

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman O'Brien who stated the following "It is 6:33 p.m. on November 9, 2023 and this is the special meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Board. Notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act in the Annual Notice of Meetings on January 20, 2023; and a copy was posted on the 2nd floor bulletin board in Town Hall and on the Township's website. In addition, notice of this meeting's public hearing was published on October 27, 2023."

"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."

The Board saluted the flag.

Roll call: Present; Mr. Brown, Mr. Giacomucci, Mr. Helsel, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. Marino, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Young. Also present; Ms. Hyatt, solicitor, Mr. Minner, Engineer, Mr. Dochney, Planner, Ms. Orbachewski, secretary, Ms. Gallagher, transcriber. Excused; Ms. Fox.

Memorialization of Resolutions:

1. PB-28-2023 - #1863 - Advantage Property Management, LLC - Amended Minor Subdivision

Motion to approve by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Helsel. Roll call vote; Ayes- Mr. Brown, Mr. Helsel, Mr. Wolfe, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Young. Nays- Zero.

2. PB-29-2023 - #1864 - Monroe Township- Minor Subdivision Extension Request

Motion to approve request and memorialize by Mr. Marino, seconded by Mr. Helsel. Roll call vote; Ayes; Mr. Brown, Mr. Giacomucci, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. Marino, Mr. Helsel, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Young. Nays- Zero.

Public Hearings:

1. #534-SP - Green Leaf Wellness Solutions, LLC - Minor Site Plan

The applicant is requesting minor site plan approval to change the existing 2-story commercial building into a retail cannabis facility with a proposed 617 square foot addition and other site improvements. The property is located at 4 S. Black Horse Pike, also known as Block 1901, Lot 1 in the Commercial Zoning District.

Ryan Hoffman was present as attorney for the applicant. Also present were Greg Simons, engineer, John Athanasiadis, partner of Green Leaf, Ray Brogden, architect, and Jill Simmermon, landlord and property owner were all sworn in by Ms. Hyatt.

Public Hearings: (continued)

1. #534-SP – Green Leaf Wellness Solutions, LLC (continued)

Mr. Hoffman stated there is one bulk variance for landscape buffers and asked Mr. Simons if he could do anything to bring it to code. Mr. Simons stated that it could be brought a little bit more into code. Mr. Simons stated that the applicant is requesting a change of use to the existing building and a 617 square foot addition in the rear. Mr. Simons stated they are proposing 34 parking spaces on the existing asphalt in the front and side, and the stone area in the rear. Mr. Simons stated there are two access points from the South Black Horse Pike and one on Sicklerville Road and one on Rutgers Road. Mr. Simons stated that there's not a lot of room to address the buffer in the front yard and they could possibly remove a bit of asphalt to provide a small buffer but would still need a variance.

Mr. Hoffman stated that the lack of sidewalks was brought up. Mr. Simons stated they are proposing sidewalks along Rutgers, Sicklerville Road and the Pike. Mr. Hoffman asked if the positive impact would outweigh the detrimental. Mr. Simons replied yes, to reuse and improve the property. Mr. Hoffman referenced the new Cannabis ordinance the Township recently adopted and a new bulk standard that the applicant would be requesting a variance for. Mr. Simons stated the front yard setback is required to be 50' and they are requesting 45' existing along the Black Horse Pike. Mr. Simons stated that the maximum lot coverage is 70% and they are requesting 73.7%. Mr. Simons stated that they are trying to utilize all the parking that is already on site and he believes that the variance request is warranted.

Mr. Minner stated that the applicant did not provide some information as part of the application, but he recommends to accept as a condition of completeness. Motion passed to deem the application complete. Mr. Young asked if a specific area on the site could be used as green space. Mr. Brogden stated there would be some green space by the trash enclosure and they plan to put some evergreens between the McDonalds property.

Mr. Dochney stated that the applicant has agreed to provide the evergreen buffer on the McDonalds side of the property. Mr. Dochney stated he would like to see some sort of landscape buffer on the Black Horse Pike frontage. Mr. Simons agreed with that comment. Mr. Dochney stated that the Sicklerville Road and Rutgers corner he would like to see some greenery and some sidewalks. Mr. Simons agreed with that.

Mr. Hoffman asked about the fence at the building for deliveries. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that the fence will be 6-foot-tall, chain-link and it will be the size of a parking space for sprinter van deliveries. Mr. Simons added that the fence will have privacy slats and may be a couple feet wider and they ask for a waiver to have that 6 foot fence in the front yard. Mr. Hoffman asked about the parking areas that are not curbed. Mr. Simons stated that they looking to keep the existing site drainage patterns so the stormwater will just drain off into the green areas. He added they do have some curbed areas proposed elsewhere as well as the sidewalks and handicap ramps. Mr. Simons stated they are asking for a waiver for the ADA parking spaces to be 11' x 5' instead of the Township requirement.

Public Hearings: (continued)

1. #534-SP – Green Leaf Wellness Solutions, LLC (continued)

Mr. Hoffman asked about the signage. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that nothing has been finalized as far as what they propose for signage but they will cooperate with Zoning on the requirements. Mr. Hoffman added they are asking for a waiver to have signage on two sides of the building. Mr. Athanasiadis stated there is signage that will be illuminated, and they are requesting a pilon sign on the Black Horse Pike side. Ms. Orbachewski asked them to add the pilon sign to the plan when they revise.

Mr. Hoffman asked about the building renovations. Mr. Brogden stated the existing structure is block and wood. He added that the addition in the rear will need to be block wall as well for security reasons. Mr. Brogden stated that they will add a new wood exterior with a stone veneer, except for the rear addition which will be painted or stucco. Mr. Hoffman asked if the building will be painted to blend in with other businesses in the area. Mr. Brogden replies yes. Mr. Brogden believes this will enhance the area. Mr. Brogden stated that the existing garage doors may be replaced with some windows but that is still undecided.

Mr. Hoffman asked what was going to be updated on the interior. Mr. Brogden stated that the roof will be replaced, the floor will be patched and will get an epoxy base. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that there will be security check in upon entry to the store and the security officer will be armed during business hours. He added there will be 24-hour security on site. Mr. Athanasiadis stated there is only one way to enter and they will exit in the rear. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that the inventory will be scanned in upon arrival then be placed in the vault room. He added there will be restrooms and a break room for the employees. Mr. Athanasiadis stated there will be an IT room for the security cameras.

Mr. Hoffman asked about the HVAC. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that a new HVAC is part of the plan as far as the requirements for Cannabis. Mr. Athanasiadis stated they have already been approved by the State for license. Mr. Hoffman asked about the safety and security plan. Mr. Minner stated that it was recently submitted and did not have a change to review. Mr. Minner added that anything would be conditioned upon approval. Mr. Dochney stated he had no comments and he was satisfied that he Chief of Police had approved it. Mr. Hoffman asked about the environmental impact plan and the remediation plan. Mr. Athanasiadis stated about a month ago there were ground soil borings and remediation being done. Mr. Hoffman stated that they do not have the emergency services and vehicles access plan yet. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that they can comply with that.

Mr. Hoffman asked about customer queuing. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that if it becomes too busy, they have a system where people can enter their phone number and can wait in their car until they are notified to come in. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that about 15 to 20 people would be the maximum. Mr. Athanasiadis stated on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday they would have about 4 to 6 employees. He stated on Friday and Saturday there would be about 6 to 8 employees. Mr. Athanasiadis stated they would likely have about 12 employees overall. He stated that there would be 2 managers on shift for inventory. Mr. Athanasiadis stated they plan to be open from 10 to 7

Public Hearings: (continued)

1. #534-SP – Green Leaf Wellness Solutions, LLC (continued)

every day. Mr. Athanasiadis stated they do not plan to have any music playing outdoors. Mr. Athanasiadis stated he does not believe their site will cause any light pollution and they plan to use LED lighting as noted on the plan. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that there will be no consumption of Cannabis on the site as required by the State. Mr. Hoffman asked about the lighting on the site. Mr. Simons stated the existing lighting is not compliant so they plan to eliminate existing flood lights. Mr. Minner stated that they need to show all existing lights within 100' of the site on the plan. Mr. Hoffman stated that they will comply with the County and the State for the property driveways. Mr. Simons stated there is no proposed expansion of the driveways, but they will add new asphalt and curbing on the Rutgers driveway. Mr. Hoffman asked if the State of County proposed a right in right out access could they comply. Mr. Simons stated that any changes would be for safety and aesthetic. Mr. Hoffman asked about sight triangles Mr. Simons stated they will add the sight triangles on the revised plan.

Mr. Hoffman stated they already submitted a phase one environmental assessment and provided a remediation plan. Mr. Simons stated there is on going remediation. Mr. Athanasiadis stated there was some soil contamination and there is an LSRP assigned to the site. Mr. Hoffman asked if they could comply with the conditions of approval. Mr. Athanasiadis agreed. Mr. Minner asked if they could speak on the parking requirements. Mr. Simons stated that 26 spaces would be required with the new Cannabis Ordinance and they currently have 34 spaces.

Mr. Minner reviewed his report for the Board and noted that the applicant has agreed to comply with or provide the items that were discussed during testimony. Mr. Dochney asked about the signage. He referred to the lettering on the canopy. Mr. Brogden stated that the canopy sits out about 3 to 4 feet. Mr. Hoffman asked if the lettering would be in the front of the canopy. Mr. Brogden replied yes, but they could attach it to the wall if required. Mr. Dochney stated that he does not have an issue but it would require a waiver if they want to keep that. Mr. Hoffman stated that they do ask for that waiver. Mr. Dochney stated the waiver would be for more than one façade sign as well as the projection of the façade sign. Mr. Dochney stated that the applicant has agreed to comply with the other comments or conditions he stated.

Mr. Giacomucci asked where they plan to hire from. Mr. Athanasiadis stated they will try to hire as much as they can from Monroe. Mr. Giacomucci asked about the HVAC and will it be on the rooftop. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that it will probably be on the rooftop. Mr. Marino asked about the signage and what would be illuminated. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that the plan is still working. Mr. Marino stated that he would prefer to see the rooftop units closed off from view on the front. Mr. Wolfe stated that he is concerned with the two access points on Black Horse Pike and perhaps it could be one way in one way out. Mr. Hoffman stated they will comply with whatever the County comes back with.

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

Public Hearings: (continued)

1. #534-SP – Green Leaf Wellness Solutions, LLC (continued)

Ms. Hyatt asked about the number of employees. Mr. Hoffman stated that there would be 12 total employed, but 8 at a time max. Ms. Hyatt asked about the security guards. Mr. Athanasiadis stated that there would be two security guards, one at the entrance and one at the exit. Mr. Minner stated that the parking is still okay but is it a total of 8 or 10 employees on site. Mr. Athanasiadis replied it would be 10. Mr. Hoffman asked while open there would be 2 security guards and while closed there would be only 1. Mr. Athanasiadis replied yes.

Motion to approve by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Helsel. Roll call vote; Ayes- Mr. Brown, Mr. Helsel, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. Marino, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Young. Nays- Zero.

2. #1872 – Monroe Township/ Newfield Bank – Minor Subdivision

The applicant is proposing to subdivide an existing lot into (2) lots in order to accept a donation of the back portion of said lot to the Township from Newfield Bank to be used for public parking. The existing lot is 1.238 acres proposing to create Lot 3.01 which will contain 0.7322 acres, the bank property, and Lot 3.02 will contain 0.5059 acres. The property is located at 320 S. Main Street, also known as Block 3205, Lot 3 in the RG-40 Zoning District.

Steven Boraske was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Boraske stated that he subdivision will require two variances which is for lot coverage for each proposed lot. He stated the proposed use of the lot will be for parking for Main Street. Mr. Boraske stated they are able to comply with the Board engineer's review and they will make the corrections to the plan. Joseph Raday was sworn in by Ms. Hyatt. Motion passed to deem the application complete. Mr. Wolfe will abstain from this application.

Mr. Raday stated that he completed the subdivision plan at the time when he was employed as the Township Engineer. He stated that the Township wanted to accept this property and to use as parking for the residents. Mr. Minner stated that the applicant has agreed to revise documents as according to his review.

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

Motion to approve by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Marino. Roll call vote; Ayes- Mr. Brown, Mr. Marino, Mr. Giacomucci, Mr. Helsel, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Young. Abstention- Mr. Wolfe. Nays- Zero.

Public Portion:

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

Reports:

Ms. Orbaczewski reminded the Board that there is another meeting next week 11/16.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion passed to approve the minutes from the meeting on October 26, 2023. Abstention- Mr. Marino.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 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.

Respectfully submitted by: Amy Gallagher, Clerk Transcriber

