

**Borough of Florham Park
Planning Board
Work Session Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2022
(Held via ZOOM)**

The Regular meeting of The Borough of Florham Park Planning Board was called to order on Monday evening, February 14, 2022 at 6:30p.m. The meeting was conducted by virtual means utilizing the Zoom service in accordance with the guidelines set for by the State of New Jersey which explicitly permits a public body to conduct a meeting electronically during a state of emergency.

Members Present:

Mr. Michael DeAngelis – Chairman
Mr. Joseph Guerin- Vice Chairman
Ms. Kristen Santoro
Mr. David Roberts
Mr. Jeffrey Noss

Members Absent:

Mayor Mark Taylor
Mr. Gary Feith
Mr. Sid Dvorkin
Mr. Jeffrey Hegan

Also Present:

Mr. Michael Sgaramella, Board Engineer
Ms. Katherine Sarmad, Board Planner
Mr. Derek Orth, 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:

The following site plan waivers were administratively approved by Mike Sgaramella:

22SPW-01: Healthy Smile Dentistry (66 Ridgedale Avenue) – new owner of medical building
22SPW-02: 23 Vreeland Road, LLC (Appel Design Group) – new tenant
22SPW-03: 23 Vreeland Road, LLC (Peter Waldor & Assoc.) – new tenant
22SPW-04: Sun Valley Plaza, LLC, Passaic Avenue (additional parking spaces)

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

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

February 14, 2022

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1. Call to Order.
2. Adequate notice has been given in accordance with the Sunshine Law.
3. Announcement – There will be no new testimony after 9:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr. Michael DeAngelis – Chairman
Mr. Joseph Guerin- Vice Chairman
Ms. Kristen Santoro
Mr. David Roberts
Mr. Jeffrey Noss

Members Absent:

Mayor Mark Taylor
Mr. Gary Feith
Mr. Sid Dvorkin
Mr. Jeffrey Hegan

Also Present:

Mr. Michael Sgaramella, Board Engineer
Ms. Katherine Sarmad, Board Planner
Mr. Derek Orth, Esq. Board Attorney

Approval of Minutes:

4. Approval of the minutes of the January 10, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Noss made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Roberts

Roll: On a roll call vote all members present and eligible voted to approve the minutes.

5. **Zoning Ordinance Review Discussion – Katherine Sarmad**

Katherine Sarmad presented a summary of the edits based on Board discussion and discussion between the Engineer and Zoning Officer included in the second draft of the zoning ordinance update. The highlights include the following:

New C-5 zone creation. This proposed zone is a portion of the C-1 zone that is beyond two Vreeland (multi-family project) to the Columbia and Fernwood corridor. New uses contemplated for this zone would be warehouse, distribution centers, commissary kitchen, exercise and health clubs, educational training, pack and ship services, flex office, and self-storage facilities. These could be listed as permitted uses or made conditional uses. A conditional use must meet certain design standards. She stated that the proposed bulk standards would be the same as a C-1 zone except for height. The current height limit for the C-1 zone is 40 feet. The proposed height is 45 feet, which is needed for a warehouse use. Parking standards were added for this zone. The parking standard for warehouse use is proposed to be one per 1000sf.

C-1 zones are scattered across the Borough and some areas are not suited for these new uses. Katherine Sarmad thought it was better to create a new zone. Office uses have struggled. All bulk standards for the C-5 zone are same as C-1. However, the height limit would be increased to 45 feet as permitted in the C-3 and C-4 zone.

Solar Panels - Created design standards for solar panels over parking in C and PODS zones only.

Building coverage change - Remove the overhangs up to two (2) feet from being required to be included in total building coverage percentage. They do not affect storm water and are often not included in building coverage numbers and only discovered during plan review. This could lead to a small increase of allowable building coverage.

Lot coverage change - Remove pools and up to one foot of coping from counting towards improved lot coverage. They collect water for the most part often will max out the improved lot coverage on a property, leaving no available lot coverage for a patio or walkway without variance approval. Decks and walkways will still count towards lot coverage.

Building coverage percentages - There was discussion on building coverage percentages for residential properties. Katherine Sarmad will look to see if there is a more equitable way of organizing the ranges for the allowable building coverage percentages. Larger residential lots in the R-15 and R-25 zones are permitted less coverage than the same size lot in the R-44 zone. She suggested that lots over 40,000 square feet regardless of the zone they are in be permitted 10% building coverage. Mike DeAngelis agreed that the percentages for larger lots should be corrected. It looks like they are penalized. The R-88 zone is 15 parcels located off Brooklake Road. Katherine Sarmad suggested an increase to six percent.

It was noted that all properties would gain a little more building with the elimination of overhangs. Jeff Noss was concerned that the new residential buildings will go right to the setback line and be even closer than what they are currently, especially if they are side by side.

Corner lots - There was discussion on corner lots and the setbacks for two front yards. The setbacks are problematic. Katherine Sarmad wants to create more flexibility for corner lots. One suggestion is to create the same distance from the interior side neighbor and rear neighbor. She will research this more.

Rear yard setbacks - The rear setback is 30 feet in R-7, 50 feet in R-25, and R-15 is 40%. The largest setback requirement is in the R-15 zone. It is not clear where that came from. She thought it should be 60 feet. Jeff Noss thought it was to control the home to a reasonable depth. Mike Sgaramella thought it was also connected to decks being too far back and into the setback. It was noted that the setback for a deck must be clarified.

The buffer areas in a PB zone when abutting a residential zone is suggested to be 50 feet for non-residential and multi-family, instead of 150 feet. Many properties in the PB zones are only 150 feet deep in total, which would make any development of the property impossible when abutting a residential area, especially along Columbia Turnpike. The purpose of the buffer within the setback is to use landscaping design techniques to separate uses.

Accessory structures in residential zones – It was recommended that accessory structures under 200 sf and less than 10 feet high not be included in building coverage. This was a recommendation from the Construction Official to more mirror the building code requirement. The suggested setback is 5 feet from property lines for any accessory structure over 100 square feet. It needs to be clear that accessory structures are still included in lot coverage calculations and storm water calculations.

Pools – setbacks should be separate and increased to 10 feet. Mechanical pad can remain at 5 feet.

Sheds in non-residential zones- Permitted up to 250 feet with bulk standards.

EV ordinance (Electric Vehicle) –

Most of the state model ordinance cannot be modified. Two areas that can be regulated locally are signage and fees. Advertising signage provides a free or low cost charge. However, research has shown that the free EV stations are slow to charge. The other negative is that they often not repaired in a timely manner when broken, but the

digital signage continues to run. This adds extra digital signage to a property. Katherine Sarmad recommended that digital signage (advertising) be excluded and prohibited from EV stations. In addition, she suggested that any charging stations on public property charge a fee.

Katherine Sarmad also reviewed the signage ordinance. She made some suggested changes to the B-1 zone signage and asked for feedback. She suggested that wall sign area to be calculated at 15% of the façade. It will limit the area of the sign in total. Mike Sgaramella brought up that it could lead to less uniformity in sign dimensions in the town center. This will be further discussed. Katherine Sarmad stated that if height and length are important then we must include standards. Mike Sgaramella noted that how the building façade is measured should be defined.

Signage standards in the University Zone are proposed to mirror the PODS zone. Jeff Noss thought that more signage is needed in the interest of health and safety on the college campuses. This is especially for signs interior to the campus and not seen from public thoroughfares. Katherine agreed and will revise.

Election and campaign signs. They are controlled by the temporary sign ordinance. Not changing at this time.

The meeting was opened to the public.

Jonathan Meyers, Columbia Fernwood Associates. He stated that he supports the changes that are being contemplated with respect to the C zones.

Mike DeAngelis thanked Katherine and noted that there several members who are not at the meeting tonight. He recommended that the full Planning Board review these proposals at a future meeting.

Seeing no other business to come before the Board, Mike DeAngelis asked for a motion to adjourn.

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

February 14, 2022