

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP LAND USE BOARD

MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Jefferson Township Land Use Board, pursuant to due notice and in compliance with the Sunshine Law.
Municipal Building, Jefferson Township, at 7:00 PM.

Presiding: **Chairman Williams**
Secretary: **Stephanie McCormack**

Present:
Chairman Williams
Vice-Chairman Palko
Vice-Chairwoman Galfo
Chief Castimore
Councilwoman Senatore
Mr. Deutsch
Ms. Steelman

Absent:
Mr. Small
Mayor Wilsusen
Mr. DiFrisco
Mr. Hine
Ms. Macalle-Holly
Mr. Galfo

Also Present:
Glenn Kienz, Board Attorney
John Ruschke, Board Engineer
Stephanie McCormack, Board Secretary

REGULAR MEETING (IF DEEMED COMPLETE):

Heller's Lane Urban Renewal Entity, LLC

No. 23-01

Block 273.01, Lots 2.061, 2.062
& 12
Heller's Lane, Route 15 &
Bowling Green Parkway
Amended Site Plan

Mr. Steve Schepis, the applicant's Attorney, was present. He explained this application is for a Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval for an amended site plan. Should the application be approved, there will be a merger of all three lots into one, single lot.

Mr. Kenneth Dykstra, the applicant's Engineer, came forward and was sworn in. He presented Exhibit A-1, a colorized rendering of the prior site plan approval, and Exhibit A-2, a colorized rendering of the amended site plan. He then proceeded to pass out smaller copies of the exhibits. The prior approval consisted of a 40-unit apartment building with an 11-unit detached garage building, and a separate commercial building on Lot 12. The amended site plan consists of a three-story, 32-unit apartment building with three additional, stacked-unit buildings, containing six (6) units each. There will be 88 surface parking spaces, 6 of which will be handicap spaces, and 42 garage spaces for a total of 130 parking spaces. The only other amendment to the site plan is the addition of an on-site dog park to be utilized by the tenants. Because of the amendments, the impervious coverage has been reduced by approximately 11,000 square feet. On the prior approval, a staircase was proposed from the main apartment building down to Bowling Green Parkway. The applicant feels this would be both a

maintenance and liability issue, and would like to make the staircase an option rather than mandatory. The sewer system will be exactly the same, except for one unit which will empty into the sewage treatment plant on the Quick Chek property. There is already a maintenance/easement/stormwater management agreement in place for both of the sewage treatment plants.

Mr. Ruschke discussed the main points of his report. He suggested that the sidewalk be moved to the other side of the street, and that a cross-walk be added at the new driveway. He then asked about the drainage ditch.

Mr. Dykstra stated that the drainage ditch will be taken care of.

Mr. Ruschke stated that the stairway was requested so that the tenants had a way to easily access the local businesses in the immediate area. He then asked if the applicant had an alternative solution to the stairway.

Mr. Dykstra stated that there is a 30-foot rise in that area, making it quite steep.

Mr. Ruschke recommended a switch-back.

Mr. Nicholas Minoia, a representative from Diversified Properties, came forward, and was sworn in. After reviewing the plan, there was more concern about safety and maintenance on such a steep slope. He feels the sidewalks will provide sufficient access to the businesses in the area.

Mr. Schepis asked if this discussion could be tabled for a brief recess with the design team. He also stated that the applicant would prefer to keep the electric vehicle charging stations within the confines of the garages, and will work with the Construction Official to ensure compliance with state requirements.

Mr. Ruschke asked if the TWA permit will need to be amended due to the amended site plan.

Mr. Dykstra stated the TWA permit will need to be revised.

Mr. Ruschke wanted to ensure the maintenance of the sewer treatment plants will fall on the owners of the properties, even if sold in the future. He feels it should be incorporated into the Deeds.

Mr. Dykstra stated that the NJPDES permit runs with the owner of the land and does not anticipate any issues.

Mr. Ruschke asked if the stormwater calculations will change the plan.

Mr. Dykstra stated it should not. They have reduced the impervious coverage by 11,000 square feet, and now that the warehouse use is eliminated, there will be a surface basin instead of a lot of underground piping.

Mr. Ruschke voiced his concerns regarding runoff to the church property, and suggested providing a swale in that same area.

Mr. Dykstra agreed to provide an additional inlet, and will work with the Board Engineer on that.

Mr. Dykstra then referred to the Township Engineer's report. He will comply with all of the items in the report, except for the fact that they will not need a new approval from the DOT for this project.

Mr. Schepis stated that the Redevelopment Agreement will need to be revised to reflect the changes to the project.

Chief Castimore asked if there was a Lighting Plan, and requested solar-powered, flashing LED signs at the cross-walks.

Mr. Dykstra replied that if that is a requirement or condition of the resolution, the applicant will comply.

Councilwoman Senatore asked if the amended plan still provides appropriate access for emergency vehicles.

Mr. Dykstra stated that access has not changed, and was deemed appropriate for the previous approval.

Vice-Chairman Palko asked about the electric vehicle charging stations.

Mr. Dykstra stated there are 42 garage spaces on the property, and 15% of those spaces are required to have charging stations. The applicant is looking into having the charging stations located inside each garage space.

Vice-Chairman Palko asked what happens if he lives in the apartment for two years, and decides to purchase an electric vehicle. Is he out of luck or would he have to go on the other end of the property to charge his vehicle?

Mr. Minoia stated that questions regarding electric charging stations is constantly evolving, and there is no clear-cut answer at the present time. If it came down to it, they would just install one for that particular tenant or as the demand changes.

Mr. Kienz recommended that it may make more sense to have the charging stations outside.

Mr. Ruschke stated that by having the charging stations located within each garage defeats the intent of the law, which is to provide easy access to anyone with an electric vehicle.

Mr. Kienz stated that if the applicant really wants the electric vehicle charging stations in the garages, there should also be charging stations available outside.

Mr. Schepis stated that the applicant would not have a problem with that.

Mr. Thomas Brennan, the applicant's Architect, came forward and was sworn in. He presented Exhibit A-3, a colorized rendering of the 32-unit building. This building is exactly the same as the 32-unit building that was approved for Phase 1, and the color palette for both will be the same. Exhibit A-4 is a colorized rendering of the three stacked, 6-unit buildings. He then distributed smaller versions of Exhibit A-4 to the board members and professionals.

Mr. Schepis then asked for a short recess to discuss alternatives to the steps leading to Bowling Green Parkway.

Mr. Kienz asked Mr. Ruschke if this subject would be better discussed and worked out between the professionals outside of the hearing.

Mr. Ruschke determined it would be better for the applicant and his professionals to try and hash things out and present their alternate option to the board members for discussion.

There was a ten-minute recess.

Mr. Dykstra stated the elevation differential is over 40 ft., which is quite substantial and a liability issue. The applicant would like to propose extending the wall and having a fence installed above the wall to prevent pedestrians from trying to navigate down the steep slope. They will be moving the walkway on the East side of the property to the opposite side of Heller's Lane and adding bollard lighting for a nicely lit walkway.

Mr. Ruschke feels this is a reasonable solution.

Mr. Kienz asked Mr. Dykstra when he would be able to submit revised plans.

Mr. Dykstra stated he could have complete revised plans ready within 90 days.

Councilwoman Senatore reiterated the importance of stormwater management and keeping the roads clean and clear during the project's construction. They want to stay on good terms with the Rescue Squad and the church.

Ms. Galfo stated she would like to see outside charging stations as well.

Mr. Dykstra stated they will work with the Board Engineer on this item.

Mr. Deutsch voiced his concerns regarding the importance of stormwater management, especially with the effects of climate change.

Mr. Dykstra stated they have planned for more than what is required.

Mr. Kienz noted that there are no members of the public present.

Councilwoman Senatore made a motion to approve with the conditions discussed. **Mr. Deutsch** seconded the motion.

In Favor: Councilwoman Senatore, Vice-Chairwoman Galfo, Vice-Chairman Palko, Chief Castimore, Mr. Deutsch, Ms. Steelman, and Chairman Williams.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chairwoman Galfo moved to adjourn **at 8:06 PM.**
Chairman Williams seconded.

In Favor: All.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Stephanie McCormack
Secretary to the Planning Board