

CRP
5/27/15

RARITAN PLANNING & ZONING BOARD
22 First Street
RARITAN, NEW JERSEY

Minutes of March 25, 2015 Meeting

Present: Mayor Liptak
Chairman R. Miller
Ms. D. Thomas
Mr. T. Brown
Mr. W. Cunningham
Mr. R. Rispoli
Mr. J. Gausz
Mr. T. Granahan
Mr. Z. Bray
Mr. R. Zack
Mr. D. Forktus

Absent: Councilwoman S. Gara

Also Present: S. Rubright, Esq.
S. Schrek – VCEA
D. Maski, VCEA
Mr. L. Gara- Zoning and Construction Official

Chairman Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Miller read the Open Public Meeting Notice as follows:

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was sent to the Courier News on January 17, 2015. In addition, copies of the notices were posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, on the Raritan Borough website, and filed in the Office of the Borough Clerk. They were also sent to those people who have requested and paid the cost for mailing same. Notices on the bulletin board have remained continuously posted. Proper notice having been given, the Board secretary is directed to include this statement in the minutes of this meeting.

Flag Salute

Minutes: Given the on-going recording secretary vacancy, no Minutes were available.

Engineer’s Report: Stone Bridge is gearing up for final paving.

Zoning Officer’s Report: Tim Horton will be submitting for permits soon.

Executive Session: Motion – Tom Granahan; second – Dave Forktus; All approved. Attorney-client privilege discussion of recent N.J. Supreme Court decision on COAH and affordable housing.

Regular Meeting: Re-convened at 7:50 p.m.

Old Business:

Public Hearing on “Addendum to Amendment to Land Use Plan Amendment, Orlando Driver Corridor.” Dave Maski, PP, provided the planning rationale to incorporate mixed uses, including residential and retail, in the Riverfront District. Under certain conditions set forth in the conditional use standards, it would be appropriate to have residential and mixed uses in the zone. This will facilitate redevelopment of the area. It will accomplish a lot of what the Orlando Corridor Plan was intended to do so it will be consistent with a lot of what is in the Orlando Corridor Plan. Mr. Maski will make some additions to the Plan per the Board’s discussion and the Board will continue the hearing on April 22, 2015. Motion to continue hearing – R. Miller, seconded by John Gausz. All approved.

New Business:

Raritan Crossing LLC. New Jersey Highway Route 206 at Somerset Street, Block 116.01, Lots 25, 26.01, 27 and 27.01, Block 112, Lot 3 and portion of Granetz Place right-of-way. Application for preliminary and final site plan, use variance, and parking variance approval.

The Property is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Somerset Street (CR 626) and NJ State Highway Route 206 and known as Block 116.01, Lots 25, 26.01, 27 & 27.01, Block 112, Lot 3 and portion of Granetz Place right-of-way on the Raritan Borough tax maps. The Property is currently occupied by three buildings containing various retail uses and several parking lots. The proposal is to increase the number of parking spaces through a combination of restriping and reconfiguring the parking lots. In addition, the building formerly housing Radio Shack is being converted into a walk-in urgent care medical facility. The reconfiguration of the parking lot will be partially accomplished through an expansion of the rear parking lot into a previously vacated portion of the Granetz Place right-of-way and a proposed vacation of half of the Granetz Place right-of-way to the south of Glaser Avenue.

The majority of the Property is located in the B-3 Highway Business District Zone with a small portion (mostly parking) within the B-2 Shopping Center District. Although the types of retail uses in the existing shopping center are not permitted uses in the B-3 Zone, the site received previous development approvals as a shopping center. The proposed walk-in urgent medical facility is not a permitted use and, therefore, requires a “use” variance.

The following exhibits were introduced:

- A-1 Colorized version of site plan.
- A-2 Colorized version of site plan reflecting changes requested by Borough engineer and Borough police.
- A-3 Ordinance No. 81-2: Ordinance vacating and releasing from dedication and extinguishing the public interest in a portion of a strip of land known as Granetz Place.

- A-4 Floor plan of proposed urgent care.
- A-5 Rendering of proposed urgent care.
- A-6 Colorized version of revised site plan dated March 21, 2015.
- A-7 Colorized enlarged area of plan showing Somerset Street with changes required by Police Chief.

Expanding the rear parking area into an area of Granetz Place will require vacation of the “paper street” by the Borough Counsel. Parking spaces will also be restriped. ADA parking spaces will now meet all regulations and requirements.

There are currently one hundred sixty (160) parking spaces. With the proposed changes and additions, there will be at total of one hundred ninety-five (195) spaces. Per ordinance requirements, two hundred fifty-nine (259) spaces would be required. This is calculated based on:

Shopping Center:	4 spaces/1,000 sq. ft. x 62,007 sq. ft.:	248 spaces
Medical Use:	2 doctors x 5 spaces/doctor + 1space:	<u>11 spaces</u>
Required Parking:		259 spaces

While parking on-site is currently less than the ordinance requirement, and although the proposal is still deficient, it will bring the site into better conformance with the ordinance requirements. The Applicant proposes to restripe and widen the throat of the access drive at the intersection with Somerset Street.

During the survey process, the Applicant discovered that some of the existing parking spaces in front of the former Radio Shack store are in the N.J. Department of Transportation right-of-way for State Highway Route 206. The Applicant is working with NJDOT to obtain either a lease of this area or a transfer in fee. The Applicant will work with the NJDOT and the Borough engineer to develop an acceptable landscaping plan at this corner. The Applicant will also add landscaping along the westerly property line.

As part of the parking reconfiguration, the Applicant will add one (1) more handicapped accessible parking space in front of the proposed urgent care medical facility to bring the total number of spaces to two (2). Additional accessible parking spaces will be added throughout the parking lot to accommodate the various uses.

If the Granetz Place right-of-way is not vacated, nine (9) fewer new spaces would be added. The Applicant showed that there is precedent for the vacation request here as a portion was already vacated in 1981. (A-3). The Applicant has approached the Borough Council in connection with this proposal and is now seeking a recommendation from the Board to the Council on this request.

Residents near Granetz Place had questions on how the vacation of the paper street and the new parking would affect them. The Applicant stated that the area near Granetz Place will be green space and landscaped. They wanted to know if they would still have pedestrian access to the shopping center, and the Applicant said they would.

Board members expressed concern about the access drive and Somerset Street intersection. As residents of Raritan and users of this shopping center, Board members have observed that the center is used as a short-cut to Route 206. Board members said that the driveway by the former Radio Shack and Somerset Street should be for ingress only. There is also a problem with access from Route 206 into the area near “Exercise Woman.”

Edward Orlando, M.D. testified regarding the proposed urgent care medical facility proposed for the former Radio Shack building. Dr. Orlando is certified in Emergency Medicine. The facility will be one of seventeen (17) total centers called “Excel Urgent Care.” There are five (5) such centers in New Jersey, one (1) in Connecticut and the remainder in New York. Four (4) or five (5) are under construction.

Dr. Orlando described the typical urgent care facility and explained why the former Radio Shack store is perfectly suited for this use. There is one (1) physician on staff at a time. Other staff includes a nurse practitioner, a technician/scribe, a medical assistant, a front desk receptionist and an office manager. Dr. Orlando emphasized that there will be only three (3) staff members, including the physician, on site at any one time as one (1) person can fill multiple roles. The office manager is part-time and shares time at other sites and the medical assistant is also trained as a radiology technician.

Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily with 9:00 a.m. to 4:00p.m. on weekends.

Dr. Orlando explained that the urgent care service started when emergency room physicians saw a need for such facilities. The concept of the urgent care facility is to keep patients out of the Emergency Room. This is better for patients and for the Emergency Rooms. The urgent care facilities do not do routine exams. The physicians are not internal medicine doctors and they do not provide “primary care.” The youngest patient they will see is four (4) months old.

The average turnaround time per patient is forty (40) minutes. The average number of patients is four (4) per hour. The business goal is to see thirty-five (35) to forty (40) patients per day. This ideal practice buildup starts slowly and should be reached in three (3) to four (4) years.

The physical layout calls for seven (7) exam rooms. This number of rooms is required to facilitate having the exam rooms cleaned and to allow patients to wait comfortably. The emergency nature of the practice means that the patient flow cannot be predicted. In order to make sure patients are seen quickly and discharged as soon as possible, they need to have clean exam rooms available.

In terms of parking needs, Dr. Orlando said most of their facilities have eleven (11) to fourteen (14) parking spaces. They will not occupy a site if there is inadequate parking. They will agree to instruct employees on where they have to park in order to free up parking spaces closest to the urgent care facility for patients. In response to a question regarding employee parking on Granetz Place, Dr. Orlando said he will make sure this does not happen.

There are very few drugs on-site. Common drugs are antibiotics, prednisone, and over-the-counter medicines. They do not have narcotics.

Outside vendors remove medical waste.

The application was carried to the April 22, 2015 meeting date without need for further notice.

Public Comments: None

Miscellaneous:

On motion by Mr. Granahan, seconded by Mr. Forktus and approved by all members. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan R. Rubright
Board Attorney