

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting

April 2, 2024

-Minutes-

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Vescio called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman Vescio read the OPMA Statement.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Mayor Moench-	Absent	Mr. Banga-	Absent
Councilman Kirsh-	Present	Ms. Sikora-	Absent
Mr. Pappas-	Present	Mr. Choudhury-	Present
Mr. Magura-	Present	Mr. Atkins-	Present
Chairman Vescio-	Present	Ms. Chartowich-	Absent
Mr. Wang-	Absent		

Others present: Board Attorney Mr. Mark Peck, Ms. Katherine Sarmad, Board Planner, Mr. Bill Burr, Board Engineer & Land Use Administrator Nancy Probst.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 19, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

On motion by Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Mr. Atkins, the Board voted to adopt the minutes as amended based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Magura, Mr. Choudhury, Mr. Atkins
& Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible: Mr. Pappas,

Absent: Mayor Moench, Mr. Wang, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga & Ms. Chartowich

MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions for adoption.

LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

HIDDEN RIVER FARMS (HALL RESIDENCE)

Block 429, Lot 53 (639 Meadow Road)

#23-020-PB – Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan with Bulk Variance(s)

Mr. Keith Cahill, Professional Engineer, Mr. Jason Hall, Owner and Ms. Christine Nazzaro-Cofone, Professional Planner were present to represent the application.

Mr. Hall was sworn and accepted by the Board. He provided a brief overview of the application.

Mr. Keith Cahill was introduced as the applicant's Professional Engineer. He was sworn and accepted by the Board. Exhibits were entered as follows:

04/02/24 A1 Aerial Exhibit dated 1/23/24

04/02/24 A2 Proposed Barn Concept Elevation

04/02/24 A3 Existing Conditions Photo Exhibit

Mr. Cahill introduced and described exhibit **04/02/24 A1 Aerial Exhibit dated 1/23/24** to orient the Board and described the lot characteristics in detail.

Mr. Cahill described the proposed barn as a 30,192 SF accessory structure. He reiterated the property is over 30 acres and identified the setbacks from the property lines for the proposed barn. Mr. Cahill then described the proposed barn in detail and clarified that the barn has more than 2 stalls however; Mr. Hall will not exceed the permitted 2 horses on the property. Mr. Cahill advised that he interested in obtaining future animals, such as goats or alpacas, if permitted by the Township.

Mr. Cahill reviewed the variance relief requested for the barn in detail.

Mr. Cahill referenced sheet C101 and oriented the Board to the site plan, highlighting the proposed barn. He then reviewed the stormwater management plan for the barn and identified the basins on the site plan.

Mr. Cahill confirmed the proposed barn is out of the flood area. He introduced and described exhibit **04/02/24 A3 Existing Conditions Photo Exhibit** and identified the proposed lighting for the barn.

On question by the Board, Mr. Cahill confirmed the lot consists of 29.5 acres, approximately. He advised the flood elevations were recently changed by NJDEP. Mr. Hall advised of his findings for flooding during the last 2 hurricanes and stated both were lower than when Hurricane Floyd flooded NJ.

On question by the Board, Mr. Cahill confirmed the nearest fire hydrant is on Meadow Rd.

On question by the Board, Mr. Hall confirmed there are approximately 7 acres of pasture for animal grazing. The pastures will require constant maintenance and proper fencing.

On question by the Board, Mr. Hall advised the remainder of the stalls will be used for animals permitted by ordinance as well as storage for various farm equipment used to maintain the farm.

On question by the Board, Mr. Hall opined the proposed barn is practical and efficient because the size allows multiple stalls per one horse. The barn will also house an office with a bathroom, a feed room, a tack room and a washroom. Mr. Hall explained that he wishes to invest in other animals in the future and wants to plan for adequate space.

At the request of the Board, Mr. Cahill reviewed the submitted site plan sheet set to identify the area where the horses will be kept and where the composting site will be.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Cahill identified the closest residence and then identified the site characteristics between the properties.

On questioning by the Board, Mr. Cahill reviewed the remediation efforts made to comply with NJDEP permitting in detail.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Mr. Hall confirmed the driveway is gravel because it can't be paved.

Mr. Cahill engaged in a discussion regarding drainage and storm water management for the property.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for questions.

Ms. Ilene Funkhouser of 645 Leah Ct. Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Funkhouser requested the applicant evaluate the environmental impacts to nearby residents. She then expressed concerns with storm water runoff.

Ms. Cathy Franco of 766 Weemac Rd. Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Franco asked about animals Mr. Hall intends to have on his farm.

Ms. Franco asked if Mr. Hall would consider donating some of the property. Mr. Hall advised there is about 20 acres of forest and will be involved in a forestry management program. The remainder of the land will be pasture.

With there being no further questions, the Board closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Hall introduced Ms. Christine Nazzaro-Cofone as a Professional Planner. She was sworn and accepted by the Board.

Ms. Nazzaro-Confone provided planning testimony and demonstrated how the application advances the purpose of the Municipal Land Use Law.

On questioning by the Board, Ms. Nazzaro-Cofone confirmed the applicant would be permitted to have two accessory structures. She also confirmed the applicant would be permitted to construct a much larger house by ordinance, advising the existing FAR is 0.06% where .15% FAR is permitted within this zone.

On questioning by the Board Professionals, Ms. Nazzaro-Confone confirmed the proposed barn is outside of the front yard.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for questions. With there being no questions from the public, the Board closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Hall provided a brief summation of the project.

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to public comment on the application. With there being no comments on the application, the Board closed this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Peck reviewed potential conditions for the resolution should the application be approved. The Board deliberated.

On motion by Mr. Pappas, seconded by Mr. Magura, the Board voted to approve the application with conditions based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Pappas, Mr. Magura, Mr. Choudhury,
Mr. Atkins & Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible:

Absent: Mayor Moench, Mr. Wang, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga & Ms. Chartowich

Chairman Vescio opened the meeting to the public for any question or comments not related to any agenda item.

Ms. Cathy Franco of 766 Weemac Rd. Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Franco asked about a specific piece of property being reevaluated. The Planning Board had no comment.

Area in Need of Redevelopment – Preliminary Investigation of Blocks 411, Lot 39 and Block 408, Lot 67 (Township Council Resolution # 24-03-21-102)

Mr. Peck advised the Board the Township Council has passed a resolution requesting the Board undertake a preliminary investigation for an area in need of redevelopment for the Ethicon site. The Planning Board would need to authorize the Township's Redevelopment Planner, Michael Sullivan, to prepare a report on the identified site and attend a public meeting. The Planning Board would then determine whether or not this site needs redevelopment and notify the Township Council of their findings.

Councilman Kirsh echoed Mr. Peck's summary and clarified there are 6 steps of the redevelopment process. The first step is the Township Council's resolution and step 2 consists of the Planning Board authorizing the Planning Board to direct Mr. Sullivan to begin the redevelopment investigation.

On motion by Councilman Kirsh, seconded by Mr. Atkins, the Board unanimously voted to open the meeting to the public.

Ms. Mary Gallagher of Highland Ave. Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Gallagher expressed concerns with contaminated groundwater on the site and potential pollution from the site. Councilman Kirsh advised the Township Council will ensure the integrity of the area is not compromised. Ms. Gallagher then asked how the redevelopment process works and Councilman Kirsh explained the process.

Ms. Cathy Franco of 766 Weemac Rd. Bridgewater NJ. Ms. Franco reviewed possibilities the Redevelopment Planner could identify for the site. Mr. Pappas clarified Mr. Sullivan will conduct the investigation and reiterated the redevelopment process. He also clarified there will be a public input session.

Mr. Pappas clarified Mr. Sullivan was appointed as Redevelopment Planner several years ago and has been assisting the Township with various projects since his appointment.

On motion by Mr. Choudhury, seconded by Mr. Pappas, the Board authorized Mr. Sullivan to conduct a preliminary investigation of an area in need of redevelopment for Block 411, Lot 39 and Block 408, Lot 67 based on the following roll call vote:

Affirmative: Councilman Kirsh, Mr. Pappas, Mr. Magura Mr. Choudhury,
Mr. Atkins & Chairman Vescio

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Eligible:

Absent: Mayor Moench, Mr. Wang, Ms. Sikora, Mr. Banga & Ms. Chartowich

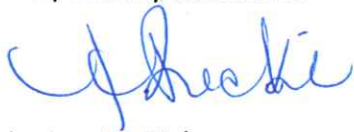
OTHER BUSINESS
Master Plan Update

Ms. Sarmad advised on April 11th, 2024 at 7pm, there will be a public workshop to gain public feedback on the Master Plan. She further advised there will be staff for the public to ask questions.

ADJOURN

On motion by Councilman Kirsh, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted



Jo-Ann M. Ricks
Deputy Land Use Administrator/Deputy Zoning Officer