

Planning Board

June 7, 2023
Work Session
Minutes



THESE PROCEEDINGS WERE HELD VIRTUALLY

CALL TO ORDER

7:30pm

ATTENDANCE

Present

- David Barad, MD- Class IV/Chairman
- John Glidden- Class I/Mayor
- Tsun-Yam Tam- Class II/Borough Historian
- Victoria Amitai- Class III/Councilperson/Council Liaison
- Robert Di Dio- Class IV/Full Member
- Angela Ferullo- Class IV/Full Member
- Conway Wong- Class IV/Full Member/Environmental Commission Liaison
- Avia Blum- Class IV/Alternate #1
- Zachary Messinger- Class IV/Alternate #2
- Daniel Steinhagen, Esq.- Board Attorney
- Nicholas De Nicola, PE- Board Engineer
- Paul Demarest- Board Coordinator/Secretary

Absent

- Dean Paltos- Class IV/Vice Chairman
- Ansar Batool- Class IV/Full Member

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Barad read mail received by the Board into the record.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

Paul Yarin, 58 Cedar Court, Closter, New Jersey, introduced himself as the newly-appointed Chairman of the Environmental Commission and spoke on the importance of educating developers, residents and merchants on the benefits of green infrastructure and sustainability, thereby, reducing the carbon footprint; he stressed incentives are key to



persuading them to install electrical vehicle charging stations, solar panels, etc. Chairman Barad concurred with Chairman Yarin's points and assured the Board will collaborate with the Commission on promoting change, by ordinance, in the way people utilize buildings and property in the Borough; he asked that the Commission continue to provide thoughtful administrative reports to assist the Board in adjudicating its caseload.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilwoman Amitai and seconded by Ms. Ferullo to approve the minutes for the April 27, 2023 Meeting. The motion passed (6-0-0):

Yes- Blum; Wong; Ferullo; Amitai; Tam; Barad;

No- n/a;

Abstain- n/a;

Late Arrival- Di Dio;

Mr. Demarest reminded that the May 3, 2023 Work Session and May 25, 2023 Meeting were cancelled, therefore, no minutes were prepared.

RESOLUTIONS

n/a;

COMPLETENESS REVIEW

#1 CASE P-2023-05

APPLICANT:	DOMOTO, LLC
SUBJECT PROPERTY:	CLOSTER COMMONS UNIT D1
BLOCK/LOT:	1607/3.32
ZONING DISTRICT:	3 (BUSINESS)
REPRESENTATION:	ADAM LAZAROS, ESQ. (IN LIEU OF BENJAMIN WINE, ESQ.)
REAL ESTATE TAX:	CURRENT THRU 2023/1 ST QUARTER
AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE:	N/A
AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION:	N/A

Synopsis

The applicant is seeking Site Plan Approval for the tenancy by a food establishment (restaurant), as well as 2 walkway installations, within a non-residential condominium unit of a shopping center; **NOTE:** landlord/shell construction to convert the subject property from a 1- to 7-tenant space unit is underway; the application was received May 24, 2023 and scheduled for the **June 7, 2023 Work Session**.

New Board Requests

- 1.) address all items in letter prepared by Board Engineer and dated June 5, 2023;
- 2.) submit tree removal permit application accompanied by Borough Tree Expert's report and mitigation plan;
- 3.) confer with landlord on installation of several electrical vehicle charging stations in parking lot and revise site plan accordingly;
- 4.) confer with landlord on installation of traffic signage, speed bumps, etc. in parking lot to vastly improve on-site circulation and revise site plan accordingly;
- 5.) confer with landlord on enhancing existing accessible ramp for subject unit and/or its immediate surroundings (vegetation buffer, curbing, etc.) to curtail safety concerns about its proximity to driveway aisle and revise site plan accordingly;
- 6.) obtain administrative reports from Police Department and Fire Marshal;
- 7.) confer with landlord installing refuse collection enclosure to centralize dumpsters currently situated in parking spaces throughout subject property and revise site plan accordingly;
- 8.) consider providing outdoor dining accommodations near proposed storefront and revise site plan accordingly;
- 9.) verify existing loading dock remains functional in light of proposed walkway in its vicinity;
- 10.) provide impact protection for subject unit's utility meter bank and revise site plan accordingly;



- 11.) ensure red light identifying existing standpipe (Siamese connection) near loading dock is functioning;

Decision

A motion was made by Councilwoman Amitai and seconded by Mayor Glidden to deem the application complete and schedule it for the June 29, 2023 Meeting pending the receipt of requested items and public noticing requirements. The motion passed (8-0-1):

Yes- Messinger; Blum; Wong; Ferullo; Amitai; Tam; Glidden; Barad;

No- n/a;

Abstain- Di Dio;

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilwoman Amitai briefed the Board on the following:

- 1.) ongoing musical series sponsored by Mayor Glidden's Committee for the Arts continues at Closter Public Library;
- 2.) Borough is continuing contract negotiations with developer to convert former Village Middle School (511 Durie Avenue) to 35-unit affordable housing complex as per Borough's court-approved settlement with fair housing advocate (Fair Share Housing Center) replacing corporation affiliated with Bergen County Housing Authority which withdrew from project with Mayor Glidden anticipating announcement in near future;

Mr. Wong briefed the Board on the following:

- 1.) Commission is contemplating creation of standardized checklist to assist in crafting its administrative reports to land use boards;
- 2.) Borough's participation in nation-wide campaign (No Mow May), whereby property owners forgo lawn mowing for 1 month, resulting in dandelions, etc., to assist hibernating bees and other insects with pollination, was successful;
- 3.) Commission encourages Borough to facilitate installation of electric vehicle charging stations on both public and private property (Mr. Steinhagen informed that such has already been addressed by ordinance resulting from statutory mandate implemented by State of New Jersey in 2021 but noted sector growth will likely be market-driven);

MISCELLANEOUS

Mayor Glidden advised that the Borough would likely host its next Joint Meeting, during which the Board gathers with the Governing Body, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Historic Preservation Commission, Improvement Commission, Shade Tree Commission and Environmental Commission to discuss land use matters and brainstorm how to improve upon the Borough's existing ordinances and enforcement agencies without taking formal action, sometime after Labor Day; he said his administrative assistant, Leslie Weatherly, would spearhead the planning.

Mayor Glidden said the Borough's recent Memorial Day weekend activities were very successful with many veterans both assisting and in attendance.

Ms. Ferullo expressed concern that conditions the Board places on applications deemed complete at its Work Sessions are not always confirmed for compliance later on at its Meetings; she noted it is important to assure each Board member has sufficient time to collect their thoughts when questioning applicants during Work Sessions.

At the Board's request, Mr. Steinhagen summarized his draft for amending Chapter 200 of the Borough Code as it relates to mandating underground electric utility service installations for new 1- and 2-family house construction projects; he said the Board needs to advise what the threshold should be, if any, for 1- and 2-family house projects which are not categorized as new construction, noting Chapter 173 of the Borough Code already requires underground electric utility service for multiple-family housing and non-residential construction projects as part of the Site Plan Review ordinances. He reminded that 1 or more prior Annual Reports prepared by the Zoning Board of Adjustment have recommended such be required for all types of new construction projects as well as additions. Mr. De Nicola noted that the Board must take into consideration that while underground service would be an obvious choice if the utility pole and subject property are on the same side of the thoroughfare, a riser pole is sometimes the only option if they are on opposite sides; he also said the Borough prohibits the opening of any thoroughfare that has been paved in the past 3 years. After considering 50% and



33.33% increases in existing roof area as potential thresholds, the Board agreed that any increase in the floor area of 1- and 2-family houses should activate the requirement for underground electric utility service; Mr. Steinhagen said he would amend the draft accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

8:48pm

