

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
VILLAGE OF RIDGEFIELD PARK
Bergen County, NJ

Minutes of Regular Meeting

January 20, 2015

The Chairman, Mr. Cathcart, called the Re-Organization meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building.

The Chairman announced that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 seq., notice of which was published in the Record on the 28th day of December 2012.

Roll Call: Present: Messrs. Cathcart, Vorhees, DellaFave, Frontera, Miele, Albuquerque Orth, Ms. Perotta

Absent: Mr. Wohlrab

Re-Appointments of Zoning Board

Chairman stepped down.

Mr. Voorhees motioned Mr. Cathcart as Chairman. Ms. Perrotta seconded. Mr. Cathcart accepted nomination

Mr. Cathcart nominated Ms. Perotta as Vice Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Vorhees.

Mr. Cathcart nominated Mr. DeMarrais as Board Attorney. Seconded by Ms. Perrotta.

Mr. Cathcart nominated Mrs. Francine Orovitz as Board Secretary. Seconded by Ms. Perrotta

Roll Call: Cathcart, Perrotta, Vorhees, DellaFave, Frontera, Mies, Alberque, Orth

Re-Organization was adjourned.

Regular meeting called to order at 8:02 p.m.

Ms. Perrotta read the rules of procedure.

Ms. Perrotta moved the minutes of the September 16, 2014 meeting be approved. Seconded by Mr. Vorhees.

Roll Call: Cathcart, Perrotta, Vorhees, DellaFave, Alberque, Orth

Correspondence:

- Mayors Advisory RE: COAH Update – Recap of Today’s Supreme Court Oral Argument

***The Chairman announced there is (1) case to be heard.**

**Case #1501 172 Main Street
Dr. Robert Forte
Block 88/Lot 15
Variance**

Mr. Cathcart stated Case #1501 will be heard but no vote will be taken tonight in order to give Planning Board and other departments time to respond.

Mr. Cathcart stated taxes are current and Record noticing was completed on January 9, 2015.

Mr. Joseph Marienello, Esq. of Marienello and Marienello presented the case to the Board. The application is to convert the former Rialto Theatre to fifteen residential apartments and retail space.

Mr. Klaus Radumacher, Klaus Radumacher Architects, New York, NY was sworn in. Mr. Marienello presented Mr. Radumacher's credentials to the Board. The Board accepted Mr. Radumacher as an expert.

Mr. Radumacher presented plans to the Board.

Exhibit A01 – Plot and Site Plan. Building is staying within the current footprint. The current property is vacant with an empty lot in the rear since 2008. Prior to 2008 it was a theatre.

The current interior has been gutted and has remnants of previous re-construction. It is currently open space.

Exhibit A02- Represents two floor plans of the building. Proposal of the building organization. Single Level in front of building and in rear two separate stories.

Proposal is Main Street will remain as retail with main entrance for retail tenant. Entrance to apartments will be on Cedar Street. The rear of the building will be one bedroom apartments and the front will be studios with loft space. Total residential will be 4 studios and 11 one bedroom apartments. Apartments range from 340 sq. ft. to 875 sq. ft. The building will remain in the same footprint. There will be changes to the façade of the building. This will add 300 sq. ft. to the building in the front on the second floor.

Exhibit A04 – Elevation drop from Cedar Street to Spruce Ave.

Exhibit A05 – Photo of the old marquis.

Exhibit A03 – Cross section of east and west sections of the apartments.

Exhibit A06 – Sketch of what the potential building will look like.

Mr. Radumacher stated they want to bring the building back to what it looked like prior to current renovations.

Parking – There are currently 7 parking spaces. No room for further parking on site.

The building will not expand into the parking area.

Questions from the Board for the architect.

Ms. Perrotta asked if adding the 300 sq. ft. is only in the front of the building. Response is yes. The plans are to stay within the lines of the existing building. There will be 920 sq. ft. of retail. The total sq. ft. of the building is 11, 622 sq. ft. Retail space is less than 10% of the building with residential being 90% of the space.

Mr. Orth asked where the egress will be for the lofts for the second level in the front. The egress will be the stairs.

Mr. Alberque asked if the glass on the second floor will be identical. Response is yes. Where will the egress be? There will be a fire exit in the back of the building.

Mr. Mieles asked if there will be windows on the north side of the building. There will not be. There will be windows in the back of the building. Mr. Mieles is concerned with the egress from the second floor.

Mr. Vorhees asked where the garbage be kept. The answer is there will be an internal trash can. No intention for a dumpster.

Ms. Lisa Philips, Philips Land Use Consulting, 19 Blackfoot Trail, Oakland, NJ, Planner was sworn in.

Mr. Marienello presented Ms. Philips' credentials to the Board. The Board accepted Ms. Philips as an expert.

Ms. Philips presented property photos to the Board. Photos were taken in the fall of 2014. Photos show retail with residential on Main Street, showing this is not introducing a new concept on Main Street. The general area in the immediate vicinity of the property is a mixed use.

The positive aspect of the property in general is the renovation.

Mr. Marienello reminded the Board the current owner had come to the Board with an application to convert the property from a theatre to a mixed office/retail use in 2008/2009. The project was never completed due to financial difficulties.

Ms. Philips stated the provision of residential in downtowns is becoming a popular trend in the United States.

Ms. Philips reviewed the code and the Master Plan and believes this application stays within the goals of the Master Plan.

Ms. Philips' opinion is that this application coordinates with the Master Plan.

Ms. Philips stated the application is seeking two variances. D1 – Use Variance and D3 – Conditional Use.

Ms. Philips stated the Positive Criteria is met.

Other requirement seeking is parking. The Village requires three parking for retail. There will be shared parking spaces. This is a benefit of the mixed use. The fifteen units require 27 parking spaces. The RSIS standards state the studios and one bedroom units require 1.8 parking spaces. Realistically the studios will only use one spot. Sixty percent of the one bedroom apartments will require two parking spaces.

Ms. Philips stated there is no substantial impairment to the Master Plan.

Questions from the Board.

Mr. Miele stated if there is no other use that can be done other than what is being presented for parking. Response was yes.

Ms. Perrotta questioned if residential needs to be above retail space. Ms. Philips stated yes, residential needs to remain above to keep the street scape commercial. There will be residential on the same floor, but you will not see it from the front.

Mr. Alberque asked if you need twenty seven residential and three commercial parking spaces required by law then you need sixteen to eighteen parking spaces and you have seven. Ms. Philips stated if you did retail you would need 39 spaces.

Exhibits A7 – Five pages of nine photos
Exhibit A8 – Aerial Photo of site
Exhibit A9 – Plot Plan

Ms. Perrotta asked about windows on the first floor for the north side. Response, all apartments will have windows.

Mr. Marienello would like to sum up at the next meeting just in case any issues come up that need to be addresses.

The case was opened to the public within 200' in favor. No one appeared.
The case was opened to the public within 200' opposed.

Mr. John Russo, 184 Main Street, Ridgefield Park, NJ was sworn in. Mr. Russo is the owner of Cosmic Wheel and is opposed to the application because of the parking. He feels the concept is good but not without parking.

Ms. Cristina Culmone, 18 Cedar Street, Unit #2B, Ridgefield Park, NJ was sworn in, Ms. Culmone is opposed to the application because of parking,

Ms. Nancy Regna, 18 Cedar Street, Unit #3B, Ridgefield Park, NJ was sworn in. Ms. Regna is opposed to the application because of parking.

Ms. Santa Coker, 18 Cedar Street Unit #2A, Ridgefield Park, NJ was sworn in. Ms. Coker is opposed to the application because of parking.

Ms. Anna Maria Borreca, 22 Cedar Street, Unit #1A, Ridgefield Park, NJ was sworn in. Ms. Borreca is opposed to the application because of parking.

Ms. Tracey Tognella, 7 Lincoln Avenue, Unit #2A, Ridgefield Park, NJ was sworn in. Ms. Tognella is opposed to the application because of parking.

The case was opened to the public outside 200' in favor. No one appeared.

The case was opened to the public outside 200' opposed. No one appeared.

There will be no vote tonight.

Mr. DeMarrais explained to the public that the application has been sent to the Planning Board and the Historical Committee to review. The public will again have the chance to voice their opinion,

Ms. Eun Jin Choi, 39 Webster Street, Ridgefield Park, NJ current owner of the property asked to address the Board. Ms. Choi is in favor of the application.

Mr. Aberque asked the applicant if they had considered any other ways for parking. The Elks have been approached but they said they do not rent out spaces and they have spoken to the Mayor. The Mayor did not want to speak about it prior to the approval of an application. After approval they will approach the town for leasing overnight parking.

Ms. Perrotta motioned to adjourn meeting. Mr. Vorhees seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

(Note: Please refer to the Transcription of the January 20, 2015 meeting for the rest of the minutes.)

Respectfully submitted,

Francine Orovitz