

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
September 21, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Mittleman 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

Bola, E.
Coates, E.
Hendry, D.
Kirk, T.
Mittleman, K.
Nees, S.
Roglieri, C.
Saad, A.

Board Members Absent:

Maurer, C.

Mr. Nees moved, and Ms. Kirk seconded a motion to excuse the absences of Board Member Maurer. The motion carried unanimously.

Others Present:

Attorney Matt Flynn for Board Attorney Steven Warner, Board Planner James Clavelli, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Nees, Mr. Bola, Ms. Kirk, and Ms. Coates abstained.
Mr. Roglieri moved, and Mr. Saad seconded a motion to approve the August 17, 2023, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented for Board consideration.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ira Sumkin

Appl# ZB22-010-"D" Variance- Addition
Block 18 Lot 19 – 58 Old Highway 28

Chair Mittleman announced that due to insufficient notice, this application will not be heard this evening. It will be carried to the meeting on October 19, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. New notice will be provided.

Minalex Inc.

Appl# ZB22-001- Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan with Use Variance and Bulk Variances for Building Addition
Block 38 Lot 27 – 25 Coddington Road.

Attorney Kevin Grubb was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Grubb stated that Minalex Inc. has been in Readington Township for over 60 years. He explained that they were present this evening seeking Major Site Plan approval with "D" variance relief to construct an office and warehouse addition to the existing building on site.

The following were present and sworn in for the applicant:
Michael Casey, vice president of marketing and sales for Minalex Inc.
Chris Casey, vice president of operations for Minalex Inc.
George Folk, PE, applicant's engineer
Michael Tormey, RA, applicant's architect
David Troast, PP, applicant's planner

Board Planner, James Clavelli and Board Engineer, Rob O'Brien were also sworn.

The following exhibits were marked into evidence as follows:

Exhibit A-1 – A colored rendering of overall site plan

Exhibit A-2 – A colored rendering of site plan detail

Exhibit A-3 – Google Map aerial photo of site

Michael Casey, vice president of marketing and sales for the applicant was present. Mr. Casey provided a history of the company noting that it was started by his father in 1965. Mr. Casey explained that the company manufactures aluminum extrusions for many different industries. He further explained that the purpose of the proposed addition was not to increase production but to provide more office space for the existing employees and also allow them to bring the product that they currently have stored outside inside the warehouse. Mr. Casey stated that they remained an essential business during Covid as they manufactured a part for respirators. He also confirmed that moving the product inside would be safer and allow them to comply with Township ordinance requirements.

The Board questioned if the company had any other locations. Mr. Casey confirmed that this was the only location.

The Board questioned if they anticipated future growth. Mr. Casey stated that they have no plans for future expansion at this time. It was noted that they would need to return to the Board for approval for any future expansion.

The Board questioned if they had any issues with theft. Mr. Casey stated that they had a few incidents but have since installed cameras and fences.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Casey stated that the proposed warehouse expansion would allow them to bring everything they currently have stored outside inside the warehouse.

The Board inquired about the use of the adjacent lot.

The Board inquired about the boat and the trailers that are on the property. Mr. Casey confirmed that these would be removed to accommodate the addition.

Chair Mittleman opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Casey. There were no questions.

Chris Casey, vice president of operations for the applicant was present. Mr. Casey explained that their standard business hours were Monday through Friday from 7am to 3pm. He noted that they have been extremely busy so have been working from 5am to 5pm and also on Saturday from 5am to 12pm. He stated that there are 2 to 4 general deliveries per day and explained the product delivery process, noting that product is delivered 1 to 2 times per month. He explained that due to supply chain issues caused by Covid, they have had to buy more product at one time, resulting in the need for more warehouse space to store it. He further explained that they have an outside storage tank for hazardous waste used on site that was approved by the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection). He stated that the facility is inspected by the DEP every 3 to 5 years and reports are required to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), County and Township regularly. He also noted that there have been no spills or injuries and no employee turnover. He confirmed that there will be no additional truck traffic as a result of the proposed expansion. Mr. Casey described the safety measures used on site.

The Board questioned if they have any trucks on site overnight. Mr. Casey stated that a few times per year they may have a truck that would arrive before business hours. He noted that there have been no complaints.

The Board questioned the need for so many parking spaces. Mr. Casey stated that they are meeting the ordinance requirement.

The Board inquired about the lighting. Mr. Casey stated that the outside safety lights remain on in the evening.

The Board questioned if there was a loading dock. Mr. Casey stated that they use the front door garage as their loading space area and plan to continue with the same process. It was noted that a waiver would be required.

The Board inquired about curbing. Mr. Casey stated that they currently do not have any curbing and were not planning to install any. It was noted that a waiver would be required.

Chair Mittleman opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Casey. There were no questions.

George Folk, the applicant's engineer, was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Folk described the existing conditions on the site and the proposal to expand the existing office and warehouse to clean up the site and bring it into conformance with the Township ordinance. He confirmed that the existing pond is adequate for fire suppression, the existing septic can accommodate the proposed addition and the existing site lighting is sufficient. He explained that there is only a small amount of impervious coverage being added so it will not affect stormwater management. He also noted that some additional landscaping and street trees will be added to the site. He stated that they are maintaining the existing parking, updating the ADA parking spaces and adding EV (Electric Vehicle) spaces. He also noted that 23 of the parking spaces would be banked. Referencing Exhibit,

A-3, Mr. Folk described the buffers on the site.

Mr. Folk reviewed the reports of the Board's professionals.

In response to a question from Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, Mr. Folk confirmed that the roof drain would be relocated to accommodate the building addition.

Mr. Folk reviewed the variances and design exceptions that were being requested by the applicant.

The applicant agreed to update the plans to include details of the loading spaces, a lighting plan with illumination calculation and the proposed landscaping as requested by Board Planner, James Clavelli.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Folk confirmed that there would be no change to any of the parking. He confirmed that the area for the banked parking is concrete but not striped.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien requested that the proposed aisle widths and parallel spaces be dimensioned on the site plan. Mr. O'Brien also noted that the construction office would need to review the proposed ADA parking spaces to ensure compliance.

Chair Mittleman opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Folk. There were no questions.

Michael Tormey, the applicant's architect, was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Tormey reviewed the architectural plans with the Board. He explained that the proposed office expansion is 2,140 square feet which would make the office a total of 4,390 square feet. He noted that this would include an update to the restrooms to make them ADA compliant and the creation of a waiting room, reception area and conference room. He stated that the proposed warehouse expansion is 4,700 square feet and would allow forklifts to move throughout the warehouse and also bring the items that are being stored outside inside. He also noted that two downward facing lights are proposed on the building for safety and the same concrete block that exists on the building would be used for the addition.

The Board questioned where the employees would enter the building. Mr. Tormey stated that they would use the front or side doors.

Chair Mittleman opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Tormey. There were no questions.

David Troast, the applicant's planner, was accepted by the Board as an expert witness in both planning and also as a landscape architect. Mr. Troast explained that the use is a pre-existing non-conforming use and noted that the zoning of the property changed in 2009 making the property in the RR (Rural Residential Zone).

Mr. Troast reviewed the requested variances as follows:

40:55D-70.d(2) Expansion of non-conforming use
§148-16.E(2)(d) Maximum impervious coverage
§148-16.E(2)(f) Minimum side yard setback – parking area (preexisting nonconformity)
§148-16.E(2)(f) Minimum side yard setback – septic dis. Field (preexisting nonconformity)

Mr. Troast explained that the changes in building coverage and impervious coverage are minor in nature for the standards for industrial development. He noted that the warehouse addition is over an existing asphalt storage yard and there is no change to the site drainage. He explained that the enclosing of the outdoor storage will be a benefit to the neighboring properties and bring the property in conformance with the Township ordinance. He further explained that the office space expansion will permit a safer space for social distancing and the warehouse expansion will allow for improved safety and efficiency.

Mr. Troast concluded by stating that Minalex is a vibrant business manufacturing products essential to the economy and the business has been functioning on the property for over 50 years with no identified issues. He confirmed that the proposed changes are consistent with the Master Plan of Readington Township.

Chair Mittleman opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Troast
There were no questions.

In response to question from Boad Planner James Clavelli, Chris Casey stated that the barrels on site would be moved inside.

The applicant agreed to enclose the dumpster with cedar fencing.

The Board questioned the number of people that work in the office. Mr. Casey stated that 10 people currently work in the office.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien requested that the walkway be shown on the plans.

The Board questioned if the property could be subdivided in the future. Board Planner James Clavelli confirmed that Board approval with variances would be required.

Chair Mittleman opened the public portion of the meeting for comments. There were no comments.

The Board deliberated and discussed the conditions of approval.

Ms. Hendry moved, and Mr. Nees seconded a motion to approve the application for Minalex Inc. with the conditions as discussed. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Bola			X					
Hendry	X		X					
Kirk			X					
Mittleman			X					
Nees		X	X					
Maurer						X		
Roglieri			X					
Saad (Alt #1)			X					
Coates (Alt #2)							X	

OTHER BUSINESS

The Board discussed appointing an alternate member to the TRC to fill in when needed. Steve Nees volunteered.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hendry moved, and Mr. Nees seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Ann Marie Lehberger
 Zoning Board Secretary