

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting

May 16, 2023

-Minutes-

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Vescio called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman Vescio read the OPMA Statement.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Mr. Pappas- Present	Councilman Ring- Present
Mr. Wang- Present	Mr. Van Eck-Present
Mayor Moench-Present	Ms. Zarro- Absent
Mr. Genova- Absent	Mr. Banga- Present
Mr. Magura- Present	Ms. Chartowich- Present
Ms. Sikora-Present	Mr. Vescio- Present

Others present: Board Attorney Mr. Mark Peck, Board Planner Ms. Scarlett Doyle, Board Engineer Mr. Bill Burr, Mr. Michael Sullivan, Consulting Board Planner and Mr. Joe Fischinger, Board Traffic Engineer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes for approvals.

RESOLUTIONS

GCP BRIDGEWATER, LP
Block 400, Lot 7 (530 Route 22)
#23-001-PB – Minor Site Plan Approval (*Pending*)

LAND USE APPLICATIONS

M&M AT ROUTE 206, LLC
Block 476, Lot 22
#22-021-PB – Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan
(Carried to 6/13/23 without further Notice)

This application was carried to the Tuesday June 13, 2023 Regular Meeting without further notice.

GALLERIA CONSTRUCTION

Block 172, Lot 11 (Buena Pkwy. & Levan Ct.)

#22-009-PB – Minor Subdivision with Variances
(Carried to 7/18/23 without further Notice)

This application was carried to the Tuesday July 18, 2023 Special Meeting without further notice.

AR BRIDGEWATER II, LLC

Block 483, Lot 17

#23-007-PB – Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval

Ms. Nicole Dory, Esq. was present to represent the applicant. Sworn testimony was provided by Bill Bumber, Managing Director of Development for Advanced Reality, Craig Herrman Professional Engineer, Ted Osbourne Professional Architect, Dawn Quorack Professional Traffic Engineer and Brian McPeak Professional Planner.

Ms. Dory provided an overview and the history of the application. She advised the proposed project will be phased and Phase 1 consists of Preliminary and Final site Plan approval for buildings 1, 2 & 5. The applicant is also seeking preliminary approval for buildings 2 & 3.

Ms. Dory introduced Mr. Bill Bumber as the Managing Director of Development and he was sworn.

Mr. Bumber described the entire project vision for the Board. The vision for the site is mixed use and includes a high-tech research and development site with a flex light industrial component. The intent is for the site to work harmoniously together.

Mr. Bumber described each of the life sciences, light flex industrial and hi-tech buildings for the Board. The buildings are intended and designed to have multi-tenants in each. He then advised the plan conforms to the amended ordinances and the applicant seeking minimal variances and waivers.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Bumber advised the site is an old research and development center and the applicant intends to demolish everything existing on the site. The applicant will also demo the existing utility structure.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Bumber advised the phasing timelines depend upon market demands. He expects buildings will be demolished in early 2024.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Bumber confirmed no tenants have been identified for the buildings yet.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Bumber confirmed there are no monitoring wells on the subject property.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Bumber advised the intent is to get approvals and start the process for building permits. He explained the reason of the phasing of the site and advised buildings 3 & 4 will be podium style. These will require more intensive work.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Bumber reiterated that no tenants have been secured. He confirmed this site would not be a fulfillment center since the site is relatively smaller. The ideal tenant would be a localized tenant with small, light distribution type vehicles.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Bumber advised the loading areas were relocated from the original design so as to not be seen from the highway. He then stated architectural details were added to help minimize sounds from the trucks. He proceeded to describe the loading dock area in detail.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for questions.

Mr. John Ercolio of 1110 Washington Valley Rd. Bridgewater NJ. Mr. Ercolio asked what percentage of the lot will be impervious coverage and what provisions are being made for potential flooding. This question was deferred to the applicant's Engineer.

Mr. Aroon Naidu of 38 Braemer Place Bridgewater NJ. Mr. Naidu stated he appreciates the name of the project. He then asked how warehouses are innovative and suggested the applicant focus more on Research and Development and Life Science buildings.

Mr. Naidu asked about traffic with the Temple nearby. He was deferred to the applicant's Traffic Engineer. Chairman Vescio advised the public that the Board has retained their own Traffic Engineer as well.

Ms. Dory introduced Mr. Craig Herrman as the applicant's Professional Engineer. He was sworn and accepted by the Board.

Mr. Herrman used sheet A3 of the site plan set to orient the Board to the site. He described the site in detail and identified the existing buildings and zone lines. He confirmed the existing helipad will be removed.

Mr. Herrman reviewed the slopes and elevations throughout the site. He then discussed the access points and traffic device-controlled intersections.

Mr. Herrman identified the different easements on the property and advised the applicant is not permitted to change the grade significantly within the easements. He advised there are freshwater wetlands on the property and a flood hazard area. The applicant has applied to NJDEP and is addressing the flood hazard area.

Mr. Herrman advised the maximum stories is 5 for the site yet the buildings are proposed to be 4 stories. He then discussed the building heights in detail.

Mr. Herrman advised building 8 will be a café/restaurant use. He described the circulation for the drive thru and opined there is enough space. Mr. Herrman then described the driveway and roadway connectivity throughout the site in detail as well as specific access points.

Mr. Herrman discussed the parking on the site in detail and advised the applicant is requesting a design waiver for buildings 7 & 8 since those buildings will be serviced from the front by smaller trucks and vans.

Mr. Herrman reviewed the fences and retaining walls on the property. He then identified the variances requested as it pertains to those walls and fences.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Herrman advised the parking is related to the needs of the building, not just the requirements of the ordinance. The Board suggested banked parking in an effort to minimize impervious coverage. Mr. Herrman opined that once the buildings are operational, they will use the parking as it is currently proposed.

The Board requested the applicant meet with the Township Professionals to determine whether or not banked parking is possible for the site.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Herrman advised there are no deterrents for foot traffic coming into the site. The Board confirmed Route 202-206 and Muirfield Ln. has a County bus stop so there is likely to be foot traffic throughout the site. The Board requested the applicant reevaluate the possibility of foot traffic and expressed concerns with people trying to cross Route 202-206 to and from the bus stop.

The Board discussed the proposed street name of Discovery Drive and advised the applicant that the Township has preapproved street names with historical value that should be selected. If the applicant chooses not to pick one of those names, they are required to present to the Township Council a reason for not selecting a preapproved name and receive Township approval.

On questioning of the Board, Mr. Herrman confirmed the applicant will plant evergreens and shade trees wherever possible.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Herrman identified the Peters Brook on the plan and addressed water that may flow into the stream. He testified the applicant is not adding more water into Peters Brook. He then discussed the stormwater analysis that was performed in detail.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Herrman advised if subsequent phases aren't built, the stormwater design would be able to "stand alone" due to the lack of adding impervious coverage.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Herrman advised the plantings along the highway would begin as soon as practical.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Herrman confirmed the roadways will be private however they will grant Title 39 powers to the Township.

The Board engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the landscaping and plantings throughout the site with Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Herrman.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for questions.

Mr. Hen Dittmer 30 Muirfield Lane Bridgewater NJ. Mr. Dittmer asked how far building 1 is to the curb line on Route 202-206. Mr. Herrman advised it is approx. 168 ft. Mr. Dittmer asked if there was a berm and Mr. Herman stated there would be a landscaping buffer but not a berm.

Mr. Dittmer asked if any soil testing has ever been done on the property for benzine in the soil and Ms. Dory advised the applicant is not required to test for it. The Board expressed concerns with no property owners of the subject property ever testing the soil. Ms. Dory confirmed there was extensive testing of 28 areas of concern when Sanofi Aventis owned the property. 26 of those were closed and the remaining spots underwent additional testing. The first was unfounded and the only area of concern remaining is the monitoring well. The Board requested a letter from the State Agency overseeing the benzine remediation and Ms. Dory expressed concerns with the applicant trying to get that letter.

Mr. Aroon Naidu of 38 Braemer Place Bridgewater NJ. Mr. Naidu asked how many trucks are expected to enter the site daily. His questions were deferred to the applicant's Traffic Engineer. He then asked why the warehouses were being built as Phase 1 instead of the buildings for innovation being built. Ms. Dory confirmed the previous witness provided proper testimony regarding the selection of the phases.

Ms. Geraldine Staub 10 Braemer Place Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Staub asked where the trucks enter the property. She was deferred to the applicants Traffic Engineer.

This application was carried to the Tuesday June 20, 2023 Regular Meeting with no further notice.

ADJOURN

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted



Jo-Ann M. Ricks

Deputy Land Use Administrator/Deputy Zoning Officer