

Minutes of the Planning/Zoning Board Meeting
May 10, 2022 @ 7:30 p.m.
Council Chamber – Borough Hall

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mancini at 7:34 p.m.

Members in attendance were Councilwoman Mary Ellen Murphy, Tom Napolitano, Corrado Mancini, Councilwoman Daniele Fede (arrived 8:32 pm), Vice Chair John Mitchell, Ed Rieper, D/Sgt. Hector Liriano, Yesenia Frias, Daniel Schnipp, Robert Foster and William Hordern. Board attorney Kevin Kelly was also present.

A motion was made by John Mitchell with a second by Yesenia Frias to open the meeting to public comments unrelated to the Queen Anne Road application. All in favor. There being no public comments, a motion to close was made by Councilwoman Murphy with a second by John Mitchell. Motion passed.

Mr. Kelly swore in the following new members to the Planning/Zoning Board. They are Yesenia Frias (full member), Robert Foster (Alternate 1), and William Hordern (Alternate 2).

The continuation of the 51 Queen Anne Road application was re-opened with all proof of service items accepted by the Board. Mr. Chewcaskie, the applicant's attorney, advised the property in question is in a B-1 business retail zone and proper use variances are needed. The building will consist of 35 residential units with 4 floors. The first floor will consist of the lobby entrance and a covered parking area. Floors 2 through 4 will consist of apartment units. There are affordable housing units provided which aids the borough in meeting the requirement.

The plans submitted were revised with suggestions by Mr. Robert Costa, the borough engineer. Mr. Chewcaskie advised there were 2 witnesses to testify, one being Mr. Calisto Bertin, the applicant's Architect and the applicant's Planner.

Mr. Bertin opened his presentation by stating his qualifications and was deemed a qualified witness. Mr. Kelly advised he had worked with the Mr. Bertin in the past and did not feel there would be a conflict of any kind.

Mr. Bertin advised the site in question is currently a service station with plans for all tanks to be removed. He stated that there had been a clean up of this site in the past and with monitoring by the DEP it was reported that soil contamination is at a minimum. He did advise that if there was any evidence of high levels of contamination after the removal of these tanks, it would be cleaned up to the satisfaction of the DEP.

The Board was given a breakdown of the number of units in the building. They are as follows: 9, 1 bedroom apartments, 23 two bedroom apartments and 3 three bedroom apartments with one community room.

Exhibits A1 are the Original Site Plans dated 12/14/2021 – revised 4/25/2022. A2 are the architect plans dated 12/14/2021 – revised 4/25/2022 and consists of 4 sheets. A3 in the landscaping renderings dated 5/10/2022.

A parking variance will be needed as there is a shortage of parking spaces. There are 50 allotted spaces with an allotted number of electric vehicle spaces. There will be 1 driveway for entrance and egress to/from the building.

Mr. Bertin stated that the electrical poles are on the service station property but service the senior housing unit behind the site. A discussion ensued about the problem with the removal of the electrical poles. The end result being the applicant's attorney and PSE&G must resolve the issue before any further action can be taken by the Board. Mr. Costa advised if these poles were not removed by PSE&G, the entire site plans would have to be redone because the building would be too close to the electrical poles.

A traffic assessment was also done with reference to the use of Trip Generation Data. It was stated that 40 trips were made to the service station during the morning hours with approximately 50 customer trips in the evening. It was also stated there would be a 70% reduction in traffic during the morning hours with approximately 100 trips in peak evening hours. The Board requested a traffic study be done due to the fact that Queen Anne Road is a narrow street with cars parked on both sides, commuter buses.

The building will have a trash compactor room, utilities room, package room and mail room.

Storm water detention was discussed. Recharge basins would be installed with release of water underground flowing into storage pipes along Queen Anne Road.

There are to be 2 lighting poles in the parking lot with wall lights facing the courtyard and 3 lights facing the former right of way. All lighting will be LED and adjustable with times as needed.

At 8:20 pm. the Zoom connection failed. The meeting was stopped until Mrs. Morrone connected to the borough recording system.

A question was raised by Mrs. Frias about clearance for fire trucks to access the parking area. It was stated there is a 14 foot clearance. She also stated the easement is in bad repair and is in need of improvements. If the applicant were to improve the condition of the easement, there would be room for parallel parking spaces and it would not interfere with the Teaneck property.

Mr. Schnipp raised the question of soil contamination once the tanks are removed from the site. It was stated the shafts would be filled with materials by the DEP. If the DEP deems there is contamination the wells would be relocated and the soil cleaned.

Mr. Napolitano expressed his concern regarding the traffic pattern on Queen Anne Road. He suggested a traffic study be done rather than basing the traffic pattern on Tip Generation Data. He also stated he has concerns regarding the storm water drainage. The size of the basins and water flowing down stream causing flooding issues. He suggested an increase in the size of the basins.

Mr. Napolitano asked for clarification on the shortage of parking spaces. With credit for the 7 spaces for electric vehicle parking spaces, there is still a deficiency of 13 spaces.

Mr. Schnipp suggested the placement of brick pavers replacing concrete sidewalk. It was stated the borough changed the ordinance regarding pavers that includes more technical specifications and that the maintenance of the pavers is the owner's responsibility. He also asked about trash enclosures. It was stated the only trash cans outside of the trash room would be cans for recycles.

Ms. Spach Trahan, borough planner raised the question as to the location of an ADA parking spot location. It was stated that the ADA parking space would be as close to the lobby entrance as possible and would not be placed in the parking area.

Mr. Costa pointed out that the litigation regarding the easement specified that it be kept unimproved and he is not sure it can be changed. Mr. Kelly to look into that.

Mr. Costa also pointed out that the project could not be done unless coordination with PSE&G to move the existing lines is accomplished. The lines are shown on the plans, however, when asked where the transformer would be, no answer was given.

A motion was made by John Mitchell with a second by Yesenia Frias to open to public comments. There being none, a motion was made by John Mitchell with a second by Yesenia Frias to close. Both motions passed.

At 9:10pm a request was made by Mr. Chewcaskie, attorney for the applicant for a 5 minute recess. Motion was made by Yesenia Frias with a second by John Mitchell. Motion carried to resume meeting at 9:15 p.m.

At 9:20 p.m. a motion was made by Tom Napolitano with a second by John Mitchell to resume the meeting. Motion passed.

Mr. Chewcaskie stated that there are several issues that need to be revisited and requested to return next month for their Planner's testimony and to address outstanding issues.

Mr. Bertin reviewed exhibit A4 – Floor Plans for the site which were revised on 5/2/2022. Once again it was stated that the building will be 4 stories with one level for parking and three for units. The one bedroom apartments are 795 sq feet; the two bedroom apartments are 1184 sq feet and the three bedroom apartments are 1446 sq ft. There are 5 affordable housing units, with one community room.

Each unit will have its own PTAC unit which will be covered with a decorative slab. A variance will be needed for the balconies. Variances will also be needed for signs on the building.

Mrs. Frias asked if there will be a live in superintendent or doorman. We were advised there will be a visiting superintendent. In case of emergencies tenants will contact the building manager.

Mr. Schnipp asked if there were any plans to install a billboard or cell tower on the roof of the building. He stated it has been a problem in the past and the Board would like the applicant's assurance that this will occur in the future. The applicant agreed not to install these items on the roof of the building.

Tom Napolitano asked about a noise wall on the route 80 side of the building. We were advised that there would be triple pane windows installed to reduce noise. Mr. Bertin also said the building is above route 80 so noise would most likely not be an issue.

Mr. Mancini asked about the materials that will be used. Concrete, wood frame, fire walls between the apartments, fire rated walls in the halls and sprinklers.

Mrs. Frias asked about a high curb in front of the building so cars cannot drive along the sidewalk. We were advised that is in the plans.

Mr. Schnipp questioned the height variances. Mr. Kelly stated height for 3 stories is 45 feet, 4 stories is 55 feet.

Ms. Trahan advised a height variance will be required. There is also concern about open parking garage on Queen Anne Road. It was stated that there would be trees, bushes and a picket fence in front of the building to shield parking from the street.

A motion was made by John Mitchell with a second by Yesenia Frias to open for public comments. Mrs. Daniele Fede, 179 Larch Avenue, Bogota NJ spoke on behalf of the Environmental Committee. She advised it would be nice to have cut outs in the sidewalk for trees. She advised pavers are not permitted as a substitute for sidewalks or landscaping to the curb line.

There being no further questions from the public a motion was made by John Mitchell with a second by Tom Napolitano to close public comments. Motion passed.

Mr. Chewcaskie, applicant's attorney, requested that they return next month with the intention of addressing the following issues to the board.

- PSE&G – service relocation
- Easement utilization into plans
- Bertin – review drainage issues
- Environmental issues – pavement vs green spaces
- Traffic Study

Mr. Chewcaskie agreed to return to the Board on June 14, 2022 at 7:30 pm in the council chamber. This serves as public notice with no further notices given.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by John Mitchell and seconded by Yesenia Frias. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Morrone
Secretary/Clerk