

PLANNING BOARD
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2018

The Mountainside Planning Board met on Thursday, December 20 2018 at the Mountainside Municipal Building, 1385 Route 22, Mountainside, NJ 07092.

In compliance with Chapter 231 OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT in the State of New Jersey, adequate notice had been given to all members of the Planning Board and the newspaper that had been designated to receive notice, The Local Source.

PRESENT: Mayor Mirabelli, Councilman Dierkes, Messrs. Disko, Garran, Jakositz, Matlin, Parker, Tomaine, Younghans, Zawislak, Attorney Loughlin and Secretary Rees.

The November minutes were approved as presented.

MEMORIALIZATIONS:

Artis Senior Living, 1020-1028 Springfield Avenue, Block 24.04, Lot 10.01 and 10.04 – Site plan and development of a senior living facility. A motion was made and seconded to approve the resolution. All were in favor.

Maloney and Curcio Inc., 1090 Bristol Road, Block 7.04, Lot 38 – Applicant proposed a change of tenancy for warehouse, office, and commercial wholesales for plumbing parts. Existing variances included foundation area over 35 percent where 37.5 percent existed. A new variance was necessary for insufficient parking in the Limited Industrial Zone where 32 spaces were provided and 69 spaces were required. A motion was made and seconded to approve the resolution. All were in favor.

Kreisberg, 1442 Fernwood Road, Block 10.04, Lot 4 – Applicants proposed to construct a deck addition in the rear yard of a single-family dwelling. Existing variance included driveway in the side yard setback. New variances included ground projection over 3.75 percent where 4.4 percent was proposed, and lot coverage over 30 percent where 46.1 percent was proposed. A motion was made and seconded to approve the resolution. All were in favor.

Mr. Tomaine announced that the Lemos of 1073 Willow Road application was postponed.

NEW BUSINESS:
Planning Board:

The Garnico Group LLC/The Barnes Tract, 973 and 961 Mountain Avenue, Block 14, Lots 13 and 14 – Applicants proposed preliminary and final site plan and development for a 32-unit townhouse and apartment complex, which would include affordable housing units. New variances included height over 36 feet where 39.5 feet was proposed and front yard under 30 feet where 26.4 feet was proposed.

Mr. Jeffrey Lehrer, Esq. of DiFrancesco Bateman in Warren, NJ, represented the applicants for a new townhouse and apartment complex.

Attorney Lehrer stated that Lot 13 was currently under contract. The house would be demolished.

Attorney Lehrer gave a brief history of the Barnes Tract and the fact that it had been placed in the Area in Need of Redevelopment Zone as well as the Borough's affordable housing obligations.

The two variances were reviewed.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Lee Titus of North Plainfield, NJ. He gave his credential to the board.

Exhibit: A-1: Color version of sheets 3 and 4

Exhibit: A-2: Drainage facilities

Exhibit 13 and 14: Area in Need of Redevelopment

Mr. Titus described the existing site. It fronts on Mountain Avenue. It is a very steep lot and is currently overgrown. Lot 14 is currently owned by the Borough.

There would be six buildings, consisting of a total of 32 units. Six of those units would be affordable housing units and the rest would be market rate units.

There would be 52 parking spaces. Eighteen parking spaces would be on the street, inside the loop. Fourteen spaces would be between the affordable units. There would be two handicap parking spaces.

Mr. Titus described the internal traffic circulation from Mountain Avenue and then from exiting the complex. There would be two way traffic all the way around the property.

There would be sidewalks along Mountain Avenue, outside the loop, and around the perimeter.

Basements: Per Mr. Disko's review. Mr. Titus assured the board that any and all basements would not be converted into bedrooms.

Impervious pavers: Also per Mr. Disko's review Mr. Titus assured the board that any impervious surface within the complex would not be sealed or paved over.

Lighting: There would be 32 carriage-type lantern lights scattered around the complex.

Sign: There would be no site sign. The monument sign would meet the ordinance. It may be externally lit.

Stormwater: Mr. Titus described the storm water plan. The plan would meet all state regulations.

Recreation facility: There would be a path between the loop road and the county park.

Fence: The existing fence would remain on the northern side of the site.

Trash/recycling: Each unit would have their own trash and recycling container that would be picked up by a private hauler.

Mail: Mail would either be delivered to each unit or there would be one mail box at the entrance.

Parking: Each of the market-rate units would have a two-car garage; so that there would be two spaces in the garage and two spaces outside the garage. There would be a separate parking lot for the affordable housing units only. The market rate units would not be able to use that parking lot.

Reports:

- Mr. Disko's report covered connection fees. The affordable housing units may need to pay only 50 percent of the fees. Attorney Loughlin agreed.
- Lot 17 access would remain
- Performance guarantee: Only bonding may be required

- There would be two handicap parking spaces
- Would comply with all fire hydrant regulations

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Gordon Meth as a part-time employee of NV5 and traffic consultant to the planning board.

Mr. Meth inquired about the curb in the road on Mountain Avenue and did it meet the standards. Mr. Titus stated that he did not check the site distance.

Mr. Chadwick's report:

Mr. Chadwick indicated that the monument sign did not need to be so large. He suggested that it be reduced. Mr. Titus agreed.

Mr. Zawislak inquired about sidewalks around the interior townhouses. There would only be sidewalks around the perimeter of the complex.

Mr. Tomaine opened up the floor to the audience for questions.

Audience participation:

Mrs. Tertia Moore, 981 Mountain Avenue inquired about the gravel sidewalk. It would start near her property and continue to the fitness trail and the community pool. Mr. Disko stated that there would be a linkage from Mountain Avenue to the County Park in order to provide access to the pool. Attorney Lehrer stated that the proposed trail was at the request of the Borough, not the applicant.

Attorney Alan Barkin represented Scott and Alyssa Kim of 108 New Providence Road. Attorney Barkin inquired about the topography of the right-of-way. Attorney Loughlin advised Attorney Barkin regarding the easement for the driveway in the right-of-way. Attorney Barkin gave a brief history of the easement, stating that it had been in existence for over 100 years. Attorney Loughlin again advised Attorney Barkin that the two property owners should come to an agreement. Attorney Barkin then request that the developer re-grade the easement. Mr. Titus stated that it may be possible. Plans show the access shifted within the easement and regraded as required.

Mr. Robert Penn, 989 Mountain Avenue inquired about the storm water run-off for a storm that would be greater than 1-2 inches. Mr. Titus explained how the drainage system would work.

Mrs. Genevieve Cooper of 125 Knightsbridge inquired about how long it would take to build the townhouses. It may take at least three years. Mrs. Cooper inquired about the proposed buffer between the townhouses and Knightsbridge Road. Could there be a barrier so that cars would be not able to drive over the curb. Mr. Chadwick suggested landscaping between the driveway and the parking lot.

Mrs. Cooper inquired about the relocation of the telephone poles. Mr. Titus would reach out to the PSE+G.

Mrs. Cooper inquired about the proposed wall and the wetlands area. Mr. Titus stated that there would be a transition area and that the County would not have to give their permission.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Jonathon Rau of 138 Knightsbridge inquired about the existing chain link fence. He would like for the fence to remain. Mr. Disko stated that the fence should be left alone.

Mrs. Ernestina Almeida of 237 South Fork Road inquired about how they were going to keep the dust down. Mr. Titus stated that grass would be planted to keep the dust down and the soil would be stabilized in the open areas. Somerset Union Soil Conservation District must approve any plan of disturbed areas.

Mrs. Lynn Samsky of 126 Knightsbridge Road inquired if there would be a fence around the whole development. She was informed that a fence was not proposed at this time.

Mr. Zawislak inquired as to how many buildings were to be located less than 30 feet from Mountain Avenue. There would be four units less than 30 feet from Mountain Avenue.

At 9:35 pm the board took a recess and at 9:45 pm the board resumed the public portion of the meeting.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. John Saracco as the architect. He gave his credentials to the board.

Per Mr. Chadwick's report, Mr. Saracco stated that the basements would not be able to be habitable and be converted into bedrooms. There would be no windows and the basement would be accessible only from the first floor.

There would be many different types of units from which to choose from. He described the different styles of units with many different options. Mr. Saracco then described the types of materials that would be used on the roofs, turrets, soffits, etc.

Affordable housing units: They would look the same as the market rate units except that they would not have garages.

The board discussed the proposed bathrooms in the basement; whether there would be full bathrooms or half-bathrooms. The developer would like to have at least a shower in the bathroom.

Mr. Younghans inquired about the proposed outside lights on each of the units. Would the lights be shielded and would they be placed on a timer. There would not be any lights over the garages. Mr. Chadwick stated that there may be too many lights.

Mrs. Genevieve Cooper of Knightsbridge Road asked if the developer would consider lowering the proposed turrets. There are only three turrets that exceed the height requirement. The proposed turrets will be 39.5 feet high. The developer will consider revising the height. The other units will maintain the 35 ft. height requirement.

Basements: In response to concerns from both the board members as well as the members of the audience, Attorney Lehrer stated that in order that the basements would not be converted into bedrooms, they would place a restriction into the deed and that the owner would be informed about this restriction and that it would be illegal to convert the basement into a bedroom. Mr. Chadwick also advised the board regarding this matter.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Ms. Kristin Zazzaro of Red Bank, NJ as the professional planner. She gave her credentials to the board.

Ms. Zazzaro reviewed the two variances. Ms. Zazzaro felt that the variances should be granted due to the redevelopment plan, design standards and part of the affordable housing plan. She also discussed the positive and negative criteria and felt that this project was in an appropriate location.

Ms. Zazzaro described the beautiful landscaping that will be planted throughout the complex, including the wall of trees that will be planted along Mountain Avenue.

After discussing the setback of the structures, Mr. Chadwick suggested that one of the buildings be shifted back by approximately two feet. Ms. Zazzaro stated that it would not work due to the fact that it would make the proposed roads too tight, and the driveway would have to be shortened.

School system: Ms. Zazzaro and Mr. Chadwick both stated that there may be no significant impact to the school system. There may or may not be any children living in the complex.

Mr. Tomaine opened up the floor to the audience for questions. There were none.

Attorney Loughlin duly swore in Mr. Greg Spadaro of Westfield, NJ as the landscape architect. He gave his credentials to the board.

Exhibit A-5: Color version of the proposed landscaping.

Mr. Spadaro stated that although many trees will be removed, he will be planting many more evergreen trees and other ornamental trees in their place around the area.

Exhibit A-6: Photographs of the site showing the southwest corner with additional plantings, evergreen trees and shrubs.

Exhibit A-7: View 1 street frontage – south side

Exhibit A-8: View 2

Trees would be planted 50 feet on-center. Taller trees would help with the height impact of the buildings. Hundreds of trees, shrubs and grasses will be planted.

Plantings will be planted along the north side of the easement.

The gravel driveway will be re-graded.

Mr. Tomaine opened up the floor to the audience for questions.

Attorney Barkin representing Mr. Scott Kim, Mrs. Alyssa Kim of Mountain Avenue/New Providence Road, Mrs. Tertia Moore of 951 Mountain Avenue, Mr. John Rau of 138 Knightsbridge Road, and Mrs. Genevieve Cooper of Knightsbridge Road, all inquired about the types of trees and the amount of trees that will be planted along Mountain Avenue and in the complex. Mr. Spadaro again described all the trees and shrubs that will be planted.

Due to the late hour, the application was adjourned to the January 29th meeting. No further notice would be required.

Having no further business, the meeting was duly adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Ruth M. Rees
Secretary

