

## SITE PLAN REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD

### NOTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING Wednesday, September 2, 2015 PRINCETON MUNICIPAL BUILDING Meeting Room A –7:30 P.M. Princeton, New Jersey

PRESENT: Alyce Bush, Robert Cerutti, Harry Cooke, Robert Freudenberg, Lydia Robinson, William Wolfe

ABSENT: Dana Molina, Holly Nelson, Pamela Rew

ALSO PRESENT: Jack West, Municipal Engineer; Derek Bridger, Zoning Officer; Kerry A. Philip, Secretary

Secretary Philip called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. reading the Opening Statement as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, acknowledging that notice of this meeting was issued on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2015.

#### MINUTES

- a) July 8, 2015 – Motion was made by H. Cooke and A. Bush seconded the motion to approve the minutes as amended. The vote was 3-0 in favor of those eligible to vote. Motion carried.
- b) August 11, 2015 – postponed to next meeting

#### APPLICATION

- a) West Windsor Real Estate  
Prelim/Final Major Subdivision & Site Plan w/var.  
176-188 Bayard Lane  
Block 6802, Lots 44, 45 & 46  
File #Z1414-107SPF/UP  
MLUL Deadline: 11/8/15

Representatives for the applicant: Nicole Bayman, Esq.; Drinker Biddle & Reath; D. Geoffrey Brown, Princeton Junction Engineering; Howard Rabin, Principal for Applicant; Robert Fania, RMF Architect, LLC.

The applicant is proposing to consolidate the three existing parcels and re-subdivide to recreate three conforming parcels (in lot area) in order to construct three two-family structures on each lot (seeking a D-1 variance). This zone only permits one single family structure on each lot. The applicant is seeking to construct a two-family structure on each lot, which is not permitted, creating the D-1 variance.

Nicole Bayman, Esq., legal counsel for the applicant, stated that the applicant owns 3 lots that are located on Route 206, one which is an odd shaped lot. Major subdivision and site plan approval is being requested for three duplex buildings. She stated that this development provides a great opportunity to provide housing in an area that is a mixture of residential and commercial.

D. Geoffrey Brown, engineer for the applicant, stated that they are doing a subdivision of three existing lots so that they are all conforming in order to construct three duplex buildings. The two northerly buildings would have a combined driveway from Route 206. All utilities are along Route 206 and installation will be underground. Regarding stormwater, Mr. Brown stated that there have been several meetings with the Land Use Engineer and the stormwater consultant and he believes that things can be worked out. The design will meet the stormwater management requirements. John West, municipal land use engineer, stated that there were concerns but now they are fairly close to having a plan that everyone is comfortable with.

Mr. Brown advised that porous pavement driveways with a stone detention basin underneath is proposed, the water travels to a pipe down the property line to an above ground detention basin to discharge at the northwest corner of property and into the Stony Brook. He advised that regular pavement will be proposed for the driveway curb cut for the northerly buildings so water will not run in to the roadway. Street trees along Route 206 will be installed and additional landscaping can be provided. The applicant is willing to do whatever is recommended. He then distributed photographs of the property as viewed from Route 206.

Chairman Wolfe stated that the left turn lane on Route 206 is very important because of the traffic turning to access Birch. The traffic in this area is terrible and recommended only one driveway to access the three buildings. The proposed location of the driveway curb cut at the northerly end should be eliminated. Mr. Brown stated that they can make this work. Mr. West agreed that this location is ideal because he had concerns about the northerly driveway. Chairman Wolfe stated that the width of the driveway would need to be increased but this change would be acceptable.

Chairman Wolfe and H. Cooke recommended that the applicant consider moving the garages closer to the roadway to reduce the pavement. Mr. West stated that this needs to be reviewed in relationship to how close the garages would be to Birch but visually you may want the garages to be set back slightly.

A. Bush asked about emergency vehicle access. Mr. Brown stated that there will be no fire engine access but ambulances will be able to access the site. The fire engine would position itself on Route 206 in the case of a fire. Being that a fire hydrant was recommended by the Land Use Engineer and the closest one is 400 feet away the applicant will install one in the northerly portion of the site. H. Cooke stated that a variety of architectural styles are always recommended but this proposal does not provide any variety. Also of concern is a duplex in place of a single family home. Derek Bridger, Zoning Officer, stated that duplexes are not permitted. Mr. Brown stated that the duplex buildings provide the same square footage that is permitted for a single family structure.

R. Cerutti stated that he is interested in hearing why this development would be beneficial to the community. Ms. Bayman stated that their Planner is not present to provide positive and negative criteria for this project. Mr. Rabin stated that feedback was given over the past few years about what the community would like to see along that corridor, he said that the people are asking for a transition area of commercial to residential with respect to the neighboring parcels. He believes a duplex building is better than a single family house. H. Cooke stated that this proposal does not fit in this area because three large buildings all appearing the same takes away from the aesthetics of the area. A. Bush stated that she is very sensitive about development in this part of town and the proposal changes the way that things appear. She asked who will be responsible to maintain

the sidewalk. Mr. Brown stated that the sidewalks will be the responsibility of the individual homeowners.

Mr. West stated that the municipal landscape consultant will be asked to work with the applicant in order to save as many large trees as possible. Mr. Rabin stated that the building envelopes can be adjusted to save trees. Chairman Wolfe stated that really significant trees that are an important part of landscaping along this portion of Route 206 go back 40 to 50 feet and asked if there is any way to compact the developed area to preserve the pines and some deciduous trees. Mr. Brown stated that this would have to be reviewed. Mr. Fania stated regarding changes to the design, roof lines, materials and profile changes can be done.

Chairman Wolfe noted the duplexes that exist along Jefferson Road, he stated that there is a successful mix of two-family homes surrounded by single family homes. He asked that the applicant treat the structures as three different unified buildings so that they are in scale with other homes in the area.

Chairman Wolfe recommended that the entry door to each unit be relocated closer to the driveway and not near the neighboring unit's door. He stated that providing a slight offset of the design is a mistake and recommended a variety of roof lines and gables in the design. R. Cerutti stated that each structure should be slightly different. Mr. Rabin, applicant, stated that renditions of different styles and elevations had been prepared and can be reconsidered.

R. Freudenberg asked about the applicant's proposed sustainable approaches. Mr. Fania stated that local materials will be obtained, high performance windows are proposed as well as efficient mechanical systems. R. Freudenberg recommended that the applicant provide a list of all of the sustainable approaches proposed for review.

R. Freudenberg stated that there does not appear to be much rear yard area due to the detention basin and a small portion of the backyard requires NJDEP approval for filling a portion of the yard that is not within the basin area. Mr. Brown confirmed this and stated that the applicant had received a permit from the NJDEP for filling but the permit is expired. If they are unable to obtain the permit they will have to come back before the Zoning Board.

Chairman Wolfe asked that the applicant identify the important species of trees that are to be preserved and that a subcommittee be formed by the Zoning Board to review the proposed landscape plan. The plan is to be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Board, Daniel Dobromilsky, landscape architectural consultant and Lorraine Konopka, Municipal Arborist.

Mr. Fania stated that finish materials have not been chosen but fiber cement siding and stone is being considered for the façade along with a mix of raised seam metal roofing and asphalt shingles for the roofs.

Chairman Wolfe recommended that the applicant try furniture layouts in the proposed floor plans for the front bedroom, minor tweaks to the locations of the windows and closet may be warranted.

H. Cooke stated that there are so many unknowns and problems associated with this it will be difficult to provide a positive recommendation to the Zoning Board. He prefers that the applicant rethink the project and come back for another session and take into account all comments offered. Chairman Wolfe agreed because of the change involving the two driveways. Without seeing the

design of the new driveway entry he would have a hard time recommending approval of the site plan.

R. Cerutti recommended landscaping in the two center areas to help buffer the view of the garages. A subcommittee could be formed to review the revised detail. A majority of the members wished to see the revised plan so the applicant was asked to come back with an alternative design for the duplex buildings. R. Cerutti stated that the square footage for the duplex buildings equal what would be permitted for a single family house so having duplexes on this site is not a concern.

Secretary Philip asked the applicant to respond to Items #2 and #5 in the Planning Composite. Ms. Bayman stated that in response to #5 the former minor subdivision application will probably be withdrawn. Pertaining to #2 she advised that they will review this further.

Motion was made by A. Bush and R. Cerutti seconded the motion to have the applicant come back to SPRAB with an alternative design for the three duplex buildings and a redesign of the driveway entry from Route 206. The vote was 6-0 in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Bridger advised that an extension of time is needed from the applicant. A report summarizing the comments provided by the Site Plan Review Advisory Board was requested.

### **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED DESIGN CHANGES**

The applicant was asked to return to SPRAB with an alternative design and specific material choices for the duplexes. The following comments were provided:

1. The driveway and curb cut onto Rte. 206 proposed for the two northerly duplex buildings should be eliminated. A single curb cut and driveway is recommended for all three duplex buildings. The driveway should be widened in front of the buildings. The single curb cut should be located where the southerly curb cut has been shown as this will make good use of the center left turn lane on Rte. 206 north of Leigh Avenue.
2. It is strongly recommended that the three duplex buildings vary in form, architectural detail, and to some extent materials to give each building a distinct identity. Varying roof lines and gable placement are recommended.
3. It is also recommended that the staggering of the two dwelling units of each building be eliminated to unify the structures and to better resemble the scale of surrounding single family homes.
4. The applicant should consider entries on the side of each unit near its garage and driveway, so the entry doors to the two units are not next to each other, offering more distinct identity and privacy.
5. The applicant stated that the finish choices have not been determined. A material board should be prepared identifying the materials proposed for all three duplex buildings.
6. The front and rear setbacks of the three buildings as well as their plan configuration should be reviewed and adjusted where possible in order to preserve existing large caliper pine and deciduous trees.
7. A landscape plan must be prepared identifying all trees that will be preserved along with the proposed landscaping for review and approval by the Municipal Landscape Consultant and Municipal Arborist.
8. The landscape plan should provide additional planting in the areas in between and next to the six individual driveways to buffer the view of the garages.

9. A list of all sustainable approaches should be prepared and presented to the Board.
10. A fire hydrant is recommended for installation at the northerly property line since the closest hydrant is located 400 feet away.
11. Any outstanding drainage issues must be done to the satisfaction of the Municipal Land Use Engineer and Stormwater Consultant.
12. The drainage plan should be detailed on the revised plan.
13. Revisions to the plan are recommended or a copy of the filed deed of consolidation should be provided to the Planning Office in response to Item #2 of the Planning Composite:
  - [2] Plan provides a note (#4) which indicates lots 44 and 45 have merged by Princeton Township. Please provide the deed of consolidation as this was not perfected by the Planning Board in 2008.
14. Important to note that #5 of the Planning Composite requests a formal withdrawal of a prior development proposal:
  - [5] It should be noted that the applicant received minor subdivision approval from the Regional Planning Board of Princeton on 9/18/08. This subdivision created two conforming parcels, but the subdivision was never perfected, therefore the applicant should formally withdraw the minor subdivision application.

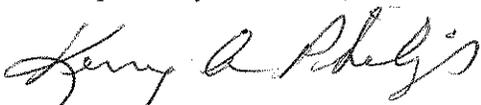
**COMMENT**

H. Cooke stated that this is a very visible and high traffic area, the proposal does not fit in because three large buildings all appearing the same takes away from the aesthetics of this area.

W. Wolfe referenced the duplex units on Jefferson Road area, noting that these unified structures are in scale and blend well with the surrounding single family homes.

With no further business before the Board, motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kerry A. Philip  
Secretary