

Town of Westfield
Planning Board
Minutes
March 2, 2020

The Westfield Planning Board met on March 2, 2020, at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers in the Westfield Municipal Building, 425 East Broad Street, Westfield, NJ.

In compliance with Chapter 23 1 P.C. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT in the State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this meeting was provided to all members of the Planning Board and the newspapers that have been designated to receive notice, the Star Ledger and the Westfield Leader.

REGULAR MEETING:

Chairman Newell called the meeting to order and opened the meeting by calling all present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Michael Ash, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman

ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

ALSO PRESENT: Alan Trembulak, Planning Board Attorney, Donald Sammet, Town Planner and Linda Jacus, Administrative Secretary

ADOPTIONS OF MINUTES:

Chairman Newell called for a motion to adopt the minutes of the February 3, 2020, meeting. Michael Ash made a motion to adopt; Ann Freedman seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Michael Ash, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ann Freedman

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: Ross Goldstein

ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

Motion carried.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

Chairman Newell called for a motion to adopt the following resolution:

PB 19-12 Winfield 226 North Holdings, LLC., 226 North Avenue

Applicant sought approval to convert the second and third floor to apartments contrary to Section

17.02A1/C5 and 17.02E2 of the Land Use Ordinance to allow 6 parking spaces where the Ordinance requires 33 parking spaces; to allow no off-street loading area where the Ordinance requires an off-street loading area. Application approved with conditions.

Michael La Place made a motion to adopt the resolution; Ann Freedman seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place,
Michael Ash, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman

ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

Motion carried.

Chairman Newell called for a motion to adopt the following resolution:

PB 19-13 Michael & Carroll Keating, 605 East Broad Street

Applicants sought approval to subdivide the property creating two fully conforming lots.

Application approved with conditions.

Linda Habgood made a motion to adopt the resolution; Matthew Ceberio seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place,
Michael Ash, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman

ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

Motion carried.

Chairman Newell announced the following applications have been carried to the April 6, 2020, meeting:

PB 19-10 923 Central Avenue, LLC., 923 Central Avenue

PB 19-09 440 North Avenue East, LLC., 440 North Avenue East

NEW APPEALS:

PB 19-14 Michael & Roseann Hennessey, 444 Mountain Avenue 12/17/2019 Block 1208 Lot 1

Applicants are seeking approval to subdivide the property and retain the existing single-family home on proposed lot 1.02, and construct a new single-family dwelling on proposed lot I .01 using the existing detached garage and driveway contrary to Section 1 1.08E5, 1 1.08E4, 17.05A, 13.0211 of the Land Use Ordinance. Ordinance requires a minimum front yard setback of 40 feet. Proposed is 9.42 feet for lot 1.02. Ordinance requires a minimum lot depth of 120 feet. Proposed is 78.52 feet for lot 1.02. Ordinance allows a maximum driveway width of 24 feet.

Proposed is 26 feet for lot 1.01 and 30 feet for lot 1.02. Ordinance requires a minimum setback for a patio of 5 feet. Proposed is 1.36 feet. Application deemed complete January 16, 2020. 120 day decision date is May 16, 2020.

Joshua Koodray, Esq. (370 Chestnut Street, Union) appeared on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Koodray stated this is an application for a subdivision of property. The site is situated on the corner of Mountain Avenue and North Euclid Avenue, and is in RS-8 zone. The lot size is 17,370 square feet, and has an existing one family home and garage. Proposed lot 1.02 will contain 8,583 square feet and will retain the existing one family home. The existing home will be renovated and a new two car garage will be constructed. Lot 1.02 requires variances for lot depth, front yard setback, patio setback, and maximum driveway width. Proposed lot 1.01, will consist of 8,787 square feet. This parcel will retain the existing garage which will be restored along with the existing driveway. A new Victorian style one family home will be built and will be a great compliment to the neighborhood.

Chairman Newell swore in Thomas Quinn (328 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains). The Board accepted Mr. Quinn as a licensed engineer.

Mr. Quinn described the existing conditions. The property is on the corner of North Euclid Avenue and Mountain Avenue, and is in the RS-8 zone. The property currently has access off of North Euclid and there is long driveway that serves a detached two-car garage. Exhibit A-I, Concept Plan B was marked, Mr. Quinn stated this is a conforming subdivision plan we created, and the lot areas are similar to what we have currently. In order to conform with the lot depth, we created pie shaped lots which would be problematic, so we went with the plan that is before you. The proposed subdivision plan creates more geometrically pleasing shaped lots. The lot areas conform, but a variance is necessary for lot 1.02 for the lot depth. The minimum lot depth required is 120 feet, and we are proposing 78.52 feet. As a result of the proposed subdivision, the North Euclid Avenue frontage of the property becomes the zoning front yard. The existing dwelling sits 9.42 feet from the front lot line along North Euclid Avenue, where a minimum of 40 feet is required so a variance is necessary. A new two-car garage is proposed to serve the existing dwelling, and to access this new detached garage, a new driveway with access to Mountain Avenue is proposed. A turn-around area is proposed resulting in a portion of the driveway measuring 30 feet in width where a maximum width of 24 feet for a driveway is allowed. The new lot line will be located 1.36 feet from an existing patio that serves the existing single-family dwelling; as a result, a variance is required as a 5-foot setback is required for the patio. For lot 1.01, which would contain the new home, all setback, height, floor area ratio, and coverage requirements can be met for the proposed dwelling. This lot would contain the existing detached garage and serve the new home being constructed. A portion of the driveway measures 26 feet in width to allow for adequate circulation and exceeds the 24400t width requirement so a variance is required. Mr. Quinn stated the impervious coverage will be increased, but we maneuvered most of the increase so any stormwater is directed out to the road with little impact to the neighbors.

Open to public questions. None. Closed to public questions.

Chairman Newell swore in Michael Hennessy. Mr. Hennessy distributed a narrative to the Board, which was marked as Exhibit A-2. He stated the proposed plan will retain the existing home, which will be restored and updated inside and out. A new garage will be constructed for the existing home. On the new lot, a Victorian style home will be constructed. Exhibit A-3, the front elevation of the new home facing North Euclid Avenue was marked. The home would have a wraparound front porch and have four bedrooms and 2 1 2 baths. The size would be similar to the other homes in the neighborhood. Exhibit A-4, a drawing showing the right and left elevation and the rear elevation was marked. Exhibit A-5 & Exhibit A-6 were marked which show the proposed floor plan and attic plan. Exhibit A-7, a sample of the materials that will be used for the new home was marked. Mr. Hennessey stated we believe the proposed design will complement the current houses in the neighborhood, and that granting these variances would not be detrimental to our neighbors.

Open to public questions.

William Cagney (450 Mountain Avenue) asked about the restoration of the existing home and the construction of the new garage.

Closed to public questions.

Chairman Newell swore in Nicholas Graviano (101 Crofts Comer Road, Holmdel). The Board accepted Mr. Graviano as licensed planner.

Mr. Graviano stated he reviewed the plans and visited the site. This application is for a minor subdivision with c variances. It is located in the RS-8 zone, and is over 17,000 square feet where the RS-8 zone requires a minimum of 8,000 square feet. Two fully conforming lots could be obtained if the existing home was demolished, but the applicant seeks to restore the existing home, which is part of the character of the neighborhood. Twelve out of the eighteen lots in this area are irregular and do not have a symmetrical shape so the plans before you are the most rational division of this lot. It creates two lots that are keeping with the layout of neighborhood and helps retain the existing home. The applicant does require c variances. For lot I .02 the applicant requires a lot depth variance, front yard setback variance, and a variance for the setback of the patio at the property line. Additionally, for lot 1.02, the applicant is proposing a driveway width which is in excess of the ordinance; the majority of the driveway is within the ordinance, but the turnaround area requires a variance. For the new home on lot 1.01, a 26-foot-wide driveway is proposed which is needed to maneuver in and out of the garage.

These variances can be granted under the C-2 criteria, as the benefits outweigh any detriments. This is an oversized lot, and the master plan goals and objectives are being advanced by protecting the existing character of an existing neighborhood. The master plan discourages demolition of older housing units which contribute to town character and it recommends rehabilitating older homes when feasible. A conforming lot size is proposed for each lot, which is in keeping with the permitted land density of the zone. The proposed subdivision provides new housing, promotes a desirable visual environment, and the rehabilitation of the existing home helps promote good civic design and arrangement. The variances and subdivision can be

granted without any substantial detriment to the public good, and does not impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance.

Open to public questions.

Andrew Broad (515 Kimball Avenue) asked if the county had any issue with the proposed curb cuts.

Closed to public questions.

Open to public comments.

Alfred Meyer (505 Kimball Avenue) stated he is an abutting property owner, and has concerns about the application. He thinks the home fronting on North Euclid would be inconsistent with the neighborhood. Mr. Meyer stated he is concerned about safety, the curb cut on the site plan is 50 feet from the corner of North Euclid, and believes a traffic engineer should look at that. There is an underground spring in the neighborhood, and there has been ongoing construction activity in the area which has flooded the basements of many neighbors. Mr. Meyer stated he believes someone needs to take a hard look at what is underground, and do a drainage analysis.

Gordon Vickers (436 Mountain Avenue) stated he objects to the application. He feels that the subdivision will bring a significant change to the neighborhood. The proposed driveway is a safety concern, and the corner of North Euclid and Mountain Avenue is a dangerous corner.

William Cagney (450 Mountain Avenue) appeared on behalf of his daughter who could not be present at the meeting. Mr. Cagney stated his daughter is concerned about what the subject property will look like when everything is completed, and feels it will be out of character with the neighborhood. There is almost no front yard or side yard proposed with the new home. There is great concern about the additional asphalt and the impact it will have on drainage. Safety is a significant concern because the corner of North Euclid Avenue and Mountain Avenue is very dangerous, people speed on North Euclid and run the stop sign.

Closed to public comments.

The Board agreed subdivisions are a big concern, a lot of older and historic homes have been lost, but what is being proposed is a creative solution. The existing home will remain and be updated, and the new home is attractive and will not be out of character. The two new lots will not be out of place in the neighborhood as there are many lots within 200 feet that are smaller than the two lots being created. There was concern about flooding and the additional impervious coverage. A condition of approval would be the applicant's grading and drainage plans must be reviewed and approved by the town engineer. The applicants should reconfigure the driveway on lot 1.02 in order to relocate the turnaround area further to the rear of the property in a location approved by the town engineer, and the driveway width should be reduced to 12 feet from the front yard setback line to Mountain Avenue. The new home should be constructed as

testified to by the applicant, and the existing single-family home shall be preserved as restored as testified to by the applicant.

Chairman Newell called for motion. Michael Ash made a motion to approve with the above conditions; Michael La Place seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Michael La Place, Michael Ash, Matthew Ceberio, Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman
OPPOSED: Mayor Shelley Brindle and Linda Habgood
ABSTAINED: None
ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison
Motion carried.

Application approved. OTHER BUSINESS:

Resolution #54-2020, which was adopted by the Mayor and Town Council on February 11, 2020, referring the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan for review and consideration for incorporation into the Master Plan Reexamination Report.

Resolution #54-2020 was adopted by the Mayor and Council and it refers the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan to the Planning Board for review and incorporation into the master plan reexamination report. While the master plan reexam was being prepared, one of the goals and objectives was to make the Parks and Recreation Plan an appendix to the master plan reexamination.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Michael Ash, Linda Habgood,
Matthew Ceberio, Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman
OPPOSED: None
ABSTAINED: None
ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

Motion carried.

Public Hearing on the Recommended Updates to the Town Master Plan: Vision, Guiding Principles, and Goals & Objectives

Don Sammet stated at the last meeting I brought this forward to have a public hearing to amend the vision, guiding principles, and goals and objectives that were identified in the recent master plan reexamination report. Michael La Place suggested the wording on the first page, second paragraph under Town Vision be revised to read "Westfield will be a model of carefully managed development, providing a range of

housing options for all current and prospective residents within walking distance to the downtown". The second proposed revision will add an additional goal and objective under section #6 "Improved transit service on the New Jersey Transit Raritan Valley Line serving Westfield". The immediate adoption of the recommended updates will replace the existing goals and objectives section of the 2002 master plan.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Michael Ash, Linda Habgood,

Matthew Ceberio, Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

Motion carried.

General Ordinance #2160-Requires notification to the Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC) of building permits and development applications within the special improvement district.

This will require the DWC to be notified of any development applications or building permits within the special improvement district. The DWC will play an important role to advocate for businesses within the special improvement district and they will help businesses navigate the construction permit and zoning approval process.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Michael Ash, Linda Habgood,

Matthew Ceberio, Ross Goldstein, Ann Freedman

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Darielle Walsh, Kris McAloon, Anastasia Harrison

Motion carried.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Jacus
Administrative Secretary