

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 5, 2024

The Regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chairman Karp in Meeting Room A in the Municipal Building.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, location, and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the township bulletin board, and filed with the Municipal Clerk on May 22, 2024.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Michael Karp, Chairman, Class IV
Hemant Marathe, Mayor, Class I
Martin Whitfield, Councilman, Class III
Jyotika Bahree, Class II
Anis Baig, Class IV
Robert Loverro, Alt. #1
Pankaj Patel, Alt. #2

ABSENT: Curtis Hoberman, Vice-Chairman, Class IV
Sue Appelget, Class IV
Simon Pankove, Class IV
Allen Schectel, Class IV

TOWNSHIP CONSULTANT STAFF PRESENT

Gerald Muller, Esq., Attorney, Muller & Baillie, P.C
David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis & Associates
Frances Guzik, PE, Township Engineer
Edward Snieckus, Landscape Architect, Burgis & Associates
Quazi Masood, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer, Arora & Associates

Sam Surtees, Land Use Manager and Zoning Officer

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on non-agenda and non-pending application items. There were no comments from the public.

MINUTES:

April 17, 2024

Mr. Baig made a motion to approve the April 17, 2024 minutes, as amended; seconded by Mayor Marathe. Approved by voice vote. Abstention(s) by: Bahree, Loverro

The minutes will be amended by the Recording Secretary and the final version will be forwarded to the Administrative Secretary.

RESOLUTION:

PB22-02 ER/UDC West Windsor, LLC

Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan, Subdivision & Sign Waivers – Phase I (Quick Chek)
Preliminary Site Plan – Phase 2 (Drive-thru Restaurant)
332-340 Princeton-Hightstown Road
Block 47, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6

Attorney Muller explained that the Planning Board approved application for a Quick-Chek. The resolution was prepared, and then Attorney Muller received a communication from the applicant/property owner, ER/UDC that they wished to withdraw the application. Attorney Muller told the applicant that the application was already approved and they could not withdraw it. He explained to the applicant that the resolution cannot be held indefinitely, so now it is before the Planning Board.

Mr. Baig made a motion to approve Planning Board Resolution PB 22-02; seconded by Mayor Marathe.

Roll Call:

Aye: Loverro, Baig, Whitfield, Marathe, Karp

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Schectel, Pankove, Appelget, Hoberman

Not Voting: Patel, Bahree

APPLICATION (A):

PB24-02 ELLSWORTH REALTY ASSOC., LLC
 Concept Plan & Rezoning
 33 Princeton-Hightstown Road
 Block 5, Lot 20
 Property Zoned: RP-7 District
 MLUL: N/A

Concept review for the mixed-use development known as Ellsworth Village Center (corner of Princeton-Hightstown and Cranbury Roads) to consider updating an existing building along Cranbury Road with apartments on top of commercial space, new residential building and public space fronting Cranbury Road, improvements to parking and stormwater infrastructure and additional residential units to the rear of the site, with aesthetic upgrades to the existing commercial building (where Dunkin Donuts is located). The applicant is seeking feedback allowing the Township Council to explore changes to the redevelopment plan, no new development will be approved at this time.

(In an earlier notification, Vice-Chairman Hoberman recused himself from this meeting.)

Attorney Muller confirmed that although this is a Concept Review, the applicant is also asking for zoning changes. It is not required to be noticed; however, West Windsor Township does require noticing and it has been noticed.

The following gave a presentation on behalf of the applicant. They were sworn-in simultaneously by Attorney Muller.

Sean Ellsworth, Managing Partner/Owner of Ellsworth

Marina Rubina, LA, Architect

Ingrid Kohler, PE, ACT Engineering, Architect and Project Manager

Kerry Pehnke, PE, Traffic Consultant, Langan Engineering

Ryan Kennedy, Attorney, representing the applicant, gave a description of the project.

Mr. Ellsworth thanked the Township staff and his team for all their help. He reviewed some of the history of the property and how the project has evolved.

Architect Marina Rubina gave a power point presentation of the site plan of the property that included existing buildings as well as the proposed placement of the new ones. She described the elevation throughout the property and the applicant's intention to include a generous amount of seating areas. She then discussed the location of the affordable housing units (which are now required to be wheelchair accessible), apartments, and townhouses. They are proposing that all the affordable units be in one building because it is easier to qualify for funding. Chief Lynch's report was discussed and Architect Rubina agreed to all his concerns.

Ms. Kohler reviewed the turning radius of the firetruck. She also reviewed the storm water management, and said there is a reduction of motor vehicle surface on the property. Additional soil testing will be done, and a rain garden will be installed.

Ms. Pehnke, Traffic Consultant, stated that there will be a reduction in retail and be replaced with residential. She explained the improved road changes that they are proposing. EV parking and trash truck radius will be presented at the time of application. The number of allocated parking spaces per unit was discussed. The applicant testified that only one parking space was allocated per COAH unit, because only certain units would own a car, they are commuters and would use the train station. Chairman Karp strongly questioned this. Alternating parking, as done in New York City, was also considered. Engineer Guzik suggested installing video cameras in the parking lots prior to returning to the Board to get a feel of the parking requirement.

Mr. Kennedy also explained that Federal funding is only available if all the affordable units are in one building. Chairman Karp asked him to explain why there would be the possibility of a COAH building being sold. Mr. Kennedy responded that it is a mortgage-backed managed development.

The Township's Planning Board Professionals were sworn-in by Attorney Muller. Reports were submitted and reviewed as follows:

- David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis Associates, report dated May 29, 2024
- Quazi Masood, PE, Traffic Engineer, Arora and Associates, report dated May 29, 2024
- Edward Snieckus, LLA, Landscape Architect, report dated May 29, 2024
- Francis Guzik, PE, Township Engineer, report dated May 29, 2024
- Tim Lynch, Chief, Emergency Services, report dated May 30, 2024

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on the application.

ALISON MILLER, 41 Windsor Drive: Ms. Miller said that she and the Affordable Housing Committee wants to avoid stigma. She said it sounds like the Planning Board would not like see the COAH building used as income qualified. Chairman Karp responded there is a difference between low and moderate income.

ANN STUDHOLME, Pennsylvania Resident Representing 400 Steps: Ms. Studholme said they are excited about the concept presented and is eager to help with the process.

There was no further comment from the public. Mayor Marathe a motion to close the meeting for public comment; seconded by Ms. Bahree. Passed by voice vote.

Chairman Karp announced that this is a Concept Plan Review and there is nothing binding until the final application is received. Attorney Muller corrected him, that the comments by Board and Board members are non-binding. Mr. Surtees asked if the staff should proceed with creating a draft amendment to the redevelopment plan and the Land Use Plan Element a draft ordinance to implement what this concept plan shows. Chairman Karp responded, yes.

APPLICATION (B):

PB24-03 CROSSINGS @ PRINCETON JUNCTION;
 Concept Plan & Rezoning
 23 Cranbury Road
 Block 5, Lots 62, 66, & 76
 Property Zoned: RP-7 District
 MLUL: N/A

K. Hovnanian New Jersey Operations, LLC has made application to the Planning Board for Concept Review of a proposed residential development on property fronting Cranbury Road (County Route 615) and designated as Tax Lots 62 (25 Cranbury Road), 66 (29 Cranbury Road) and 76 (23 Cranbury Road) in Block 5. K. Hovnanian seeks to build thirty-seven (37) market-rate townhomes on Lots 62 and 76 with associated stormwater drainage facilities (detention basin) on Lot 66. Development of adjacent Lot 20 in Block 5 as a residential/commercial mixed-use project by others will include affordable units required for this townhome project.

Attorney Muller announced that although a notice to present a concept plan is not necessary, West Windsor Township requires it and it has been done.

The following were present to testify on behalf of the applicant. The Professionals were sworn-in by Attorney Muller.
Shirleen Roberts, In-House Attorney, representing the applicant (K. Hovnanian) said she would also be testifying
Kenneth Grisewood, Licensed Architect and Planner
Kerry Pehnke, Traffic Engineer, Langan Engineering

Ms. Shirleen Roberts, Attorney, representing the applicant (K. Hovnanian) gave an overview of the project. She stated this is a Concept Plan for another town-home community in West Windsor Township and noticing of the Concept Plan Review has been completed.

Mr. Grisewood reviewed the site plan and surrounding lots. He discussed the County's input of road improvements, the fire officials comments on the turning radius within the development, garage parking spaces and required parking spaces, sidewalks, impervious coverage, and the stormwater basin, and landscaping,

Ms. Pehnke, the Traffic Engineer, explained there will be a decrease in trip generation and amount of parking.

Ms. Roberts presented the architectural renderings of the townhomes. The square footage of the different types of models and number of floors were also discussed.

The Township's Planning Board Professionals were sworn-in by Attorney Muller. Reports were submitted and reviewed as follows:

- David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis Associates, report dated May 29, 2024
- Quazi Masood, PE, Traffic Engineer, Arora and Associates, report dated May 29, 2024
- Edward Snieckus, LLA, Landscape Architect, report dated May 29, 2024
- Francis Guzik, PE, Township Engineer, report dated May 29, 2024
- Tim Lynch, Chief, Emergency Services, report dated May 30, 2024

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on the application.

ANDREA MANDEL: 46 Ellsworth Drive, speaking as a resident: Ms. Mandel asked for more amenities. She said she would also like to see some more green infrastructure in the stormwater basin. Ms. Mandel asked for 220-240 volt outlets be placed in the garages.

ALISON MILLER, 41 Windsor Drive: Ms. Miller said she agreed with Ms. Mandel's comments. She said that it was stated the building height blends in with Ellsworth, she hopes that they will also blend with the single-family houses down the street, as well. She asked if the path would be ADA accessible. She would like to see access from Ellsworth, as well as their development.

JACOB SCHWARTZ, 42 Cranbury Road: Mr. Schwartz said he is happy to see that higher-density housing is coming to their neighborhood. He inquired about the EV chargers. The applicant is installing level 1 chargers; as an EV owner, he suggested they put in level 2 chargers. He asked if the community will be solar ready. Ms. Roberts responded it would be up to the condominium association. Chairman Karp suggested they make the roof "solar ready." Mr. Schwartz also inquired about the path and the park. He bikes to work along Cranbury Road, he asked if there could be trails that would connect to that road so he can avoid Cranbury Road. Ms. Roberts responded that this could be considered in the open space.

There was no further comment from the public. Mayor Marathe made a motion to close the meeting for public comment; seconded by Mr. Baig. Passed by voice vote.

Chairman Karp reiterated that this is a Concept Plan Review and that the comments by Board and Board members are non-binding. He asked that the applicant take into consideration the comments from the public, the Board members and feedback from the Township Consultants.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chairman Karp adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Dziura. RMC/CMR
Recording Secretary