SPECIAL PLANNING BOARD
CITY OF BAYONNE
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 30, 2022

A regular meeting of the City of Bayonne Planning Board was held on Tuesday, March 30, 2022 in the Dorothy E. Harrington Municipal Council Chambers, 630 Avenue C, Bayonne, New Jersey.

Chairperson Fiermonte called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Chairperson Fiermonte advised that the Board has complied with the Open Public Meetings Act/Sunshine Law.

Secretary Nadrowski called the roll. Present at the time of roll call were Chairperson Becker, Veloz, Nadrowski, Maiorano, Vice-Chairperson Valado. Chairperson Fiermonte, Vice-Mayor Davis, Commissioners Nadrowski, Valado, and Youssef were not present.

Also present were Richard N. Campisano, Esq., Board Counsel, City Engineer, Malvika Apte, PP consulting City Planner, Andrew Raichle, PP City Engineer Suzanne Mack, PP, City Planner and Alicia Losonczy, Planning/Zoning Board of Adjustment Administrator.

Adoption of Minutes

Commissioner Nadrowski made a motion to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting held on February 8, 2021 and Commissioner Veloz seconded the motion. A unanimous vote of eligible members followed.

Communications:

- Zoning Board of Adjustment – Annual Report for Calendar Year 2021

- Municipal Council resolution authorizing and directing the Planning Board to conduct an investigation of property located at area known as 69-73 LeFante Way, which property is identified as Block 412, Lot 3, to develop a map reflecting the boundaries of the proposed non-condemnation redevelopment area and determine whether the property constitutes a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment pursuant to the LRHL, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. *(P-22-006 former Seahorse)*

- Municipal Council resolution authorizing and directing the Planning Board to conduct an investigation of property located at area known as 173-179 Avenue F, which property is identified as Block 442, Lots 6, 7, 8 and 9, to develop a map reflecting the boundaries of the proposed non-condemnation redevelopment area and determine whether the property constitutes a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment pursuant to the LRHL, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. *(P-22-007)*

Public Hearing (Item VI):

P-22-001 - 1888 STUDIOS, LLC – Site: Avenue A/West 1st-3rd Streets in City Block 332, Lot 3; Block 360, Lot 2; Block 390, Lots 1 and 2 and Block 391, Lots 1 *[The applicant is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval, along with minor subdivision approval to construct a motion picture and television studio complex that consists of a mix of studio sound stage buildings, mill buildings (where stages will be constructed and stored), attached office uses that will support the studio buildings, and a post-production office building. A lighting and grip building, a central utility plant, utility yard, a trash and recycling area, as well as a facilities yard will be constructed to support the studio use along with surface and four sub-surface parking structures.]*

Matthew Posada, Esq., the attorney for applicant, gave a brief opening statement, offered his exhibits into evidence and explained that two variances are being requested as a part of this application; they are for pervious coverage and archway signage. Mr. Posada then called his first witness to testify.

Witness #1:

Joseph J. Fleming, PE, PP, F.ASCE, was sworn in and accepted by the Board as an expert in his field. Mr. Fleming discussed the project, the multiple easements on the property and the redevelopment plan for this project. The proposal will include ten studio buildings with flex buildings, five mill buildings, office and post-production facility, utility yard, post-production facility and underground parking distributed over four underground parking facilities. Mr. Fleming discussed the waterfront walkway that will be created around the entire waterfront edge and will include twenty public parking spaces, the circulation plan and the storm water management plan. He testified that the grade is being increased by approximately eighteen feet.

Board questions:

Secretary Nadrowski and Commissioner Maiorano questioned Mr. Melamed.

Audience questions:

Michael Ruscigno, Michael Dahl and Robert Dalton questioned Mr. Fleming.

Witness #2:

Craig P, Hermann, PE, PP, CME, was sworn in and accepted by the Board as an expert in his field. Mr. Hermann discussed Sections 3.2 and 3.5 of the Redevelopment Plan – walkway and recreational pier. He testified that a marina is not proposed at this time but if the applicant chooses to add one, they will return with an amended application. Mr. Hermann testified to the green infrastructure, filtera vaults, and discussed one-hundred and the nineteen EV (electric vehicle) parking spaces (26 of which are in the garage, others are surface parking). Mr. Hermann discussed a ten-foot-wide walkway connecting the waterfront walkway to the West First Street right of way which leads to a sixteen-foot-wide waterfront walkway. He testified that the water tower is twelve (12) stories high and the Fire Department has been provided a circulation plan. He discussed the landscaping plan, vehicular circulation through the paseo, the trash plan that will be handled by a private hauler, site lighting. Mr. Hermann testified that the proposed sixty-foot light pole will be lowered to the thirty (30) foot high light requirement making it compliant. Mr. Hermann testified there is no phasing anticipated and the project may last two and half to four years.

Board questions:

Secretary Nadrowski asked if community neighbors may be acceptable to discuss recreational amenities and to include restrooms in the public parking area. Vice-Chairperson Valado requested safety measures be put into place on the walkway. Commissioner Maiorano made comment to Vice-Chair Valado's question, however, Mr. Posada clarified the applicant is willing to comply with the security request. Ms. Apte asked if there were dedicated loading docks on the site and requested the trash plan be presented to the City when the applicant receives it. Mr. Raichle clarified his report

Audience questions:

Mr. Robert Dalton questioned details of the proposal and Ms. Jean Hunt questioned Mr. Hermann about a student apprenticeship and if employment of special needs children would be permitted.

*****A short break was taken at 7:31 pm. A roll call was taken at 7:45 and the meeting resumed.***

Mike Ruscigno questioned Mr. Dalton.

Witness #3:

Michael White, Architect licensed in California, was accepted by the Board as an expert in his field and was sworn in. Mr. White discussed the project in great detail how the proposal of the film studio will support the process of the film studio. He discussed the building design and its art deco concept. Mr. White testified that the water tower is for aesthetic purpose of the nostalgic film studio.

Board Questions:

Secretary Nadrowski, Commissioner Veloz and Maiorano questioned Mr. White.

Audience Questions:

There were no questions from the audience.

Witness #4:

Mr. Jack Paruta, Architect, was sworn in and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. He discussed the studio campus and in great detail. He mentioned how the view corridors were taking into consideration when designing the location of the buildings. Mr. Paruta asked the Board to accept Exhibit A-39 Waterfront Stage and Stage Support Elevations Plan. He testified to the use of the buildings and advised a silver LEED certification is targeted for most buildings and gold certification for some others. Mr. Paruta testified to the sustainable materials to be incorporated into the project. Mr. Paruta discussed that the retaining wall will be landscaped.

Board Questions:

Ms. Apte and Mr. Raichle questioned Mr. Paruta.

Audience Questions:

Mr. Robert Dalton questioned the 25% 238,000 sf of solar panels.

solar panel coverage questioned Mr. Paruta.

Witness #5:

Mr. Karl Pehnke, Civil Engineer, was sworn in and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. He discussed the traffic study that was prepared and discussed the uniqueness of the proposed vibrant facility that will have many components to it. He discussed the design of the entry gate and other details of the project.

Board Questions:

Secretary Nadrowski, Commissioner Maiorano, Ms. Apte and Mr. Raichle questioned Mr. Pehnke or made comment.

Audience Questions:

Mr. Dalton questioned Mr. Pehnke.

Witness #6:

Mr. John McDonough, PP, was sworn in and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. He complimented the City and discussed how the project promotes the Master Plan. He added that everything the applicant is doing will be a positive compliment to the City and the applicant is taking a dead site and turning it into a jewel. Mr. McDonough testifies that this is a fully compliant application.

Board Questions:

There were no questions from the Board.

Audience Questions:

There were no comments from the audience.

Public Comment:

Richard DeAngelis, Esq., representing the Starting Point Pub, testified that his client is concerned with storm water management concerns in the area. He appreciated Mr. Raichle's assistance with responses to his client's concerns. Rebecca Graves, a member of the United Artists, spoke in favor of the application. Mr. Dalton commented on the application. Commissioner Nadrowski questioned how job applications would be handled.

Closing Remarks:

Mr. Posada asked that the Board vote favorably upon this application.

Closed Caucus:

Commissioners Veloz, Maiorano, Becker, Nadrowski made comment that this is a great project for the City.

Motion:

Commissioner Nadrowski made a motion to approve the application subject to any and all conditions as spread across the record and Commissioner Veloz seconded the motion.

The following vote to approve the application was taken at the hearing on March 30, 2022:
RECORDED VOTE:

Commissioners	*Aye*	*Nay*	*Abstain*	*Recuse*	*Absent*
Karen Fiermonte	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Maria I. Valado	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
Sharon Nadrowski	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
Michael Quintela	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Mitesh R. Patel	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
George Becker	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Friday Mathews, Jr.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
Demyana Youssef	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
James Davis, Mayor	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
Ramon Veloz (Mayoral Designee)	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

*A short break was taken at 9:03 pm. Roll call was taken by Secretary Nadrowski at 9:17 and the meeting resumed.

Public Hearing (Item VII):

P-22-002 – GAURI SHANKAR FLAGSHIP URBAN RENEWAL, LLC – Site: 54 Flagship Street in City Block 751, Lot 1.06 *[The applicant is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval to construct a new six- story residential building consisting of 159 units, 166 indoor and outdoor parking spaces and ground floor retail of 7,745 square feet.]*

William Sullivan, Esq., the attorney for applicant, advised that he is filling in for Donald Pepe, Esq. Maria Valado advised Mr. Sullivan that the application would not begin to be heard this evening and requested a motion be made for such. Commissioner Becker made a motion to carry the application to the next regular scheduled meeting of Tuesday, April 12, 2022. Commissioner Veloz seconded the motion. A unanimous vote of the commissioners followed.

On motion by Commissioner Veloz, seconded by Commissioner Nadrowski, the Board unanimously voted to close the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:22 pm.

Susan Bischoff, Certified Shorthand Reporter, 449 Columbia Boulevard, Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075 took a transcript of the meeting.

/akl