

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE
PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
June 3, 2020**

The Township of West Orange Planning Board held its regularly scheduled meeting on June 3, 2020 at 7:30 P.M. via virtual ZOOM videoconference.

Chairman Weston called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 P.M. He announced that notification of the meeting was given to the Township Clerk, and posted on the Township Bulletin Board, sent to the West Orange Chronicle and the Star Ledger, and posted on the Township's website calendar. This meeting has been properly noticed to the public in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. No new matters will start after 10:30 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- Chairman Weston requested all persons stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Chairman Weston also called for a moment of reflection to acknowledge and thank all essential workers, and silence for all those suffering or lost during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Planning Board regular meeting will be July 1, 2020 at 7:30 P.M. on the ZOOM platform. (Secretary's Note: A Special Meeting for June 25, 2020 was added at the end of this meeting)
- Application **PB-19-10/Perez**; Block: 129; Lot: 46 & 31; Zone: RT 66 Whittlesey Avenue; Seeking to sub-divide the property into two residential lots was withdrawn by the Applicant.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Dr. Robert Bagoff
Mr. Everett Johnson
Councilwoman Susan McCartney
Mr. Peter Smeraldo, Jr
Mr. Andrew Trenk
Mr. Gary Wegner
Chairman Ron Weston
Mr. William Wilkes II
Mrs. Tammy Williams (7:38)

ABSENT:

Mr. Lee Klein

ALSO PRESENT:

Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP, Township Planner
Greg Valesi (proxy for John Hess), Consulting Engineer
Kenneth D. McPherson III, Esq., Attorney
Sean McCauley, Acting Planning Board Secretary

MEETING MINUTES

Adoption of the May 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes:

Motion: Councilwoman McCartney

Second: Dr. Bagoff

Bagoff: Y	Wilkes: Y
Johnson (Alt 1): Y	Williams: --
Klein: Absent	Chairman Weston: Y
McCartney: Y	
Smeraldo: Y	8 yes, 1 absent
Trenk: Y	
Wegner: Y	

- Mr. Grygiel sworn in
- Mr. Valesi sworn in

- **APPLICATION(S)**

1. PB-19-10/Perez

Block: 129; Lot: 46 & 31; Zone: RT 66 Whittlesey Avenue
Seeking to sub-divide the property into two residential lots

- Withdrawn

2. PB-20-02/Green Essex Partners Urban Renewal Entity

Block: 155; Lots: 40.02; 42.02; 42.01; Zone: Executive Drive
Preliminary and Final Site Plan; No Variances

- **Chairman Weston** Introduced applicant’s attorney **Francis X. Regan**
- **Mr. Regan** introduced application details
- Stated that notice was provided to public and utilities, and that notice was published to newspapers
- Described location and intention to build residential structure, parking, and amenities
- Declared all of the reports submitted minor changes to plans have already been made in response to board reports and memos

- Mr. Regan introduced the Applicant's Civil Engineer, **Zachary Chaplin**, for testimony

Zachary Chaplin, Civil Engineer for the Applicant:

- **Mr. Chaplin** provided credentials and was sworn in
- Introduced and discussed the following exhibits:
 - A-1 aerial site map
 - A-2 zoomed-in aerial exhibit; pond in center is current drainage
 - A-3 rendered site plan; colorized with landscaping; 820 parking spaces including parking garage; ingress/egress access off of Executive Drive from Rooney Circle; area for large truck turnaround, deliveries, and trash pickup; dog park in northern area; amenities, i.e. pool and hard and landscaped areas; proposed rain gardens propose; shielded led lighting
- **Mr. Regan** asked a question about pedestrian accessibility/connectivity
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that a sidewalk is planned for Executive Drive/Rooney Circle; as well as a proposed shuttle service to and from the development
- **Mr. Regan** asked a question regarding availability of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that EV stations were planned for the parking deck
- **Mr. Regan** asked if the EV stations could be moved from the parking deck to ground parking
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated the Applicants would agree with that
- **Mr. Regan** asked if there were any plans for pond enhancements
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that a fountain has been proposed, and new landscaping for both the pond and ditch
- **Mr. Regan** asked about specifics regarding compliance with Mr. Hess' engineering report
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that the Applicant intends to fully comply with the recommendations

Board Questions:

- **Mr. Wegner** asked if the sidewalks would extend around the perimeter of the complex, down Executive Drive, and down Rooney Circle; and if a crosswalk to the shopping center would be included
 - **Mr. Chaplin** responded in the affirmative regarding the sidewalk path; and that the crosswalk would be part of future town redevelopment

- **Mr. Regan** added that applicant will take sidewalks to edge of the property they own, but cannot control past that boundary. The applicant will work and cooperate with town and Essex Green owner.
- **Mr. Trenk** asked whether the EV stations near the dog park would be open to the public, or just for residents.
 - **Mr. Chaplin** was not sure, but believed them to be just for the residents

- **Mr. Trenk** inquired about bike circulation plans
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated bike racks could be added, and sidewalks could be used for cycling
- **Mr. Johnson** inquired about who owns the patch of land directly east
 - **Mr. Regan** stated that it was owned by Essex Green
- **Mr. Johnson** stated that there is only one means of ingress/egress
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that elevation changes create challenges to additional entrances/exits
- **Mr. Smeraldo** reviewed fire safety protection: states that there is eleven planned hydrants, five connections to an 8" main, 6" connectors, and that the fire plan is sufficient to cover entirety of buildings; and inquires if a ladder truck, including larger ladder trucks from mutual aid, will fit into the complex
 - **Mr. Chaplin** expanded that there are sprinkler systems in the buildings, that there have been discussions with the West Orange Fire Department (WOFD) over truck size and maneuvering capability; states that there is access behind the buildings for trucks; that hydrants are on the plans and meet WOFD and American Water requirements; states there will be all new water mains; states that the entire plan is still in development
- **Councilwoman McCartney** inquired about stormwater runoff and proposed surface parking trees fashioned as islands
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated there will not be surface parking trees due to existing bioswales
- **Councilwoman McCartney** asked if a shuttle service would be public or private
 - **Mr. Regan** stated that the Applicant will coordinate with town based on demand
- **Chairman Weston** inquired about the presence of cutoff or downlit lighting
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that all periphery lighting will be down lit and in isolated areas with little spillage over property lines; some lighting will be brighter in parking areas, but more moderate in living areas
- **Chairman Weston** inquired about icy weather concerns at ingress/egress

- **Mr. Chaplin** stated that it is a question of maintenance for the Applicant; it is their road, they must maintain
 - **Chairman Weston** inquired about the existence of any back emergency entrance/exits in plan
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that it may be possible to enter and exit the site through the southerly PSEG area in extreme need
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- **Councilwoman McCartney** inquired about Item #5 in the CME Engineering Report re: the dog park being approved by township council, and whether that meant before or after being built
 - **Mr. Valesi** stated this was discussed with the Applicant
 - **Chairman Weston** recognized **Mr. Chaplin** for another comment
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that Item #29 in the CME Report re: sewer questions are being studied

Professionals Questions:

- **Chairman Weston** introduced **Greg Valesi**
- **Mr. Valesi** stated that Item #29 been addressed for the most part; and that the Applicant has agreed to revise plans for all Items on the CME Engineering Report
- Stated regarding the fountain: no matter the improvement, make sure to report the improvement
- Commented on CME Report Item #7, the sustainability memo, regarding EV station location, recommending installation of parking garage EV stations in addition to those on the ground, and to report where EV stations are ultimately installed
- Stated there is a disproportional amount of parking for Building A in relation to Buildings B & C
 - **Mr. Regan** stated that this will be testified to
- **Chairman Weston** asked **Mr. Chaplin** if there is an existing fountain in pond
 - **Mr. Chaplin** responded in the affirmative
- **Mr. Valesi** stated that CME Report Item #11 discusses outdoor seating but there is no seating detailed on the plan; and to please detail on plan
 - **Mr. Regan** stated that the outdoor seating furniture has not selected by applicant yet
- **Chairman Weston** introduced **Paul Grygiel**
- **Mr. Grygiel** inquired about pedestrian safety/connectivity; specifically a pedestrian connection to 300 executive drive

- **Mr. Chaplin** stated that the Applicant can no build into land they do not own, but will study
- **Mr. Grygiel** inquired about connections within the development between the buildings to the amenities?
 - **Mr. Chaplin** zoomed into Exhibit A-3 to show all connections
- **Mr. Grygiel** stated that the dog park called for 20' tall light fixtures; and asked if this was needed
 - **Mr. Chaplin** stated that change was in process to remove them; no intention for dog park to be opened at night

Public Questions:

Questions were asked by:

- **Kevin Malanga, 57 Ridge Road**
- **Lynda Novick, 1 Buckingham Road**
- **Roz Moskowitz Bielski, 11 Wedgewood Drive**
- **Lisa Rosenberg, 18 Buckingham Road**

End of Mr. Chaplin's Testimony

There was a recess beginning at 9:03P.M.; meeting resumed at 9:08P.M.

- **Chairman Weston** Introduced the Applicant's Architect, **Jack Raker**
- **Mr. Raker** provided credentials and was sworn in
- Introduced and discussed the following exhibits:
 - A-21: cover sheet
 - A-: building A, 2nd floor plan, built around 3 courtyards, main entry off motor court, described interior details and amenities, 304 dwelling units, garage has 570 spaces
 - A-23: example of a similar existing building interiors as is intended for this development
 - A-24: example of a similar package delivery area
 - A-25: example of a similar interior lounge area
 - A-26: example of a similar refreshment/lounge/work area
 - A-27: example of a similar fitness center
 - A-28: elevation drawing from side (front and back) and how there are different exterior looks for different sections
 - A-29: side view of wood detailing and stone at entry

- A-30: re: buildings B & C, top cutaway view for basement and first floor plans, shows location of amenities within, how B & C are situated around parking area, available rental garages, both B & C are four stories with 59 & 62 units respectively, low and moderate cost units spread throughout as required by law
- A-31: elevation side views of B, showing differing looks, similar details to A, storage spaces in both buildings
- A-32: same as A-31, but C
- A-33: end side views of B & C on different elevations
- A-34: detail interior floor plans of typical units, all layouts: 1br, 2br, 2br corner, & 2 br + den
 - **Chairman Weston** interjected to mention that using a den as a third bedroom is prohibited
- A-35-37: photos of interiors in similar existing building
- **Mr. Raker** discussed several sustainability features for the complex

Board Questions:

- **Chairman Weston** asked **Mr. Raker** to talk about fire prevention/life safety
 - **Mr. Raker** stated that the buildings are 5a-type construction; with a NFPA-13 internal sprinkler system covering all internal areas; there are standpipes throughout; and will work with WOFD to reconfigure this any way needed; there are 2-hour rated firewalls within; and egresses where required
- **Chairman Weston** inquired if sprinkler systems and other elements exist so that firefighting elements can get everywhere
 - **Mr. Raker** responded in the affirmative and stated that the buildings would be further divided if firefighting elements could not reach everywhere
- **Chairman Weston** asked for more information on 5A –type construction
 - **Mr. Raker** stated that it means that all structures are rated for fire protection
- **Chairman Weston** asked if the design left any possibility for a wall suitable for outdoor movies
 - **Mr. Raker** stated he would ask the landscape architect
- **Mr. Smeraldo** inquired about parking garage egress into building,; and if it was protected by sprinkler systems/standpipes
 - **Mr. Raker** stated that there is firewall between concrete garage and wood residences, as well as rated doors and vestibules; and that garage is open on three sides, but does not have sprinklers; there are, however, standpipes in both stairwells

- **Mr. Smeraldo** asked if dry fire systems were proposed
 - **Mr. Raker** responded that this is not in the plans
- **Mr. Smeraldo** asked about striping for fire truck access in drive areas
 - **Mr. Regan** responded that the development will be compliant
- **Mr. Trenk** asked for the number of affordable units
 - **Mr. Raker** responded sixty-four between all buildings
- **Mr. Trenk** asked if EV stations will be able to be run to the dog park
 - **Mr. Raker** responded that he is unaware of plans for EV stations at the dog park; suggested this should be asked of the civil engineer
- **Mr. Wegner** inquired if the entire complex would be fully ADA compliant
 - **Mr. Raker** responded in the affirmative
- **Mr. Wegner** asked about lighting near the dog park for safety at night; and the recommended amount of seating in seating area
 - **Mr. Raker** responded that he is not familiar with dog park nor the seating arrangements
- **Mr. Wilkes** inquired about there being only one entrance to each building
 - **Mr. Raker** confirmed that there will be only one main public entrance in each building for visitors, but many ways to get in for residents (from garage and amenity area (Building A only) , and other places in the back of all buildings)
- **Ms. Williams** asked if anyone can get in to the open garage
 - **Mr. Raker** responded in the negative; there is a garage door activated by a resident's fob
- **Chairman Weston** requested clarification on the concept of an open garage
 - **Mr. Raker** explained that the open parts are cutouts in walls to allow air through
- **Mr. Johnson** asked if the buildings are wood frame, what separates each unit (in terms of noise and fire)
 - **Mr. Raker** described that there are two walls between each apartment; walls are heavily drywalled with a gap in between to channel sound; there is no sound insulation between walls, but there is between the floor and ceiling
- **Mr. Johnson** asked if there will be underground connection between buildings
 - **Mr. Raker** responded in the negative
- **Mr. Johnson** asked if the 2br + den layout was still in the plans
 - **Mr. Raker** responded in the affirmative; adding that there were no 3br layouts

- **Chairman Weston** inquired about trash/recycling and how is it handled
 - **Mr. Raker** responded that this is handled from two different areas and through garage at Building A; there will be chutes inside, a compactor, and then through garage to be picked up
- **Chairman Weston** asked if there could be a standpipe at both ends of garage since there are no sprinklers; and that this standpipe not be through the doors in Building A, but in the actual garage
 - **Mr. Raker** stated that they we will work with WOFFD to provide what is best
- **Chairman Weston** inquired if there will be any lighting on face of building; both common and/or fancy
 - **Mr. Raker** described the accent lighting at entries, and recessed lighting on balconies; but nothing is planned for the face of the building
- **Mr. Smeraldo** asked if the HVAC system can be reversed for smoke clearance reasons
 - **Mr. Raker** responded that the HVAC system is not designed yet
- **Mr. Smeraldo** asked if there will be stairwell access to roofs
 - **Mr. Raker** responded that there will be where possible
- **Mr. Smeraldo** asked if the roofs will be truss construction, and if the trash rooms will have sprinklers
 - **Mr. Raker** responded in the affirmative for both

Professionals Questions:

- **Mr. Grygiel** asked if there will be bicycle storage in buildings B & C
 - **Mr. Raker** responded not currently, but that there is room for them

Public Questions:

Question was asked by:

- **Kevin Malanga, 57 Ridge Road**

End of Mr. Raker's Testimony

- **Mr. Regan** introduced the Applicant's Landscape Architect, **Paul Devitto**
- **Mr. Devitto** provided credentials and was sworn in
- Testimony covered tree removal and replace plan

- Had met with **Town Forester, John Linson**, in February, took inventory, identified a large number of diseased ash trees; about 185 of trees of all types are possible to keep; this is within regulations
- Spoke on exhibit A-3: Discussed reducing impervious coverage, and introducing over 200 new trees to meet requirements; keeping as many existing trees in pond area as possible; new trees and shrubs to be added; various landscaping in common areas; buffered screening behind parking garage (evergreen and shade trees), which are low maintenance and drought resistant

Board Questions:

- **Chairman Weston** inquired if all matters with **Mr. Linson** were completed
 - **Mr. Devitto** reported that he will worked with **Mr. Linson** further as necessary, and is looking forward to receiving his report
- **Chairman Weston** stated that there is an ordinance which requires one surface tree for every ten parking spaces
 - **Mr. Devitto** responded that because of the existing bioswales for stormwater management that these trees were not planned, but this can be discussed
- **Chairman Weston** asked if the Applicant is proposing deer resistant plants
 - **Mr. Devitto** responded in the affirmative, but that deer can and do eat everything
- **Chairman Weston** asked if there is to be a tree buffer between the parking lot and dog park
 - **Mr. Devitto** responded that this will be looked into

Professionals Questions:

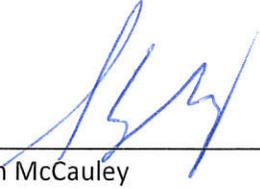
- **Mr. Grygiel** stated that the township redevelopment plan has same requirement as the town ordinance that requires a tree every ten parking spaces, and it should be considered

Public Questions:

None, though Chairman Weston left open the ability for Public Questions for Mr. Devitto when the hearing continues at the next meeting

Chairman Weston decided that the hearing on this Application would continue at a Special Meeting on June 25, 2020 at 7:30PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED at approximately 10:35 PM. Called by Dr. Bagoff, Seconded by
Chairman Weston



Sean McCauley
Township of West Orange Planning Board