

READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
February 10, 2020

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Monaco at 7:00 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

Board Members in Attendance:

Albanese, J.
Allen, J.
Cook, J.
Heller, J.
Mueller, A.
Monaco, R.
Rohrbach, T. (arrived at 8:20 p.m.)

Board Members Absent:

Duffy, E.
Filler, C.
John, C.

Others Present

Attorney Kathryn Razin Esq. for Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Esq., Board Planner Michael Sullivan, Board Environmental Consultant Jack Szczepanski, Board Conflict Traffic Engineer Walter Lublanecki and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

MINUTES

Mr. Heller and Mr. Mueller abstained

Ms. Allen moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to approve the December 9, 2019 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Allen moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to approve the January 13, 2020 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Professional Service Contract for 2020- Board Engineer – Robert S. O’Brien, PE, Van Cleef Engineering Associates LLC.

Ms. Allen moved, and Mr. Cook seconded, a motion to approve the appointment of Robert S. O’Brien, PE of Van Cleef Engineering Associates LLC as Board Engineer for 2020. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese			X					
Allen	X		X					
Cook		X	X					
Filler						X		
Heller			X					
John						X		
Mueller			X					
Duffy						X		
Monaco			X					
Rohrbach						X		

Pleasant Run LLC

Block 75 Lot 19

Appl# PB18-016- Route 202 and Summer Road Requests for Extension and Sign Plan Revisions

Chair Monaco stated that the request for extension and sign revisions from Pleasant Run LLC (Profeta Farms) would not be heard this evening.

PUBLIC HEARING

Ryland Inn Property LLC

Block 14 Lot 29- 111 Old Highway 28

Appl#PB18-011-Amended Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan with Variances

Chair Monaco announced that the Ryland Inn application would not be heard this evening. It will be carried to March 9, 2020 at 7:00 pm. No new notice will be provided.

Draft Limited Brewery Ordinance

Mr. Mueller expressed concern about the restriction on barrel production and hours of operation for inside sales as well as for outdoor events.

Braun Kiess, owner of Readington Brewery and Hop Farm was present and stated that the state is very restrictive on their operation requiring them to close by 10 pm which is consistent with the Township sound ordinance. Mr. Kiess noted that they would appreciate any consideration that the Board would give them regarding the hours.

Ms. Allen noted that the concern is for outdoor noise that will affect the residential properties that are in the rear of the property.

The Board discussed and determined that the hours for inside sales would be extended from 9 pm to 10 pm. The Board also agreed that the draft language of the ordinance would

leave open the permitted hours to have outdoor entertainment, special events and private parties for the Township Committee to decide.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for comments.

Andrew Roth of County Road 523 was present and expressed concern for the neighboring residential properties.

Mr. Cook moved, and Mr. Heller seconded, a motion to forward the Draft Limited Brewery Ordinance to the Township Committee for review and consideration as discussed. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese			X					
Allen			X					
Cook	X		X					
Filler						X		
Heller		X	X					
John						X		
Mueller			X					
Duffy						X		
Monaco			X					
Rohrbach						X		

EXECUTIVE SESSION

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CLOSED SESSION

WHEREAS, N.J. S.A. 10:4-12 (the Open Public Meeting Act) authorizes this Board to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which this Board discusses certain matters.

WHEREAS, the Board is about to discuss such a matter, specifically, a matter falling within the attorney-client privilege where confidentiality is required for the Board attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer, namely, legal advice regarding special rules relating to affordable housing;

WHEREAS, this Board believes the public should be excluded from those discussions.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Readington Township Planning Board on February 10, 2020 that the Board now go into closed session and the public be excluded and that the Board believes that the discussions conducted in the closed session may not be disclosed to the public because they will involve attorney-client privileged advice and

information.

Mr. Albanese moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded to adopt this resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned to open session at approximately 7:45 pm.

Readington Commons II, LLC

Appl# PB19-006- Block 4, Lots 51 & 52, 458-460 Route 22

Preliminary Major Site Plan with Variances -Hunterdon Heights at Readington multi-family residential apartment development

Ronald Shimanowitz, Esq. was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Shimanowitz explained that the applicant was previously before the Board on January 13th. Mr. Shimanowitz explained that since that time there has been some enhancements to the plans that will be presented this evening. He also noted that they will be addressing the concerns from the Board and members of the public regarding the flooding issue on Route 22.

The following individuals were also present for the applicant:

Gary Dean, PE, applicant's traffic engineer

Robert Larsen, RA, PP, applicant's architect and planner

Exhibits presented:

A-13 Colorized Version of Revised Concept Plan

A-14 Design Change Diagram Exhibit

It was noted that the Board's professionals had previously been sworn and remain under oath.

Gary Dean, PE, the applicant's traffic engineer was sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Dean provided testimony as follows: The Township police department was contacted to identify the protocol that was in place in the event Route 22 in front of the subject site was closed due to flooding. The police department indicated that the DOT (Department of Transportation) was immediately notified. The DOT closes the median directly across from the subject site so that cars travelling eastbound don't inadvertently make a u turn and end up in the flooded roadway. The traffic is directed out of the property using the median cut when an officer is present. The applicant is proposing a traffic control plan that would be submitted with their DOT highway access application. The plan includes barriers and cones that would be erected on westbound Route 22 to make one eastbound lane and one westbound lane that would allow residents return home. It would also allow them to exit the site going eastbound to the first median cut at Far Knoll Lane and enable neighboring properties to utilize the same route.

The Board expressed concern that the increase in the amount of rain that has been occurring would cause the flooding condition to happen more frequently.

The Board questioned if there could be an emergency access plan that could be utilized that would not require someone to be out there directing traffic. Mr. Dean explained that the only other alternative would be to leave the median cut in front of the site open to allow for two-way traffic. He noted that right now, DOT closes that median cut so that people don't make a u turn and end up in the flooded area.

The Board questioned if he knew what would be needed to be done to fix the problem. Mr. Dean explained that there appears to be a low point in the road combined with insufficient capacity downstream and noted that water is getting backed up causing the flooding

The Board discussed and agreed that a better option for the emergency action plan would be to leave the median cut open, block off the westbound lane of Route 22 at the entrance to the site and utilize the median for two-way traffic. Mr. Dean stated that the applicant would be willing to amend their traffic control plan and propose the Board's recommended option to the DOT.

Walter Lublanecki, the Board's traffic engineer stated the he agrees that the best possible emergency access would be to keep the median open and available for traffic coming out of the site during a flooding condition.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Dean.

Neil Hendrickson of 13 Glenmont Road was present and expressed concern about the water on the site with the proposed increase in impervious coverage.

Robert Larsen, RA, PP, the applicant's architect and planner was previously sworn. Mr. Larsen described the changes that had been made to the plan since the last hearing and provided testimony as follows: The green areas have been linked together to allow for the usable green space to be more contiguous. Clearly defined crosswalks have been provided to link the recreation center as well as the buildings to the east to the green area. Traffic calming elements will be added to the crosswalks. Additional dumpster locations will also be added.

The Board questioned where the electrical services would be located. Mr. Larsen noted that there would be a transformer adjacent to each building and a meter room in each building. He explained that the exact location plan would be determined by the utility company.

The Board questioned if the applicant would consider sidewalks. Mr. Larsen noted they applicant would agree to install sidewalks in the front of the site.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Larsen on his testimony so far.

June Gabel of 2 Far Knoll Lane was present and expressed concern about additional water on her property as a result of the proposal noting that her property is already very wet. Ms. Gabel also questioned what the buffer would be to prevent people from entering her property.

David Gardner, principal of Larken Associates who is the owner was sworn and explained that the grading on the property did not get completed because the office complex did not get fully built out. Mr. Gardner further explained that once the proposed development is built it should improve the water drainage on Ms. Gabel's property. Mr. Gardner also noted that an extensive landscape plan is also part of the proposal.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Gardner on his testimony.

The Board questioned if the applicant would consider installing a fence along the residential boundary of the property. The applicant agreed to installing the fence.

Andrew Roth of County Road 523 was present and asked for clarification on the location of the building pads that were going to be demolished.

The Board questioned if alternative concept plans were considered.

Mr. Larsen provided planning testimony and noted that the proposed development is in line with the purpose of the MFAH-1 ordinance.

Mr. Larsen reviewed the variances requested as follows:

- Side yard buffer width
- Accessory building and structure in front yard
- Stream corridor disturbance
- Wall height in side yard
- Fence height in side yard
- Change in grade exceeding two vertical feet
- Lot percentage of topographic change
- Maximum slope transition

Mr. Larsen explained that there is no new disturbance to native lands as a result of the proposal.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Larsen on his testimony up to this point. There were no questions.

Mr. Larsen continued his testimony and stated that the proposal reuses a large part of an already developed site to provide needed housing and is in line with the intent of the ordinance and the purpose of the site.

Mr. Larsen reviewed the exceptions that the applicant is requesting as follows:

- Change in wall plane along building facades
- Parking Area Illumination
- Illumination at Property Line
- Lighting Mounting Height
- Residential Building Sign Area
- Trash Enclosure Design
- Residential buffer design – canopy trees
- Street tree
- Parking area shade trees
- Parking area screening
- Parking area islands
- Pedestrian/vehicle separation

The Board questioned the exception for the shade trees. The applicant agreed to work with the Board Planner and the Chair of the Environmental Commission to devise a plan that to increase the number of shade trees where feasible.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Larsen.

Bob Krupnik of 4 Miller Lane was present and questioned the height of the existing light poles of the office complex.

The applicant agreed to use 16-foot light poles as required by the ordinance instead of the 20-foot that are proposed. The applicant noted that additional poles may be required.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for comments.

Neil Hendrickson of 13 Glenmont Road was sworn and noted that the soil will be critical in order to maintain the shade trees in the parking lot.

Andrew Roth of Country Route 523 was sworn and questioned the notification process when there is a zoning change on a property.

Chair Monaco provided some brief comments regarding the Township's affordable housing obligations.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan reviewed conditions of approval.

Mr. Albanese moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to approve the Readington Commons II LLC application with the conditions discussed. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese	X		X					
Allen			X					
Cook			X					
Filler						X		
Heller			X					
John						X		
Mueller		X	X					
Duffy						X		
Monaco			X					
Rohrbach							X	

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Mueller moved, and Mr. Albanese seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Ann Marie Lehberger
 Planning Board Secretary