

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting

April 16, 2024

-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

Mayor Moench-	Absent	Mr. Banga-	Present
Councilman Kirsh-	Present	Ms. Sikora-	Present
Mr. Pappas-	Present	Mr. Choudhury-	Present
Mr. Magura-	Present	Mr. Atkins-	Present
Chairman Vescio-	Present	Ms. Chartowich-	Present
Mr. Wang-	Absent		

Others present: Board Attorney Mr. Mark Peck, Ms. Katherine Sarmad, Board Planner, Mr. Bill Burr, Board Engineer & Land Use Administrator Nancy Probst.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 2, 2024 Meeting Minutes

On motion by Councilman Kirsch, seconded by Mr. Atkins, the Board voted to adopt the minutes as presented based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Magura, Mr. Choudhury,
Mr. Atkins & Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible: Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga & Ms. Chartowich

Absent: Mr. Pappas, Mayor Moench & Mr. Wang

MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS

**#24-006-PB; Bridgewater Raritan School District
Block 411, Lot 40; 60 Garretson Rd.**

On motion by Ms. Sikora, seconded by Mr. Banga, the Board approve the resolution based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Magura, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga, Ms. Chartowich,
Mr. Choudhury, Mr. Atkins & Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible:

Absent: Mr. Pappas, Mayor Moench & Mr. Wang

AR BRIDGEWATER II, LLC

Block 483, Lot 17 (1041 Route 202/206)

#21-037-PB – Extension of Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan with Bulk Variance(s)

On motion by Mr. Choudhury, seconded by Ms. Sikora, the Board approve the resolution based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Magura, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga, Ms. Chartowich,
Mr. Choudhury, Mr. Atkins & Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible:

Absent: Mr. Pappas, Mayor Moench & Mr. Wang

LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

#23-04-PB; Has

Block 150, Lot 12&13 (147 Chestnut St.)

Minor Subdivision with Bulk Variance(s)

Mr. Michael Silbert, Esq. was present to represent the applicant. Sworn testimony was provided by Mr. Craig Stires, Professional Engineer, Ms. Hulya Has, Owner and Mr. Alexander Doherty, Professional Planner. Exhibits were entered as follows:

A1 4-16-24 Grading Plan & Soil Erosion Plan

A2 4-16-24 Planning Exhibits for Hulya Has (15 pgs)

Mr. Silbert provided a brief overview of the application. Mr. Silbert then introduced Mr. Craig Stires as the applicant's Professional Engineer. He was sworn in and accepted by the Board.

Mr. Stires provided a brief overview of the application and the history of the lots. He then introduced exhibit **A1 4-16-24 Grading Plan & Soil Erosion Plan**. Mr. Stires advised the purpose of the application to formally subdivide lots 12 & 13 and then construct a 3-bedroom residence on Lot 12.

Mr. Stires discussed the storm water easement that appears only on the tax map and advised that he was unable to confirm the easement exists. He then discussed a drainage pipe located on the Raritan side of the boundary line. Mr. Stires advised the Board that the proposed residence will be built outside of the easement as shown.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Burr advised he is aware of drainage issues in Bradley Gardens broadly, but he is not familiar with drainage issues on these specific lots.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Silbert clarified the Doctrine of Merger and advised the existing residence was built prior to 1953. Mr. Silbert opined the lots were subjected to this doctrine and the intent of this application is to subdivide them into two separate lots.

Councilman Kirsh expressed concerns for potential drainage issues from the lots. Mr. Stires advised he will evaluate whether the applicant can connect to the pipe to improve drainage from stormwater. The Board then engaged in a discussion regarding the storm water for the lots and surrounding area as well as the improved lot coverage for both lots.

At the request of Mr. Burr, Mr. Stires will reevaluate the storm water management system on the site, including the possibility of adding dry wells. Mr. Stires opined if the applicant is permitted to add an inlet to drain into the pipe, it would increase drainage. Mr. Burr confirmed the applicant would need permission to connect to the pipe even though it's located within the drainage easement.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Stires advised he evaluated periodic historic aerials, and it appears that there was never a residence on the land that will become lot 12. Ms. Sarmad confirmed the aerials depict the lot as essentially a backyard for the existing residence.

Ms. Sarmad asked Mr. Stires to clarify how the FAR for the site was designed. She clarified that the proposed FAR is essentially at max.

Mr. Burr confirmed that Chestnut St. has just been paved and remains under moratorium for approximately 7 years. He recommended to the Board that a condition be implemented that the road be milled and paved properly, not patched.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for questions.

Katie Russo 150 Chestnut St. Ms. Russo was sworn in to provide testimony. Ms. Russo said she knew the previous owners of the home and advised the previous owner to try to subdivide the lot and was denied due to drainage concerns. She further advised the next owner to try to subdivide the lot in the late 90s/early 2000s and was again denied due to drainage issues.

Mr. Stires stated the applicant is adding 800 sq. ft. of impervious coverage to the lots overall. Mr. Stires offered to submit a storm report on the existing conditions and the proposed conditions. Mr. Burr requested calculations provided with the storm water plan to ensure the systems are adequately sized to accommodate the runoff.

Ms. Russo expressed concerns with the lot being inadequately sized to handle the runoff.

Mr. Anthony Guida, 7 Obert Dr. Raritan NJ. Mr. Guida agreed with Ms. Russo's testimony. He then described the pipe and stormwater on his land. Mr. Stires advised that their land surveyor did not enter his property and therefore is unfamiliar with where the pipe goes.

Mr. Eugene Jeziorski, 145 Chestnut St. Bridgewater NJ. Mr. Jeziorski asked Mr. Stires if additional water running off would impact the pipes. Mr. Stires asked if the pipes were permitted or installed without permits. Mr. did not know.

Mr. Silbert advised he filed an OPRA request for any land use records on file and no resolutions were provided; therefore, he opined there were no previous subdivision applications.

With there being no further questions from the public, the Board closed the public question portion of the meeting.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened.

Mr. Silbert introduced exhibit **A2 4-16-24 Planning Exhibits for Hulya Has (15 pgs.)** and advised Ms. Has testimony will focus on pages 3,4 and 5.

Mr. Silbert introduced Ms. Has as the owner and applicant. She was sworn in and accepted by the Board.

Ms. Has advised she purchased the property in 2019 and the home was unfinished with tarps inside and the house needed to be treated for a flea infestation. Ms. Has then referred to page 4 and advised it is an accurate representation of the residence as it is today. She described the remainder of the images as the condition of the residence when she purchased it.

Ms. Has discussed surrounding lots and opined her lot as less impervious coverage than other lots that have sheds, garages and pools.

On questioning by the Board, Ms. Has confirmed her intent was to live in the residence. Due to a change in personal circumstances, she rented the residence.

On questioning by the Board, Ms. Has advised the previous owner had a wood burning type of stove in the garage that he would use to burn garbage. She confirmed that she had since removed the stove.

On questioning by the Board, Ms. Has confirmed that she did not know the zone requirements for the lots. On further questioning, Ms. Has stated she would like to build a home on a separate lot, potentially for one of her sons.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Ms. Has confirmed that the existing residence basement is unfinished. She further confirmed she will agree to an unfinished basement in the proposed residence. Ms. Sarmad confirmed there are implications to the FAR calculations should a basement be finished.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for questions. With there being no questions from the public, the Board closed the public question portion of the meeting.

This application was carried to the Tues. May 7, 2024 Regular Meeting without further notice.

The Board and their Professionals requested the applicant conduct and in depth review of the existing and proposed storm water management conditions for when the applicant returns.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Area in Need of Redevelopment- Preliminary Investigation of Block 349, Lot 2 (Township Council Resolution No. 24-04-04-114)

This resolution was presented for Board consideration. Mr. Peck advised the Township Council to direct the Planning Board to determine whether the above-listed property is an area in need of redevelopment. He recommended the Board to authorize the Redevelopment Planner, Michael Sullivan, to investigate.

Councilman Kirsh confirmed the property is municipal owned and the Township Council has a fiduciary responsibility to determine if the site is appropriate for certain commercial uses.

On motion by Mr. Pappas, seconded by Ms. Sikora, the Board voted to authorize the Redevelopment Planner to conduct an area in need of redevelopment on the above listed property based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Magura, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga, Ms. Chartowich,
Mr. Choudhury, Mr. Atkins & Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible:

Absent: Mayor Moench & Mr. Wang

Master Pan Public Information Session

Ms. Sarmad provide the Board new dates regarding the Master Plan workshop. She advised that it has been rescheduled for May 22, 2024 at 7 pm.

ADJOURN

On motion by Ms. Sikora, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted



Jo-Ann M. Ricks

Board Secretary Certified