

## BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, August 23, 2022

—MINUTES—

### CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Vescio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Bridgewater Township Municipal Building.

### OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT & FLAG SALUTE

Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act N.J.S.A.10:4-6. On January 14, 2022, proper notice was sent to the Courier News and the Star-Ledger, filed with the Clerk at the Township of Bridgewater and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building. Please be aware of the Planning Board policy for public hearings: No new applications will be heard after 10:00 pm and no new testimony will be taken after 10:15 pm. Hearing assistance is available upon request. Accommodation will be made for individuals with a disability, pursuant to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), provided the individual with the disability provides 48 hours advance notice to the Planning Board Secretary before the public meeting. However, if the individual should require special equipment or services, such as a CART transcriber, seven days advance notice, excluding weekends and holidays, may be necessary.

### ROLL CALL

#### PRESENT\*

Chairman Maurizio Vescio  
Councilman Timothy Ring  
Ms. Ashely Sikora  
Mr. Henry Wang  
Mr. Inderpreet Banga

#### ALSO PRESENT

Caty Fina, Esq., for Mark Peck, Board Attorney  
Board Planner, Scarlett Doyle, P.P.  
Board Engineer, William Burr, P.E.  
Nancy Probst, Board Administrator

#### ABSENT

Mayor Matthew Moench  
Mr. James Magura  
Ms. Lauren Zarro  
Mr. Tom Genova  
Ms. Sonja Chartowich

\*Mr. Pappas arrived after roll call.

### MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Members of the public wishing to address the Board on any matter not listed on the agenda were invited to do so. There was no public comment.

### APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

**Motion** by Councilman Ring, **seconded** by Ms. Sikora to adopt the Minutes of July 12, 2022, as presented.

#### Roll Call:

Aye: Chairman Vescio, Councilman Ring, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Wang, Mr. Banga

Nay:

Abstain:

### RESOLUTIONS

#### **CRAWFORD CUSTOMS, LLC**

Block 638, Lots 21.01 AND 21.02

APP#20-034-PB - EXTENSION OF PRIOR APPROVAL

**Motion** by Ms. Sikora, **seconded** by Mr. Wang and unanimously carried to approve the resolution, as presented to memorialize the extension of approval of Preliminary and Final Site Plan, subject to previously approved conditions.

**Roll Call:**

Aye: Chairman Vescio, Councilman Ring, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Wang, Mr. Banga

Nay:

Abstain:

Councilman Ring explained the purpose of the resolutions appointing independent Planning and Engineering consultants. He clarified that they would be billing applicant escrows; not the Township and that Mr. Sullivan had done consulting work for the Board in the past.

**ENGAGE SERVICES OF ENGINEERING CONSULTANT (CME)**

**Motion** by Councilman Ring, **seconded** by Ms. Sikora and unanimously carried to approve the resolution, as presented to appoint CME as a Consulting Engineer to the Board.

**Roll Call:**

Aye: Chairman Vescio, Councilman Ring, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Wang, Mr. Banga

Nay:

Abstain:

**ENGAGE SERVICES OF PLANNING CONSULTANT (MICHAEL SULLIVAN)**

**Motion** by Councilman Ring, **seconded** by Ms. Sikora and unanimously carried to approve the resolution, as presented to appoint Michael Sullivan as a Consulting Planner to the Board.

**Roll Call:**

Aye: Chairman Vescio, Councilman Ring, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Wang, Mr. Banga

Nay:

Abstain:

Councilman Ring recused at 7:08.

**Motion** by Councilman Ring, **seconded** by Ms. Sikora to recess until Mr. Pappas' arrival.

**Roll Call:**

Aye: Chairman Vescio, Councilman Ring, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Wang, Mr. Banga

Nay:

Abstain:

Mr. Pappas arrived. **Motion** by Mr. Pappas, **seconded** by Mr. Sikora to resume the meeting at 7:12.

**Roll Call:**

Aye: Chairman Vescio, Councilman Ring, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Wang, Mr. Banga

Nay:

Abstain:

**LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

**North Bridge Woodlawn, LLC**

Block 525, Lot 2 (81 Woodlawn Avenue)

**APP#22-014-PB – Preliminary & Final Major Subdivision**

**Joseph Sordillo, Esq.** entered his appearance on behalf of the applicant. **Craig Stires, P.E.** was sworn and qualified.

Mr. Stires advised that General Permit#6 (regarding wetlands) was received and provided engineering testimony with respect to surface runoff.

**Exhibit A1** was identified a colored rendering of the landscape plan with zoning data and marked into testimony. Mr. Stires identified Woodlawn and Forest Avenues and explained how the piping traverses the lots. He testified that all three lots would be serviced by public sewer and gas but that only the two lots on the south side would be serviced by public water.

Mr. Stires provided testimony on the size of the lots which he indicated were all conforming and consistent with the neighborhood. He provided testimony on the history of the zone line and advised that it was used to split the block.

Mr. Stires testified that although a Stormwater Management Plan was not required, improvements would be made to improve overall drainage conditions for the neighborhood (Forest Ave. in particular) in response to concerns from neighbors about Ida and surface runoff. He advised that this would be done by installing a new inlet on the north side of Forest Ave. and another inlet at the terminus of the small ditch which would be piped to a detention basin (as shown on the plan).

Mr. Stires testified that landscaping (shade and street trees) would comply with the ordinance.

Mr. Stires addressed the following items from Ms. Doyle's review memo dated 8/5/22:

- Water connection - He advised that house service cannot go through an easement.
- Sidewalks – He advised that installation of sidewalks on the south side would not be appropriate as there are no sidewalks on the north side.
- Wetlands – He reiterated that the permit was received. Mr. Sordillo provided clarification.
- Trees – He indicated that they would comply with Ms. Doyle's recommendations.
- Houses – He advised that they have plans for building permits consistent with other homes in the neighborhood.
- Optional Deck – He indicated that this was included in the overall square footage.

Mr. Stires advised that they agreed with not having to provide a developer's agreement and that they would follow the process for compliance, post approval.

Mr. Stires responded to questions from Mr. Pappas about basements/test pits and about decks. He advised that testing had not been done for groundwater and confirmed that the deck had been accounted for in the impervious coverage calculations. He related that coverage (including the deck) would be under the maximum permitted at 24.5%.

With respect to the Township Sidewalk Fund, Mr. Sordillo explained that the project is a medium density development requiring sidewalks on one side which is not applicable for the lots facing Forest Ave. He advised that there were no sidewalks on either side of Woodlawn to connect to.

With respect to the water line easement, Mr. Stires advised that a well will continue to service the affected property as extending the main at Somerset and Woodlawn to accommodate one house would be cost prohibitive. He reiterated that the two houses on Forest would be serviced by public water.

The Chairman solicited comments from the Board.

Mr. Banga asked whether the sufficiency of the inlets was studied. Mr. Stires indicated that they supplied a drainage chart and indicated that they "should be." In response to another question from Mr. Banga about whether additional grading would be done ["adjusted"] based on construction, Mr. Stires advised that they would try to direct water to a swale along the property line, creating a third swale.

Mr. Stires responded to a question from Chairman Vescio regarding the location of storm swales. In response to another question from Chairman Vescio about the use of drywells, Mr. Stires testified that they would not likely be using them, citing ineffectiveness.

Chairman Vescio asked whether there were any plans for pools and if so, where they would backwash to. Mr. Stires testified that they may be installed and that they would drain down the swale into the municipal stormwater system.

Ms. Sikora asked how impacts to lot 8 could be mitigated. Mr. Stires testified that he did not think that lot would be affected given the location. He suggested that it might even improve the conditions there.

Chairman Vescio asked whether there would be any changes to the plan. Mr. Stires indicated that it would match the neighborhood. Chairman Vescio asked whether there would be any changes to surface runoff. Mr. Stires indicated that he discussed it with Mr. Burr and that there was more of a surface problem which would be addressed by tying the roof leaders in to inlets.

Chairman Vescio asked for more information on the sidewalk issue. Mr. Stires advised that there would be nothing existing to connect to on Woodlawn.

Ms. Doyle asked Mr. Stires whether the applicant would be willing to contribute to the sidewalk fund in lieu of constructing sidewalks. Mr. Sordillo affirmed that they would construct rather than contribute. Ms. Doyle concluded that this issue would be resolved with engineering.

Mr. Stires addressed the following items from Mr. Burr's 8/18/22 report:

- Referencing Items 1, 2 and 4, Mr. Stires advised that they were in agreement.
- Mr. Sordillo indicated that escrow would be posted for stormwater inspections.

Addressing Mr. Burr directly, Mr. Pappas asked about infrastructure being dedicated to the Township. Mr. Burr advised that he had no objection to waiving a developer's agreement. Mr. Pappas asked whether the sidewalks trigger a developer's agreement. Mr. Burr offered that sidewalks could be handled within the confines of the resolution.

Mr. Stires addressed the following additional items in Mr. Burr's report:

- No objection to item #5 regarding wetlands.
- With respect to item #6, he indicated that they have soils already and that other reports are pending.

As to technical review:

- Mr. Stires provided the rationale for the lot lines and advised that they would apply for a road opening permit.
- With respect to item #3, he indicated that they would comply.

- Mr. Stires reminded that testimony on wetlands, architectural design, sidewalks, grading, drainage, slopes, water connection and enhancements to stormwater management had been provided. He confirmed that the inlet at the end of the swale would be switched to flare. He advised that they have a will serve letter and reiterated that landscaping would comply with the ordinance.

With respect to lighting (referenced as item#2), Mr. Sordillo explained that there would be no exterior lighting other than what is typical for a development of this type.

Ms. Sikora asked about sewer mains. Mr. Stires offered that his testimony on infrastructure covered this.

Addressing Mr. Burr directly, Mr. Pappas asked about comments on page 3 of his memo regarding grading, drainage and utilities. Mr. Burr indicated that while he agreed with Mr. Stires, the project did not meet the requirements for a major project with respect to stormwater management and did not appear to address the increase in runoff, given the 9,000 square feet of new hardscape. He indicated that he would like to see the on-site features and could work with the applicant in order to enhance the proposal. Mr. Sordillo confirmed that the applicant would add any additional stormwater features. Mr. Pappas expressed concern about drainage issues.

Ms. Doyle responded to a question from Mr. Pappas about whether the owners of Lots 2.02 and 2.03 would be impacted by the split zone. She indicated that since both sides are residential, there would be no difficulty and that the rear yard setback was prohibitive anyway.

Addressing Mr. Stires directly, Mr. Burr asked whether the existing ditch on the east side provides protection for the neighbor to the east and what the condition of the headwall is. Mr. Stires testified that because of the presence of wetlands, a permit would probably be required.

Mr. Stires identified the ditch on the plan for Mr. Pappas. He explained that it runs along the property line and testified that they would be improving the condition. Mr. Pappas asked whether a condition could be added to any approval regarding cleaning/maintenance of the ditch. Mr. Stires indicated that an easement from the Township would be necessary in order to get to the ditch. Mr. Pappas asked specifically whether language requiring the property owner to maintain the ditch could be added. Mr. Sordillo explained that it is a wetland regulated drainage ditch. The Board Attorney asserted that the Township does not want an easement/wants no obligation.

Mr. Burr asked about a deed restriction with respect to the final plat. Ms. Doyle offered that it would be better to have it on the map as well as in the deed. Mr. Sordillo asserted that the obligation is on the owner when it services other properties. Mr. Pappas expressed concern about improper placement of a pipe that could cause damning and clarified that his intent was to have any maintenance of any drainage ditch be the responsibility of the property owner. Ms. Fina explained that she was not sure if the Board could require that. Mr. Pappas asserted that they would be asking for it to be figured out.

Mr. Banga asked about tree removal/whether there was any consideration given to planting additional trees. An extensive discussion ensued about trees. Ms. Doyle concluded that they would work with the applicant on species.

The Chairman opened the floor to public comment/questions at 8:21.

(Resident) James Weideli was sworn in. He asked about the reasoning behind the sidewalk installation. Mr. Stires advised that the applicant prefers to construct them on Woodlawn only and would rather build than donate to the sidewalk fund. Mr. Weideli spoke in support of Mr. Pappas' comments regarding maintenance issues.

Sharon Larson of 19 Forest Ave. asked about drainage with respect to the basin near her home. Calling the "constant" clogging an "ongoing" issue, she related that the new sewers back to the basin and cannot handle the water.

Mr. Pappas asserted that there should be language in the easement as to responsibility. Problems with the detention basin were discussed. Mr. Burr suggested that they could look at the Forest Ave. subdivision and cited this as the reason he suggested on site improvements to address the new improvements.

With respect to the resolution language regarding the ditch, Mr. Sordillo advised that the applicant will work with the Board to acknowledge the existing drainage ditch and owner's obligations to maintain it, generally. Ms. Doyle indicated that this would be acceptable. Mr. Burr acknowledged their willingness to address the issues at hand.

Deliberations began at 8:30.

- Mr. Pappas related that his motion would include that maintenance would be part of the filed map/deed.
- Mr. Wang spoke in favor of approval, mentioning the sidewalks and stormwater.
- Mr. Banga spoke about the trees.
- Ms. Sikora thanked the applicant for their willingness to address stormwater.
- Chairman Vescio offered that there was more scrutiny now because of stormwater issues. He suggested that they have opportunities to present solutions but that they were off to a good start with sidewalks and supplemental drainage features to help facilitate any drainage ditch to be maintained by the owner.

**Motion** by Mr. Pappas, **seconded** by Mr. Sikora to approve the application subject to conditions, as discussed.

**Roll Call:**

Aye: Mr. Pappas, Chairman Vescio, Mr. Wang, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga

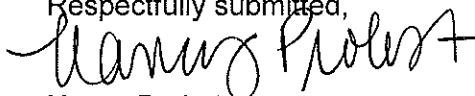
Nay:

Abstain:

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** by Ms. Sikora, **seconded** by Mr. Wang and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Probst,  
Land Use Administrator

Approved: 9/27/22