

**TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR /WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 475 CORPORATE DRIVE, MAHWAH, N.J.
MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2023 AT 7:30 P.M.**

I. CHAIRMAN 'S OPENING STATEMENT, ROLL CALL, AND FLAG SALUTE

The combined public/work session meeting of the Planning Board of the Township of Mahwah held at the Municipal Building, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, NJ was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the Planning Board Chairman, Mr. Crean. The Opening Statement was read according to the Sunshine Law, followed by the flag salute and a reminder that Planning Board meetings are being videotaped and broadcast live.

These minutes are a synopsis of the meeting. A verbatim audio recording is on file at the Planning Board Office, 475 Corporate Drive, Mahwah, NJ. Copies may be purchased for a fee.

Roll Call:

The following individuals were present:

Mr. Crean
Mr. Ervin
Ms. Galow
Mr. Grewal @ 7:32
Ms. Jankowski
Mr. Lo Iacono
Mr. Montroy
Mr. Olear
Councilman Wong

Professionals: Mark D. Madaio, Esq., Michael J. Kelly, P.E., Nicholas Dickerson, P.P.

The following individuals were absent:

Mayor Wysocki
Mr. Goldstein

II. APPROVAL OF BILLS: None to Present

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. June 12, 2023

A motion to approve the above minutes was made by Mr. Olear and seconded by Mr. Ervin. A roll call of members revealed 7 aye votes by Mr. Crean, Mr. Ervin, Mr. Lo Iacono, Mr. Montroy, Mr. Olear, Mr. Wong and Ms. Galow.

IV. RESOLUTIONS FOR MEMORIALIZATION:

1. Docket #644 – Liberty Mahwah, LLC

305 State Highway Route 17, Block 63, Lot 10.02

Preliminary and Final Site Plan,

Upgrade of the existing automobile dealership, 2 additional garage doors, vehicle display area, signage and parking modifications. Resolution of Approval.

A motion to adopt the above resolution was made by Mr. Olear and seconded by Mr. Montroy. A roll call of members revealed 6 aye votes by Mr. Ervin, Mr. Lo Iacono, Mr. Montroy, Mr. Olear, Mr. Wong and Ms. Galow. Mr. Crean was recused.

Mr. Crean read a June 6, 2023 letter from Mr. James Jaworski into the record, formally withdrawing the application known as Docket 624 – Crossroads Developers Associated LLC & Garden Crossroads LLC.

V. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – 15 MINUTES:

A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Ervin and seconded by Mr. Montroy. All voted in favor.

No one wishing to be heard, a motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Ervin and seconded by Mr. Montroy. All voted in favor.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING(S): None to Present

VII. WORK SESSION:

A) NEW BUSINESS:

1. TA-23-0022 – Walgreen Eastern Co., Inc.

1000 Macarthur Boulevard, Block 135.01, Lot 65

Tenant Application

Mr. Grewal recused himself from this application.

Mr. Bruce Whitaker of McDonnell & Whitaker at 245 E Main Street, Ramsey, NJ indicated that he was representing the above Applicant. Mr. Whitaker explained that the Applicant was a prospective tenant for the recently approved warehouse at 1000 Macarthur Boulevard.

Mr. Matthew Cook, Vice-President of Central Pharmacy Operations for Walgreens was sworn in and accepted as an expert witness. Mr. Cook explained that the Applicant was looking to lease 113,349 s.f. of the 208,345 s.f. warehouse premises at this location. The Tenant proposes to use the space as a “robotic pharmaceutical facility” engaged in “off-site pharmacy fulfillment.” Mr. Cook testified that the facility would be approximately 60-70% robotic fulfillment equipment; 10-15% designated for office, conference room, lunchroom, bathrooms, and other “operations support” activity; and another 10-15% devoted to receiving, packaging, loading and shipping activities.

Mr. Cook testified that the facility would operate seven (7) days per week, with 2-3 shifts and could potentially be a 24-hour facility with approximately 120 employees per shift.

With 2 shifts, operations would commence at approximately 5:00 a.m. and end at approximately 1:00 a.m. A 24-hour facility would operate on 3 shifts. There would generally be some “separation” between shifts so that the 120 employees in any given shift would have time to vacate the parking lot and re-occupy the 120 parking spaces earmarked for Walgreens.

Mr. Cook testified that employees would include office staff; licensed pharmacists and various “specialists” (engaged in loading, packing, unloading, and similar operations). He indicated that a total of nine (9) loading docks are within the Leasehold Area, but that Walgreens would only utilize 6 loading docks in connection with operations. The excess loading docks allocated to the unit would be closed and one loading dock would be maintained for garbage and recycling.

Mr. Cook discussed the anticipated traffic flow, explaining that one large truck was expected to make a delivery early in the morning and approximately 6 trucks would leave the building by way of Route 17 and Macarthur Boulevard. A few occurrences of smaller carriers such as Fed-Ex or UPS would be anticipated throughout the day.

Mr. Cook stated that no customers would be present and that no signage would be on the building. Mr. Cook explained the recycling process and how the minimal waste would be managed.

Mr. Cook displayed Exhibit A-1 – Stantec Floor Plans/Building Plans (4 sheets) dated May 9, 2023. Mr. Cook used the plan to show the areas of operation and automation, giving an overview of the product’s flow through the facility.

Mr. Cook explained that there may be a situation in the future when direct to customer deliveries might require additional pickups from Fed-Ex or similar carriers, but that this is not the intended use to start with.

There was discussion about the products and security. Mr. Cook indicated that no opioids or controlled substances would be processed at this site.

There was lengthy discussion regarding how the parking would be handled at the change of shift and the impact that the shift change would have on local school traffic. If shift changeovers occur at a time when parents and students are arriving or leaving area schools, various representatives of the Township and Walgreens will discuss the matter with the goal of limiting as much traffic as possible during peak school hours.

Mr. Whitaker stated the Applicant would work with Fire Prevention to address the concerns documented within their review report of May 25, 2023.

There was discussion regarding the 35 future parking spaces and all agreed that they could and should be created now while the building is still under construction.

A motion to open the meeting to the Public was made by Mr. Ervin and seconded by Ms.

Galow. All voted in favor.

Mr. Bob Lockwood of 10 Homespun Court, discussed the shift change and employee parking. Mr. Cook indicated that there would always be a defined time period between shifts in order to allow for the movement out and into the parking lot.

A motion to close the meeting to the Public was made by Mr. Ervin and seconded by Ms. Galow. All voted in favor.

Mr. Whitaker summarized the Tenant Application and indicated that he would like to discuss the future parking and additional changes to this property outside the scope of the Tenant Application. There was additional discussion regarding the future parking and the landscaping buffering that would be replaced by this parking. Mr. Crean noted that the Board would like as much buffering and screening as possible. Mr. Kelly stated that he supported creating the parking spaces now. Mr. Whitaker advised the Board that from his perspective, no resolution was required to implement this change because it was not an “approval”, nor did it constitute any amendment to the site plan since the future parking was included within the prior approval for Docket 620, dated October 25, 2021. Mr. Whitaker requested that this be reflected in the Minutes, and that a copy of the Minutes then be provided to him for his files.

A motion to approve the above Tenant Application was made by Mr. Ervin and seconded by Mr. Lo Iacono. A roll call of members revealed 7 aye votes by Mr. Crean, Mr. Ervin, Mr. Lo Iacono, Mr. Montroy, Mr. Wong, Ms. Jankowski and Ms. Galow with 1 nay vote by Mr. Olear. Mr. Grewal was recused.

Mr. Whitaker explained that Russo Developers would like to change the slope of the berm at the corner of Macarthur Boulevard and Ridge Road. Mr. Madaio and Mr. Whitaker agreed that a modification to the approved plan might require an Amended Site Plan application. Mr. Michael Pembroke, Chief Operating Officer of Russo Development, LLC was sworn in, and described the requested changes to the berm. Mr. Pembroke explained that the request was made to Mr. Kelly for approval as a field change. Mr. Kelly suggested that the Applicant review the changes with the Board as they would be present at the meeting for the Tenant Application. Mr. Pembroke displayed Exhibit A-2 - Overall Site Layout last revised July 1, 2023, and explained the Applicant’s desire to reduce the visual perception that the building is “in a hole”. After lengthy discussion regarding the proposed berm changes, Mr. Kelly explained that an Engineer from Stantec Engineering was in contact with the Planning and Zoning Department regarding additional changes that Walgreens would like to make to the site. Mr. Kelly suggested that all the changes requested by the Tenant and the Developer need to be reviewed in order to determine if all are compliant with the Municipal Code and prior approvals to define what is needed to move forward. Mr. Kelly also suggested that subsequent requests to the Board to modify the berm height should include renderings depicting the proposed landscaping and the impact of the requested changes to the berm height. Mr. Pembroke explained that the west side of the building should be painted within the next few weeks. He also stated that while some landscaping will be planted now, much

of the evergreens and landscaping needs to wait until the fall when that type of landscaping can be dug and installed.

2. **Master Plan Consistency Review of Ordinance No. 2011** – An Ordinance of the Township of Mahwah, Amending and Supplementing Chapter 22, Entitled “Site Plan Review”, Section 22-6.2, Entitled “Off-Street Parking”, and Section 22-6.3, Entitled “Off-Street Loading”, and Amending and Supplementing Chapter 24, Entitled “Zoning”, Attachment 4, Attachment 5, and Section 24-5.6, Entitled “Buffer Zone and General Landscaping Requirements” to Modify Certain Requirements Related to Warehouse and/or Distribution Uses.

Mr. Nicholas Dickerson provided the Board with a review of the Ordinance, indicating that the Ordinance was “not inconsistent” with the Municipal Master Plan. Mr. Dickerson explained that the Ordinance addresses “buffer areas”, working to not only provide adequate buffers between incompatible land uses but also encouraging that buffers be maintained in their natural state and clarifying supplemental plantings. Mr. Dickerson stated that the Ordinance also reduces what can be excessive parking requirements for warehouse uses; attempts to reduce the visual impact of loading docks in some Zones; and reduces the improved lot coverage and lot coverage requirements in the ORP200 Zone.

It was noted that the proposed Ordinance will eliminate the permitted use of “Warehouse and/or distribution facilities” and “Warehouse and/or distribution facilities containing an office” in the ORP200 Zone.

A motion finding that Ordinance 2011 is “not inconsistent” with the Municipal Master Plan was made by Mr. Montroy and seconded by Ms. Jankowski. A roll call of members revealed 8 aye votes by Mr. Crean, Mr. Ervin, Mr. Grewal, Mr. Lo Iacono, Mr. Montroy, Mr. Olear, Mr. Wong and Ms. Jankowski.

- B) OLD BUSINESS: None to Present
- C) COMMITTEE REPORTS: None to Present

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. was made by Mr. Ervin and seconded by Mr. Lo Iacono. All voted in favor.

These minutes were prepared by Mary Jo Wood, Planning Board Recording Secretary. The minutes were provided to the Planning Board on July 19, 2023 for approval at the Regular Meeting to be held July 24, 2023.