

**Borough of Florham Park
Planning Board
Work Session Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2023**

The Work Session Meeting of the Borough of Florham Park Planning Board was called to order on Monday evening, March 27, 2023 at 6:30p.m. in the Municipal Building located at 111 Ridgedale Avenue, Florham Park, New Jersey.

Members Present:

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

Members Absent:

Mayor Mark Taylor
Mr. Gary Feith

Also Present:

Mr. Michael Sgaramella, Board Engineer
Mr. Michael Mistretta, Board Planner
Mr. Derek Orth, Esq. Board Attorney
Mr. Joseph Fishinger, Board Traffic Consultant

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Mr. DeAngelis asked the Board Secretary if the statutory requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were met. Board Secretary Marlene Rawson responded that we are in compliance with the requirements.

Site Plan Waivers:

None

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 6:35pm.

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

March 27, 2023

**Borough of Florham Park
Planning Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2023**

A Regular Meeting of the Borough of Florham Park Planning Board was called to order on Monday evening, March 27, 2023 at 6:35p.m. in the Municipal Building, located at 111 Ridgedale Avenue, Florham Park, New Jersey

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
Mayor Mark Taylor
Ms. Kristen Santoro
Mr. David Roberts
Mr. Jeffrey Noss
Mr. Sid Dvorkin
Mr. Jeffrey Hegan

Members Absent:

Mr. Gary Feith

Also Present:

Mr. Michael Sgaramella, Board Engineer
Mr. Michael Mistretta, Board Planner
Mr. Derek Orth, Esq. Board Attorney
Mr. Joseph Fishinger, Board Traffic Consultant

Approval of Minutes:

4. Approval of the minutes of the March 13, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Guerin made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Dvorkin
Roll: On a roll call vote all members present and eligible voted to approve the minutes.

Resolution of Approval:

Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth

2 Convent Road
Block 1301, Lot 2

Application 20MSD-1

Applicant is seeking approval for a third extension of time to record the minor subdivision.

Mr. Guerin made a motion to approve the resolution, second by Ms. Santoro
Roll: On a roll call vote all members present and eligible voted to approve the resolution.

Amended Preliminary and Final Site Plan:

9. **McDonald's USA** **Application #22SP-5**
176 Columbia Turnpike
Block 804, Lot 1 & 2

Applicant is seeking approval for improvements to the drive-thru configuration Carried from the March 13, 2023 meeting without further notice or publication.

Michael Miceli, Esq. represented the Applicant. Tiago Duarte, engineer for the Applicant, remained sworn in.

Mr. Duarte confirmed that the subdivision has been recorded.

A-4: site plan rendering (3.27.23)

Tiago Duarte stated that the goal was to create more space for easier circulation around the area of the trash enclosure. The relocated the enclosure back to the west to achieve this. The setbacks are now 10 feet from James Street and 5 feet from the interior lot line. This closely matches current conditions. There is now a 23-foot bypass lane in that area and there will be no blocking of traffic.

The deliveries occur twice per week during non-peak times. Typically on Tuesday mid-morning and Friday afternoons. Some spaces are used during the delivery process. Trash pick-up is Monday and Thursday during off-peak hours. It generally occurs in the mid-morning and complies with the 7am-6pm requirement. The disposal company uses a front loading truck. The trash enclosure area will be refreshed with new landscape material.

Mr. Duarte stated that the new drive-thru configuration would result in an increase in capacity over the current design. There will be a 20-25% increase in efficiency according to actual studies.

Joe Fishinger, Board Traffic Consultant, reported that he agrees with the increase in efficiency and has no issues with the design. It is wide enough for two cars side by side, and there is still enough room for the bypass lane to circle the building.

Mike Mistretta, Board Planner, asked for a landscaping summary. Tiago Duarte responded to questions from Mike DeAngelis. The landscaping will be enhanced and supplemented. They will replace any damaged trees. They will preserve or replace the existing evergreens. There will be new four-foot fencing behind the new curb along the James Street side from the trash enclosure area to the corner of the building. The change in elevation will help screen the area along James Street.

Tiago Duarte described the landscape screening. They will use mature screening and will use a mix of deciduous and evergreens. They will use specimens that are 4-5 feet at planting near the trash enclosure. Mike Mistretta commented that there are different species of arborvitae that can be used and softened with the addition of flowering trees. They agreed to the review and approval of the landscape plan with the Borough Professionals.

Mike DeAngelis asked if a variance is needed for the bypass lane. Mike Sgaramella replied that there is no size regulation for that. When questioned on the height of the overhang, Tiago Duarte stated that it is 9.5 feet and there is enough clearance. There were questions on the size of the trash enclosure area. Tiago Duarte responded that they need two 8-yard dumpsters, plus carts. The trucks must have space and clearance to navigate. The enclosure area is the same size as what exists today.

Mike DeAngelis also questioned the cars that may cross into the adjacent lane while making the turn. Tiago Duarte responded that the cars are always moving forward so it regulates itself.

The meeting was opened to the public. Seeing no questions, the meeting was closed to the public.

Chris Cutral, franchise owner, and Julie Incorvaia, store manager, were sworn in for operations testimony. Julie Incorvaia confirmed that deliveries are twice per week. The schedule changes periodically. The new schedule is on

Tuesday and Friday in the morning. The delivery operation takes about 45 minutes. Julie Incorvaia also confirmed that the deliveries are usually Tuesdays at 7:30am, and Fridays at 10am.

Julie Incorvaia also said the trash pick-up is twice per week and occurs at different times. There is no backing in of the truck because it is front loading. She confirmed that the tandem drive-thru line gets very long and often reaches the shopping center parking lot.

Mike DeAngelis thought that the pay window is also slowing the process. Chris Cutral responded that the current tandem ordering could create a back-up when they are filling two orders in the tandem line. The side-by-side has no problem because the camera takes a picture so there is no question about what car is ordering. There is also the option of pre-paid orders that can be done on phone apps.

Chris Cutral also explained that online orders do not use the drive-thru and there are designated parking spaces for order pick-up. They will need to use the bypass lane to get to these spaces. He wants to move these spots to the front of the store, but needs McDonald's approval first.

Chris Cutral stated that he has 24 franchises and the Florham Park location is the busiest location with a drive-thru. The customer perception improves with a side-by-side drive-thru. The drive-thru begins as one lane, and then breaks into two lanes, then back into one lane. He may put cones up to guide the cars properly. Drivers will be instructed on how to merge once the order is placed.

Mike DeAngelis said that he just wants to be sure that there is enough room. Chris Cutral said that he has implemented this configuration at six of his locations so far, and they are all designed in the one-two-one format. They will have an extra person inside for order taking.

John McDonough, Planner for the Applicant, was sworn in. He stated that the location is in a popular center of town in the B-1 business zone. The project needs minimal relief to correct operational deficiencies and achieve fast service. The bulk standards are substantially compliant for the most part. They need five C variances that are mainly related to existing conditions.

He said the variances fall into the C-1 hardship and C-2 category as a better zoning alternative. In defense of the C-2 variance, the functional benefits include more efficient traffic flow, better customer service and safety. Speed is essential for this business and the improvements clear out the choke point. They are implementing a well-tested model. The customer expects this type of operation in a modernized and upgraded facility. They are adding new landscape that will fill the voids and soften the edge for a clean look.

The following purposes are met:

- A – Promotes the general welfare
- G – Provides for a variety of uses
- I – Creates a desirable visual environment
- H – Provides for a free flow of traffic
- N – Meets a planning goal for efficient use of land and making it better

The trash enclosure setback is similar what exists today. Landscaping in the setback will include a 4-foot fence and be bolstered with evergreens, roses, and grasses to mitigate the buffer and setbacks. It will create a clean edge and be designed by professionals. The drive aisle width is 19.1 feet and is existing today. They currently have four ground signs and are requesting two extra. This is informational signage only and needed to navigate safely thru the drive-thru.

The benefits outweigh the detriments. There is no impairment to the zone plan or master plan. The Master Plan recommends a strong commercial base and recognizes the changing business trends.

The C-1 variance condition is that the building is there and they are trying to work with the current footprint. Relief is related to the land. The dual lane drive-thru will reduce the likelihood of cars backing up into the adjacent lot

lanes. The signage is internal to the site and will not be visible to roadway traffic. John McDonough stated that the applicant has met their burden.

The meeting was opened to the public. Seeing no questions, the meeting was closed to the public.

Mike DeAngelis thanked Mr. McDonough and said he testimony was convincing. In response to Mr. Guerin's question on deliveries, the truck backs into the site. Mr. Noss felt there was some positive effect to the environment by reducing emissions to some degree by reduced wait times.

Joe Guerin asked for a summary of variances. Board Attorney Derek Orth reviewed the conditions.

Trees will be preserved if possible or replaced.

Landscape plantings subject to approval by the Board Professionals and are to be 6 feet at planting
Employee parking area is to be by the trash enclosure and will be re-stripped and new signage added.

Mike Mistretta reviewed the list of variances:

Inside setback:	10ft (R)	5.4ft (E)	5.0 ft. (Requested)
Street setback:	20ft (R)	13.6ft (E)	10 ft. (Requested)
Buffer area:	10ft (R)	8.8ft (E)	3.0 ft. (Requested)
Aisle width	24ft (R)	19.1ft (E)	19 ft. (Requested)
Signage	1 (R)	5 (E)	6 (Requested)

Signage has preexisting conditions that are not changing.

Sign area (drive-thru) 45.4ft (E) 54.3ft (Requested)

Parking space size has preexisting conditions that are not changing (10.2 x 17.6ft & 9.7 x 20ft)

There were no questions or comments. Mr. DeAngelis asked for a motion.

Mr. Guerin made a motion to authorize the Attorney to prepare a positive resolution, second by Mr. Roberts
Roll: On a roll call vote all members present and eligible voted for the preparation of a positive resolution

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Marlene Rawson
Board Secretary

March 27, 2023