned the location and type of the EVgo charging stations. Mr. Obara explained that the type would be determined by EVgo.

Mr. Powers noted that Quick Chek has had some difficulty in other locations getting the charging stations installed by the vendor in a timely fashion and requested that the installation of the charging stations not be tied to the certificate of occupancy and potentially delay the opening of the store.

Richard Lamont, Real Estate Development Manager for Quick Chek was previously sworn. Mr. Lamont explained that they currently have two locations where the installation of the charging stations have been delayed by the vendor. Mr. Lamont further explained that the applicant is committed to install the charging stations but does not want the opening of the store to be delayed.

Mr. Mueller confirmed that this is a common problem in the industry.

The Board discussed and agreed that the applicant would post a reasonable bond separate from the overall performance bond to guarantee the installation of the charging stations.

Ms. Kirk asked if the charging stations were discussed with the power company. Mr. Lamont confirmed that they were.

Mr. Obara continued his testimony as follows: The meadow area on the corner of the property at the intersection of Route 22 and County Line Road will be preserved with some additional plantings added in the transition area . The bicycle rack was relocated away from the sidewalk. The exit signs were eliminated at both access drives. The previously proposed pylon sign was replaced with a much smaller monument sign. A crosswalk will be provided across along County Line Road as well as a meandering sidewalk from the

intersection through the woodland area into the parking lot to provide the pedestrians with a clear path into the site.

Chair Goodwin asked about sidewalks along Route 22 and County Line Road

The Board and the Board's professionals discussed the sidewalks at length. Mr. Obara stated that the applicant would agree to bank them and construct them later if recommended by the Township.

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

John Madden, PP, the applicant's Planner was previously sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Madden reviewed the variances that the applicant was seeking and provided testimony as follows: The lot is large enough to accommodate the existing day care use and the proposed convenience store and fuel use. The detention basin was designed in size to accommodate two different uses. The proposal is to create two separate lots. Both lots are more than sufficient in size to accommodate the use proposed and the existing use. There is enough room on site to safely accommodate circulation and parking. The applicant's proposal will provide a convenient service to the many employees in the surrounding area as well as the residential developments currently being built nearby in Branchburg. As for the proposed signage, the size and location of the sign is driven by the characteristics of the fuel use that requires a lot of information. The use is dependent on for 75% of its customer base by passby traffic. The sign has to be visible and legible from a distance for those vehicles entering the site off the roadway as well as provide safe on and off circulation throughout the site. The applicant's proposal provides a benefit to the surrounding community and remains consistent with the Zone Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

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

Board Planner Andrea Malcolm expressed concern about the sign variances that the applicant was requesting. The Board discussed the signage at length.

Douglas Polyniak, PE, the applicant's traffic engineer, was previously sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Polyniak gave an update on the status regarding the right turn deceleration lane at County Line Road. Mr. Polyniak explained that the applicant met with representatives from the NJDOT (New Jersey Department of Transportation) and there were some different opinions amongst the NJDOT as to whether they would prefer a lane or the shoulder. The applicant agreed to submit two separate plans to the NJDOT for their review and would construct as per their decision.

Chair Goodwin asked for confirmation that there still would be a right turn lane. Mr. Polyniak confirmed that under either proposal, there would still be a designated turning lane.

Mr. Harwick questioned if there was discussion with the NJDOT regarding the pedestrian crosswalk across County Line Road. Mr. Polyniak stated that it was discussed.

Mr. Harwick questioned if the applicant considered some lighting in the proposed meandering sidewalk. Mr. Lamont noted that they would work with the Planner to come up with a lighting plan for that area.

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

Chair Goodwin opened the public portion of the meeting for questions or comments on the application. There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Powers provided closing comments and the Board began deliberations.

Mr. Harwick moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to approve the application for PMG Retail with conditions. The roll call vote follows:

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Harwick moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Ann Marie Lehberger
 Zoning Board Secretary