

BOROUGH OF RARITAN
Planning Board Meeting
MINUTES
June 26, 2024

CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Borough of Raritan Municipal Building. Chairman LoPresti read the Open Public Meetings statement into the record.

ROLL CALL

Present

Chairman LoPresti
Councilman Tozzi
Mayor Carra
Mr. Cunningham
Mr. Colvin
Ms. Carra
Ms. Windrem

Also Present

John Deluca, Acting Board Attorney
Joe Brosnan, Board Engineer/Planner
Nancy Probst, Acting Board Secretary

Absent

Ms. Debellis
Mr. DeCicco
Mr. Murphy

MINUTES

Motion by Ms. Carra, **seconded** by *Indistinguishable* to approve the Minutes of **May 22, 2024**, as presented.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chairman LoPresti, Mayor Carra, Mr. Cunningham, Councilman Tozzi, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Ms. Windrem

Nay:

Abstain:

ENGINEERING/PLANNING REPORT

Engineering

Mr. Brosnan advised that the DOT grants are all moving along, and that the entire Richard Street neighborhood is expected to be paved by next year. He advised that progress was being made on the Municipal Building (submittals being reviewed).

Planning

Mr. Brosnan advised that the new developer for 21 Orlando Drive has been addressing issues. He provided updates on the Amrutha application.

RESOLUTIONS

• **AMAN HAMDA**

#23-007 Block 32, Lot 15 (10A & 10B John F Goellner Drive)

Motion by Ms. Windrem, **seconded** by Mayor Carra and unanimously carried to adopt a resolution memorializing the approval, as presented.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chairman LoPresti, Mayor Carra, Mr. Cunningham, Councilman Tozzi, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Ms. Windrem

Nay:

Abstain:

- **AMRUTHA LLC**
23-005 Block 44, Lot 5

Motion by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Ms. Windrem and unanimously carried to adopt a [REVISED] resolution memorializing the approval, as presented.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chairman LoPresti, Mayor Carra, Mr. Cunningham, Councilman Tozzi, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Ms. Windrem

Nay:

Abstain:

- **TRIMURRAY HOLIDNGS LLC**
24-002 Block 45, Lot 3 (17 Frelinghuysen Ave.)

Motion by Ms. Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Cunningham and unanimously carried to adopt a resolution memorializing the approval, as presented.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chairman LoPresti, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Ms. Windrem

Nay:

Abstain: Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi

MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY REVIEW

Raritan Mall - Block 116.01 Lot 11.01 (Orlando Drive)

Area in Need of Redevelopment/Redevelopment Plan Consistency Review

Mr. Cunningham recused at 6:41.

Mr. Brosnan explained that although the Plan was the same, it required Board approval for procedural reasons since it had been re-introduced by Council. He confirmed that there had been no changes to the testimony given two months ago and advised that his recommendation was that the Board find it to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan.

Questions from the Public

Roger Copt asked whether they could put housing on the site if they leave the zoning as commercial. He recollected that they voted for the property to remain commercial and suggested that the developer would wind up telling the Board what to do. Referencing an issue with whether Councilman Patente was conflicted, Mr. Copt asked whether it was a conflict for the mayor and his mother to vote. The Board Attorney explained that there was no conflict of interest for Mayor or Ms. Carra. Mr. Copt again made reference to Mr. Patente having to recuse and stated that "it doesn't look good."

Mike Patente of Glaser Ave. asked how this is consistent if the Master Plan shows the site as commercial. Mr. Brosnan responded to his question. Mr. Patente asked how it's consistent with the Master Plan if the zones conflict. The Board Attorney explained that the standard is that it is not inconsistent. Mr. Patente asked what would be inconsistent. He echoed Mr. Copt's sentiments on there being a conflict of interest with the mayor and his "blood relative" sitting on the Board.

Ms. Patente spoke in support of her father's statements regarding contradictory zoning and about a potential conflict of interest with the mayor and his mother, in addition to Mr. Colvin as a Township employee.

Joyce Fritchie mentioned the meeting on Monday. Mayor Carra explained that the Redevelopment Advisory Committee discussed the Downtown Sustainable Development Plan and the possibility of an Area in Need

designation for Agway.

Patrick Dinsmore of 523 Victoria Drive asked about the relationship between Antonio Carra and the Mayor/his mother given his ownership of property within 200' of the subject property, according to the Notice for the Granetz hearing. Mayor Carra explained that this was discussed with Bill Robertson.

Mr. Copt asked whether mixed use is subject to Fair Share Housing. He commented that they are going to put apartments no one wants on the last big piece of property left in Raritan. He commented that the commercial will not be rented out and wind-up reverting to fully residential as a result. Speaking directly to the Board, he stated "you did it with Granetz." He then stated, "you represent the people and if the people say they don't want it..."

Ms. Fritchie stated that the Mayor said the developer owns buildings in Bayonne/Jersey City. She asked whether they could have the addresses.

Mr. Copt asked whether the Board looked at the developer, calling him a "slumlord with all kinds of violations and suggesting that they are "bending over backwards" for him despite needing special counsel to make him comply. He asserted that the recommendation should be to keep it "as is."

Mr. Dinsmore how the mayor's uncle owning property within 200' of Granetz not a conflict. The Board Attorney advised that it was not related.

The public question/comment period related to the AINR was closed at 6:58.

The Vote:

Motion by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Colvin and unanimously carried to find the Redevelopment Plan not inconsistent with the Master Plan, based on the recommendation of the Board Engineer.

Roll Call:

Aye: Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Ms. Carra, Chairman LoPresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Colvin

Nay:

Abstain:

PUBLIC COMMENT

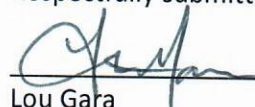
Mr. Dinsmore asked for clarification on the Amrutha resolution revisions. The revised language was read into the record. Mr. Copt stated he lives in Raritan but spends his money in Somerville. Mr. Patente commented about reconsideration for the number of zones in Raritan that allow for multi-family.

Bill Cunningham of 31 Glaser Ave. asked what spot zoning is and how it is handled under the MLUL. Mr. DeLuca responded.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Colvin and unanimously carried to adjourn at 7:09.

Respectfully submitted,



Lou Gara

Board Administrator/Secretary

Approved: 7/24/2024