

**Borough of Florham Park
Planning Board
Work Session Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2018**

The Work Session Meeting of the Borough of Florham Park Planning Board was called to order on Monday evening, December 10, 2018 at 6:40p.m. in the Municipal Building located at 111 Ridgedale Avenue, Florham Park, New Jersey.

Members Present:

Mr. Michael DeAngelis – Chairman
Mrs. Jane Margulies – Vice Chairman
Mayor Mark Taylor
Mrs. Carmen Cefolo-Pane
Mr. John Buchholz
Mr. Dave Roberts (1st Alt)

Members Absent:

Mr. Gary Feith
Mr. Joseph Guerin
Mr. Michael Cannilla

Also Present:

Mr. Michael Sgaramella, Borough Engineer
Mr. Robert Michaels, Borough Planner
Mr. John Wyciskala, Esq. Board Attorney

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Mr. DeAngelis issued the following statement:

“I hereby announce and state that adequate notice of this meeting was provided by the Secretary of this Board by preparing a notice, specifying the time, date and place of this meeting; posting such notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building; filing said notice with the Clerk of the Borough forwarding the notice to the Florham Park Eagle, and forwarding, by mail and fax, the said notice to all persons on the request list, and that said notice will be included in the minutes of this meeting. This action is in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq., “Open Public Meeting Act.”

Site Plan Waivers:

None

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 6:40p.m.

December 10, 2018

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

6. **25 Vreeland Venture, LLC**
25B Vreeland Road
Block 301, Lot 14

Application #18SPW-21
AHS Hospital Corp.

Applicant is seeking approval for a change in tenancy for medical use.
Mrs. Cefolo-Pane made a motion to approve the resolution, second by Mrs. Margulies
Roll: On a roll call vote all members present and eligible voted to approve the resolution.

7. **25 Vreeland Venture, LLC**
25B Vreeland Road
Block 301, Lot 14

Application #18SPW-22
Atlantic Ambulance Corp.

Applicant is seeking approval for a change in tenancy for administrative offices.
Mr. Roberts made a motion to approve the resolution, second by Mrs. Margulies
Roll: On a roll call vote all members present and eligible voted to approve the resolution

8. **Appointment of a Nominating Committee**

Mr. DeAngelis stated that he already spoke to member Joe Guerin to serve on the nominating committee for chairman and vice-chairman. He asked John Buchholz and Dave Roberts to join Joe Guerin on the committee.

Sign Variance:

9. **Ridgedale Professional Plaza**
220 Ridgedale Avenue
Block 901, Lots 2.1-2.7

Application # 18SPW-18 (v)

Applicant is seeking approval for a non-conforming ground sign.

Craig Alexander, Esq. represented the applicant. Thomas Centanni, property manager was sworn in.

Mr. Centanni stated that the building is 22,000 square feet and has eight occupants. They are mostly medical tenants (75%) and the remaining being professional tenants. He stated that the property needs better identity. The location address sign is away from the street and close to the building. They have received complaints about people not being able to find the building.

The proposal is to have a new sign that will have both the street number as well as the businesses listed on the sign. The sign is to be double sided and internally lit.

Jane Margulies asked if there are residents in the area. Mr. Centanni said that there are mostly businesses around the site. There are some residents across Ridgedale Avenue. Mr. DeAngelis questioned why this need exists when GPS devices are used in most vehicles. Mr. Centanni responded that it is still confusing for some visitors because the street name can be either North Ridgedale or South Ridgedale.

Mr. Cannilla asked if the proposal is for 24 square feet in size. He asked about the sign base since it includes the street number making the entire area 36 square feet. Mr. Alexander asked to confer with his client. He stated that he wanted to amend to a greater amount to include the base.

Mr. Michaels clarified that when there is writing on the sign base, the square footage would be increased to include only the rectangle around the writing area. The increase would be calculated by drawing a rectangle around the writing area only. The entire sign base would not be included.

Laura Shreve, Newmark Signs, was sworn in. She is an account specialist involved in the design of this sign. She stated that the property is three acres. The current sign is perpendicular to the road and is not visible to the driving public. The proposed sign is double sided and sits on a masonry base. It will have better visibility and will identify

the address and tenants. She stated that the street number is important because people still want to see that even if they have GPS. The names are important for business recognition and also for visitors.

Ms. Shreve confirmed that the number area on the base is 8" x 16" and one square foot would be added to the requested amount making it 25 square feet. The permitted sign area is 16 square feet. Mr. Wyciskala confirmed that the application is amended to increase the requested square footage of signage to 25 square foot. This will include the street number on the sign base.

James Giurintano, Planner (Bowman Consulting) was sworn in.

A-1 sign exhibit and google earth image of 220 Ridgedale Ave (photos).

Mr. Giurintano described the proposed sign as well as the proposed location. The proposed location is 12 feet from the property line and 23 feet off the face of the curb. There will be no obstruction to any site lines. The building is 100 feet from the roadway and is hidden from view by vegetation on adjacent properties. The sign is needed to give the motoring public advance notice of where the property is.

Mr. Giurintano described the other signs depicted on the exhibit that are in the area. There are oversized signs that include Wells Fargo (17sf), AAA (27sf), TD Bank (23sf), Chase Bank (20sf), and Exxon (53sf). He added that these signs are for single tenant locations, allowing for larger lettering and more visibility. He noted that 171 Ridgedale Ave. is a multi-tenanted building and has a 24sf sign. Although many of these area signs are in the business zone, the subject location is only one block from that zone and will maintain the character of the existing signage in the area. If the subject property was in the B-1 zone it would be compliant.

He said that this is a multi-tenanted building. The proposed sign will comply with height and setback requirements and the variance is needed for sign area only. He noted that the proposed sign location is behind the site lines and also on the outside of the curve in the road so there is no visual obstruction. He stated that the building sits back 100 feet from the roadway and is screened by vegetation. The motoring public needs advance notice of where this property is in order to safely enter the site.

They need larger letter height for accurate visibility from 50 feet away. There has been many transportation studies done that support the sign size. Although GPS use is common, the motoring public still wants a visual confirmation of a destination.

Mr. Giurintano reviewed Bob Michaels' report and said that the justification for the variance is suited to the C-2 criteria. It encourages appropriate use and promotes health and safety and general welfare. It is good transportation design as it improves visibility to the motoring public. It promotes a desirable visual element and good civic design. There is no detriment as it is internally illuminated and will not produce glare or spillage. It is aesthetically pleasing with muted coloring. There is no impact to other properties. The nearest resident is 150ft north of the driveway and 170 feet from the sign.

Bob Michaels asked about the hours that the sign would remain lighted. Mr. Giurintano conferred with Mr. Centanni and said that the sign lighting would be off within an hour of the last tenant closing. Bob Michaels asked if Mr. Giurintano felt that there could be a C-1 hardship criteria due to the irregular shape of the lot and the building setback of 100 feet. Mr. Giurintano agreed that those conditions do create a hardship.

Mayor Taylor stated that it is old building that was a single occupant for 30 years.

Mr. DeAngelis confirmed that all the businesses in the building use 220 Ridgedale Avenue as their address. He thought that it may be more logical to use the street address of "220" on a conforming sign and then add a tenant sign deeper into the property closer to the building and parking. His opinion is that the tenant list on the proposed signage would be unreadable to drivers. He does not see any advantage.

Mrs. Margulies said that is a good opinion.

Carmen Cefolo-Pane asked how far away the residential homes are. Mr. Giurintano said that the closest one is 150 away. She confirmed with Mr. Giurintano that there would be no obstruction to site lines from the neighboring locations.

Mrs. Margulies asked about vehicles exiting the adjacent golf course. Mr. Giurintano said that there is no obstruction to them. He added that the golf course pump house blocks a site line when exiting the golf course.

Mrs. Margulies confirmed that proper public notice was served. She asked about the tenant hours of operation. Mr. Centanni said most tenant hours of operation end at 7pm. Mrs. Margulies requested that the sign be turned off by 8:00p.m. They agreed. She recommended that it be put into the resolution.

Mr. Buchholz verified that there are eight tenants in the building.

There were no other questions or comments. Mr. DeAngelis opened the meeting to the public. There were no questions or comments. He called for a motion.

Mr. Cannilla made a motion to approve the application with the modifications discussed, second by Mr. Roberts

Roll: Cannilla, yes; Roberts, yes; DeAngelis, no; Margulies, no; Taylor, no; Cefolo-Pane, no; Buchholz, yes.

Application denied (4-3).

Preliminary and Final Major Subdivision:

10. **64 Ridgedale Avenue, LLC**
64 Ridgedale Avenue
Block 2804, Lot 19

Application #18MSD-3
R-15 Zone

Applicant is seeking approval for a 5 lot subdivision on a 3.28 acre parcel.

Carried from the November 26, 2018 meeting without further notice or publication.

Carmen Cefolo-Pane recused herself from the application.

Steven Azzolini, Esq. represented the applicant. He reviewed the plans and the project to date. Anthony Facchino, PE, remained under oath.

A-10: site plan rendering dated 12/10/18

The south and east property lines have been regraded to reduce any disturbance to the trees and to maintain existing drainage flow from the residents along Roosevelt. The proposed drainage system and berms along that property line have been removed. The driveway on lot 19.01 is now 80 feet from the Ridgedale Avenue instead of 50 feet. They will plant 74 trees. The northerly side of the cul- de- sac will have shrubs and low maintenance plantings.

They are now preserving 31% of the existing tree canopy due to these changes. They are located primarily behind the homes. They will also add trees to the site in these areas.

There are now three street lights proposed. They will work with the County to prepare the easement for maintenance of the storm drains. They will submit a revised tree removal permit as requested. They will comply with a tree assessment done by Borough Engineer Mike Sgaramella. They will not impact any neighboring property trees due to the grading being pulled back.

There remains two variances that they are seeking. They are lot width on corner lot 19.01 and lot depth on lot 19.02. The house on lot 19.01 is proposed to be 80 feet back from Ridgedale Avenue and they have testified that it

will not be closer. There will be no drainage disturbance in the rear of the homes parallel to the rear yards of Roosevelt and the property will now drain to easements in between each of the proposed properties.

The meeting was opened to the public.

Patrick McAuley, Esq. representing 12 Afton Drive. He asked if there will be additional shrubbery along the north side of Salvatore Court. Mr. Facchino said that there is additional shrubbery proposed to the north side of the proposed street, but no more than the previous plan. Mr. McAuley asked where the street lights would be. Mr. Facchino stated that three street lights are proposed; one in the beginning area, one in the middle and one in the bulb in front of lot 19.05. He also asked about the grade changes between the road and his client's property on Afton Drive.

Chris Ayars, 9 Roosevelt Blvd. He is still concerned with the elevation of the proposed property. It appears to be four feet higher than his property and asked why it was not lowered. Mr. Facchino said that the elevations are consistent with Mr. Ayars' property. Mr. Azzolini asked Mr. Facchino if any water runoff will go onto neighboring properties. Mr. Facchino stated that it will not.

Mr. Ayars said that the property is being raised four feet and he wants certainty that he will not take on any water. He wanted to know what recourse he has if he gets water. Mr. Azzolini responded that these are engineered plans that are reviewed by professionals. They can say with a degree of engineering certainty how it will work. He added that Mr. Ayars is asking speculative questions that cannot be answered. Mr. DeAngelis agreed. Mr. Facchino said that he will not have any more water than what he has today. Mr. Buchholz added that this is a better plan than what was proposed before.

Mr. Ayars stated that he remains concerned with the elevations and also about the impact to the trees on his property. The development is within 30 feet of his trees. Mr. Facchino said that they measured all the driplines and they are outside of the driplines of the tree canopies. Mr. Ayars felt that the root structure could be compromised. He said there was extensive testimony on the affects to the trees. Mr. Azzolini responded that they have taken extraordinary measures to preserve the area trees and have done everything that they can.

Michael Reiner, 63 Ridgedale Avenue. Asked about the landscape shrubs on the island and who will maintain them. Mr. Facchino stated that it is to be municipal property and the town would take care of it.

Tom McNally, Roosevelt Blvd. Did not understand the elevations of the land. It appears that water is going uphill. Mr. Facchino said that he is looking at the grade elevation, and the pipes are underneath.

Mr. Azzolini recapped the two variances. There is a front yard setback variance needed for Lot 19.01. They are asking for 76 feet frontage where 125 feet is required. There is a lot depth variance needed for Lot 19.02. They are requesting 132.8 feet where 150 feet is required. They are also requesting a waiver for tree removal. Their plan calls for preserving 31.9% of the existing tree canopy where 40% is required.

Mr. DeAngelis asked that the conditions be reviewed. Mr. Wyciskala stated that they agreed to provide an 80 foot setback on lot 19.01., compliance with engineer's reports, and consent from all inside and outside approving agencies is required. Protection for the Afton Drive residents concerning their rear property frontage will be recorded and there is to be no access to Salvatore Court from that. They will provide supplemental plantings along the northerly line. Street trees along the south side must not in the grass strip.

The meeting was opened to the public for comments.

Mary Orloff, Florham Park Environmental Commission representative. She stated that the commission had a special meeting on the wetlands associated with the potential development of this property. The position of the commission is that they will be comfortable with how the NJ DEP decides to proceed on this application.

Brian Kaminetz, 10 Afton Drive. He wanted to know how the affected properties along Afton Drive will be grandfathered protection against their rear yards becoming front yards. Mr. Wyciskala stated that it would be a condition of the resolution.

He wanted to know what kinds of trees would be planted in the tree buffer behind 10 Afton Drive. Mr. Facchino said that there would be 2 deciduous and 2 evergreen trees. He wanted to have more planted. Mr. Facchino said they will do that if they are able to.

Mr. Azzolini added that they would be happy to plant trees on the neighbor's property if they want that.

Patrick McAuley. He stated that he thinks that the Board should deny this application. He said that the applicant did not meet the burden of proof that the benefits outweigh the detriments. There are safety issues at stake. The move to a more southerly road entrance is helpful but still not safe. There are still traffic movement conflicts that will create a hazardous condition. It does not meet the Morris County Planning requirements regarding distance requirements. There are many negative impacts. Afton Drive residents will now have a street light in their back yard. This causes a loss of privacy. If the application is approved, he wants language in the deed for the new homes as well as a recordable resolution concerning and protecting the Afton Drive rear yards. The deed restrictions should be clear in that the future owners cannot object to the Afton Drive rear yards.

John Wyciskala said that the resolution can be recorded.

Michael Reiner, 63 Ridgedale Avenue. He said that there has been many changes in Florham Park since he has been here. Some are good changes, but this project is not a good change. It affects many people who are not on the 200 foot list. He said that many people feel very negative about this project and he has a petition with 60 signatures on it opposing this.

Mr. Azzolini objected to his statements and said that he is not representing them. John Wyciskala responded that the Board cannot accept a petition and Mr. Reiner cannot speak for the people who signed it. If they have something to say they must come to the meeting. However, he can state what the petition said.

Mr. Reiner read his petition. It noted that the project involves too many houses on too small of a property. There are runoff, wetlands, and the possibility of an endangered species to be considered. He feels that DEP approval should be obtained before any application for development. He doesn't understand the rush. He also wants to see what the impact of the affordable housing obligation will have on the town before this. He does not like the idea of a "dead end" street. It will become a pick-up area for the middle school. He feels that it will set a precedent. He does not like the idea of demolishing a charming 1800's home and recommends rejecting the proposal.

Tom McNally, 15 Roosevelt Blvd. He stated that the value of his property and other adjacent properties depend on this property. He questioned whether the town storm drain system can handle this and said that we need to be sure.

Laurie Finelli, Elm Street. She said that she grew up on Elm Street. No one likes to see changes when they are used to something next to them even though it is not theirs. It seems like a very safe plan. The site lines appear to be clear where the road intersects with Ridgedale Avenue. It is not green acres property and there is plenty of land in Florham Park devoted to that. It will be a great development on a cul-de-sac which are family streets. Everyone wants to live on a cul-de-sac. There are many trees proposed and there are trees existing on neighboring properties that screen them from this. This is only 5 homes. Growing up on Elm Street, we had great homes with families and had to deal with growth and changes along Elm Street but we worked with that. Everything works together.

There were no other comments from the public and Mr. DeAngelis closed that portion of the meeting.

Mark Taylor stated that the affordable housing obligation is for 624 units. This project will be obligated to pay 1% of the construction costs into the housing trust fund. The NJ DEP approval is needed for this project to move forward. However, the Planning Board is required to consider the application and must act on it and cannot hold the application up until the DEP approves or denies the plan. They are an outside agency. Also, he stated that an endangered species portion is part of the DEP submittal and will be considered.

Mayor Taylor continued and asked what could happen to this property if this project does not happen. He personally said less homes and more landscaping would be better. He added that he has been in Florham Park for 59 years and has seen many changes.

Mike Cannilla asked about house side shields on the street lights.

Mike Sgaramella replied that the street lights should be located on the south side of the road where the sidewalk is. They cannot install shields there. It may be possible to install a shield on the street light located in the cul-de-sac bulb.

Mr. DeAngelis gave his evaluation of the application. He said the property is in the R-15 zone and the minimum lot size is 15,000 square feet. The proposed lot sizes are extra-large. The detriments of granting the variances do not outweigh the benefits. There is a deficient lot width, but the road needed to be moved. People want to buy new homes in Florham Park. We are getting 5 beautiful homes on a nice cul-de-sac. Five homes will not have an impact on traffic. There is a concern with the wetlands but that is the purview of the DEP. The trees seem to be adequately protected. There are uses that could go on this property that would be a lot worse.

Bob Michaels stated that a house of worship is able to be built there and that would have a much greater impact on the area than this plan.

Mike Cannilla said that a better plan has been presented tonight. There are very few lots that are this large.

Mr. Azzolini thanked the Board for their time and stated that the testimony is complete.

Seeing no further comments from the Board, Mr. DeAngelis called for a motion.

Mr. Buchholz made a motion to authorize the attorney to prepare a positive resolution to be reviewed at the January 14, 2019 meeting, second by Mrs. Margulies.

Roll: Buchholz, yes; Margulies, yes; DeAngelis, yes; Taylor, yes; Cannilla, yes; Roberts, yes.

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 9:10p.m.

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

December 10, 2018