

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman O'Brien. The Board saluted the flag. Roll call was as follows:

Present – Mr. Agnesino, Mr. Crane, Ms. Flaherty, Mr. Masterson, Mr. Scardino, Mr. Teefy, Ms. Hui, Mr. Cotton. Absent – Mr. Cooper, (excused), Mr. Caligiuri, (excused), Mr. Kernan, (excused), Mr. Jordan, (excused). Also present – Mr. Rocco, Solicitor.

Proper notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act on January 8, 2016.

Chairman O'Brien read the following statement: "Be advised, no new item of business will be started after 10:30 p.m. and the meeting shall terminate no later than 11:00 p.m."

Memorialization of Resolutions:

1. PB-95-16 – App. #WSP-61-16 – Smith Fred Orchards, Inc. – Site Plan Waiver Approved

Motion by Mr. Agnesino, seconded by Mr. Masterson to adopt resolution PB-95-16. Roll call vote: Ayes – Mr. Agnesino, Mr. Crane, Mr. Masterson, Mr. Scardino, Mr. Cotton, Mr. O'Brien. Nays – Zero. Abstentions – Zero.

Site Plan Waivers for Board Action:

1. #WSP-66-16 – Steven Boorstein

Present – Steven Boorstein, applicant.

Member's packets contained: 1. A copy of the applicant's site plan waiver application and survey. 2. Letter dated November 3, 2016 prepared by Rosemary Flaherty, Zoning Officer.

The applicant is before the Board for approval to occupy a four unit apartment building for his financial planning business. The property is located at 5 South Main Street, also known as Block 11806, Lot 1 in the RG-TC Zoning District.

Mr. Boorstein was sworn in by Mr. Rocco. Mr. Boorstein stated that he has been a resident in the town for twenty-two years and has his own financial planning business. He would like to convert the building back to being commercial on the lower level and residential on the top. His business is currently located in Franklinville and he is hoping to sell that building and move his business into Williamstown. Eventually he would like to rent the second unit on the first floor to another business or expand his business into that space. He eventually will do work on the property to fix it up.

Ms. Flaherty reviewed her report for the Board. She stated that the use is a permitted use in the zone. She stated Mr. Boorstein also owns the vacant lot adjacent to this site. He will utilize the parking lot in the rear of the building for his business and tenants; however he has the vacant lot for any overflow parking. Mr. Boorstein stated that he would be amenable to allowing parking in the vacant lot for Township events such as the Memorial Day parade, etc. The property does have sidewalk along Clayton Road and Main Street. The applicant is permitted to have signage on both sides of the building. Landscaping is really not feasible at the site but Ms. Flaherty suggested box planters to help dress up the site. Entrance and exit signs are recommended at the access drives and no parking is permitted on the grassed area. Ms. Flaherty also recommended that the applicant find an alternative design pattern to differentiate between the residential section of the building and the commercial section of the building. She commented that she learned that is a valuable aesthetic to attract people to business on a downtown main street when she attended a seminar on promoting a downtown main street business area. The applicant is also required to obtain a zoning permit and Certificate of Occupancy for the use.

Site Plan Waivers (continued)

1. #WSP-66-26 – Steven Boorstein (continued)

Mr. Crane inquired as to the second lot for additional parking. Mr. Boorstein replied that he owns Lot 24 as well which is an unimproved lot. With regard to his business on Lot 1, most of his clients are either by phone or he visits their homes. He had approximately twelve or fourteen meetings at his office last year. The parking on Lot 1 can accommodate five or six cars which is sufficient. There is one for each tenant, one for himself, and one for a client or visitor. He would eventually like to make the back lot, Lot 24, into a parking lot. If in the future he does rent part of the lower level of the building to another commercial office, he would make the necessary improvements to the back lot. He did say he is aware of water drainage issues in the area so he would probably have to stone the lot rather than have any impervious type of coverage. Mr. Boorstein also stated that he would be open to incorporating a message for the Township such as “Welcome to Williamstown” on his proposed signage for his business. Ms. Flaherty commented that Mr. Boorstein would qualify for the façade program. She stated that when he is ready to make improvements to the outside of the building she will help him with the process to apply for the façade program.

Motion passed to open the application to the public. There being none, motion passed to close the application to the public.

Mr. Rocco reviewed the conditions for the Board. Mr. Boorstein agreed to work with Ms. Flaherty with regard to the landscaping and to work with the town during public events for parking in the back lot. Motion by Mr. Agnesino, seconded by Ms. Flaherty to grant site plan waiver approval. Roll call vote: Ayes – Mr. Agnesino, Mr. Crane, Ms. Flaherty, Mr. Masterson, Mr. Scardino, Mr. Teefy, Ms. Hui, Mr. Cotton, Mr. O’Brien. Nays – Zero. Abstentions – Zero.

Reports:

1. Mr. Teefy informed the Board that they participated in a Fam Tour today, which is a familiarity tour. They used a trolley car to take dignitaries, developers, reporters from the Courier Post and South Jersey Times, as well as a person from EDC that works in different counties in South Jersey on a tour of the town. Mr. Teefy stated that it went very well; they were all shown parts of the town that most were familiar with and parts of the town that they weren’t familiar with. Different business owners spoke about having their business in Williamstown. The invited guests were given swag bags which contained various items inside a reusable bag with the town’s new logo. He also stated that they are not changing the name to Williamstown Township.

2. Mr. Teefy stated that someone has purchased Geet’s Diner as well as the liquor license. They do not know what the plans are for the building as of yet but the new owners will have to appear before the Planning Board before they can reopen.

3. Mr. Crane questioned why new tenant business owners going into an existing building that was used for the same or similar use has to spend \$850.00 to come before the Board for a site plan waiver. Ms. Flaherty replied that if there are issues with the building or the property it’s the only way to resolve those issues. In the past they would just get a zoning permit and then nothing would get done to resolve issues with the property. She also stated that she has been looking into the fees and is recommending changes to Council to reduce the fees for applicants. That issue was before Council last night and it will come to the Board for their recommendation. Mr. Scardino commented that in some cases where there is a landlord, the landlord should be coming in to address the issues with the property. Ms. Flaherty replied that many towns require the property owner to appear before the Board with the tenant but sometimes the landlords do not live in the State. She stated that the ordinance should be tweaked to require the property owners to come in to the Board along with the prospective tenants. Mr. Scardino stated that Ms. Flaherty looks at the properties and knows the issues so it should be the property owner’s problem not the tenants.

Reports: (continued)

Ms. Flaherty mentioned to Mr. Crane that his son's business, Adversary Fitness, should reach out to Christine Scola in Human Resources, if he would like to offer a discount to the Township employees and their families since that will help to generate membership. She stated that other gyms in the area have done that as well. Mr. Crane stated that his son's wife is actually running the business and that he will mention it to his son.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

These minutes are an extract from the meeting that was held on the above date and are not a verbatim account or to be construed as an official transcript of the proceedings. The tape of the meeting is stored in the office of the Board.

Ninette Orbaczewski
Clerk Transcriber