

BOROUGH OF RARITAN
TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
November 8, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. in the Raritan Municipal Building.

Present for the Borough:

Rick Miller
Debbie Thomas
Mike DeCicco
John Gausz
Stan Schrek, Board Engineer
Angela Knowles, Board Planner

Present for the Applicant, CGR:

Ray Vella, Managing Member
Mike Cacavelli, Attorney
Dave Stires, Engineer
Andy Levine, Architect

Mr. Cacavelli provided an overview of the proposal to convert an existing commercial space into a mixed use development by adding four residential apartments (three [two bedrooms] via a second floor addition and one [efficiency type] ADA compliant unit on the first floor which is currently by the applicant exclusively as an office/shop space for his [Building Contractor] business).

Mr. Vella identified the shop/storage area on a plan and explained that he plans to provide required parking using three spaces in the existing garage together with leased space from an adjoining property owner. A discussion ensued on compliance with code/ parking standards.

Mr. Vella explained that he plans to pull the existing second floor exterior wall in 5' on both sides in order to accommodate windows/comply with code. He identified the proposed modifications to the structure on a plan and indicated that he would be refinishing the façade and rear.

Preliminary zoning and parking were discussed at length. Mr. Vella reiterated his intention to address a lot area deficiency by modifying exterior walls. With respect to parking, he explained that in the absence of a specific standard for the zone, the one for storage facilities was used. He then clarified that his current use of the first floor as a shop/storage area is limited/sporadic.

Parking need/availability was discussed at length, particularly with respect to the location of a handicapped space. Mr. Schrek advised that the backing out of vehicles out into the intersection and potential loss of spaces in front of the building would be relevant to the County.

An extensive discussion ensued on access to the rear of the property. Mr. Vella reiterated his intention to lease property [with first rights to purchase] in order to accommodate what he believes would be 10 spaces from an adjoining property owner.

Further discussion on parking need/availability ensued. Ownership of the properties in the rear of the subject property was discussed. Mr. Schrek asserted that the crux of the application is parking. Ms. Thomas added that

backing out onto First Avenue would also be a challenge. Mr. Vella asserted that his intention was to put a code compliant addition onto a conforming building and clean it up. The location of the handicapped spot for the ADA unit was discussed. Mr. Vella offered that a space in front of the building could be designated as handicapped by Council. Access/functionality of a handicapped space in a busy intersection was discussed. Alternative locations were discussed. Accessibility for people parking in the back was discussed which led to a discussion on the potential creation of an entrance in the rear.

A discussion ensued on control over the parking lot at lease end. The location of the entrance was discussed again. The applicant and his consultants discussed eliminating the fourth unit in order to solve the handicapped parking issue.

Ms. Knowles advised that the units would need to be code compliant for STC given the nature of the business [luxury apartment above a workshop].

Acquisition of neighboring properties in order to develop the entire Somerset Street/First Avenue area was discussed. Mr. Vella explained that one property owner who owns three lots is not interested in selling.

Further discussion ensued on parking, egress, sound and potential elimination of the ADA compliant unit. The location of the handicapped space was discussed further and at length.

Mr. Shrek expressed concern about the use being dependent upon parking owned/controlled by another entity. Mr. Miller suggested they speak to the Board Attorney.

The potential impact that placing a handicapped space in front of the building would have on the existing pizzeria was discussed. Mr. Shrek opined that the 20 year lease for parking would likely not work. It was determined that parking issues would need to be resolved prior to making any formal applications.

The meeting ended at 9:29.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Probst, Planning Board Secretary

APPROVED 1/23/19