

Minutes of the Park Ridge Planning Board
Meeting of August 26, 2009

These minutes have not been approved and are subject to change by the public body at its next meeting.

The regular meeting of the Park Ridge Planning Board was called to order by the Chairman, David Mesiano, on the above date, time and place.

Chairman called for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL: Present: Messrs. Browne, Brouwer, Maguire, Mesiano, Mital, Oppelt,
O'Donoghue, Sandler, Saluzzi
Absent: Councilman Wells
Also Present: John Ten Hoeve, Jr., Board Attorney
Eve Mancuso, PE, Board Engineer
Brigette Bogart, PP, Planning Consultant

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT:

The Notice for this meeting required by Section 3(d) of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided by the adoption of a resolution by the Park Ridge Planning Board on January 28, 2009, setting forth a schedule of regular meetings, by mailing of said schedule to the Record and The Review on January 29, 2009 and by posting of said schedule on the Municipal Bulletin Board and the continuous maintenance thereof and by filing the said schedule in the office of the Borough Clerk.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE:

RICHARD CASSATA

Chairman Mesiano presented a plaque to Richard Cassata in recognition of Mr. Cassata's long time service of 19 years to both the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

ANYONE PRESENT WISHING TO BE HEARD: (non-agenda items)

There was no one.

PUBLIC HEARING:

GEORGE PAPAS – 66 Fairview Avenue - **Soil Moving**
Lot: 5 Block: 2209

(existing house to be demolished – new house constructed)

MESIANO: This was talked about two weeks ago at the work session. Do you want to come up (this to the applicant)?

George Papas, 66 Fairview Avenue came forward and was sworn.

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MANCUSO: We did receive a new plan, with last revised date of August 6, 2009, with a notation that says "tree protection on Note 12" and in fact, there is now a tree protection detail on the new plan and Note 12 says "tree wells shall be installed around trees in filled areas".

I don't see any other amendment. The total cut, total fill are now correct on the amended application, which says total quantity of soil to be moved is 737 cu yds, which is now consistent with the table that is on the plan. That addresses one of my items.

My third item is just for discussion and it is regarding soil erosion measures, which is a standard note.

Fourth item from my correspondence of July 30th was noting the mature trees on the property and our recommendation that every effort be made to protect them. Now, we do have the tree protection detail that is shown on the revised plan.

Item 5 regarding a proposed truck route was to be determined prior to the permit being issued and that item remains open and that is typically determined when the contractor/owner comes in for the permit and it is determined who, in fact, will be removing the soil.

So it appears that the items that required revision have, in fact, been revised.

TEN HOEVE: As you heard the engineer say, she has received new plans from your engineer and is it accurate to say that all the questions that are raised in your July 30th letter have been answered?

PAPAS: To the best of my knowledge, yes.

MAGUIRE: I know you are only here for the soil moving but could you give us some data on what you are doing here? Is it an addition, a pool?

PAPAS: No. I'm doing a knock-down and a new house. The existing house on the survey is the outline and the red is the new house. The pool will be new once I go through all the permit process. This is just for soil moving.

MESIANO: to ENGINEER:_ Have all your questions been addressed?

MANCUSO: The items that needed plan revision have been met.

TEN HOEVE: Just so you understand, there are some things on the drawing that may not fully comply with setback requirements. I am not sure about the pool, for example. This approval isn't going to approve anything else on the plan, just soil moving.

PAPAS: I understand.

BOGART: The only thing I would note is if you are interested in keeping those trees in the front yard, you might want to consider moving that wall back a little bit further. As close as it is, I am sure you will lose most of those trees.

PAPAS: Thank you. I was told by PSEG I might lose some when they disconnect the gas.

BOGART: Generally you want to stay as far away as the canopy reaches.

PAPAS: Thank you.

MANCUSO: I have an additional comment...just for the applicant's understanding of the procedure. What we have done from our office is review for soil permit only. If the soil movement is approved, you still have to go to

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the building department for plot plan review because I did not receive storm water management calculations or anything of that nature. So there still is another level of review prior to the permit being issued. I just wanted to clarify that so you would know what is ahead. Issues such as those the planner mentioned regarding retaining walls, storm water management, more detail regarding the pool setbacks, setbacks on the vinyl shed...all of those issues still remain to be addressed in the plot plan review.

TEN HOEVE: Which doesn't require a hearing or application.

MANCUSO: Right, that is strictly the building department.

SALUZZI: That will all be part of the permit process.

MANCUSO: Additionally the edge of the driveway over to the property is also one of the things that needs to be addressed but it is not the purview of this board with this application. This is strictly soil moving.

OPPELT: And as far as fencing the pool...because that has to be addressed as well.

MANCUSO: Yes, the requirements for fencing, pool, where the equipment is going...all of that will be addressed by the building department at the time of permit.

BEER: Mr. Oppelt, Mr. Papas has been working with the building office and had picked up his permits. It was when they were working with him it was discovered that he required soil moving. This is a modular home that was due to be delivered but subsequently canceled in order to have the hearing.

MANCUSO: That's why I am noting because even with this approval he is still not ready for delivery.

BEER: He knows he has another level to go because he has already picked up the building permits.

MANCUSO: There are a number of items on the plan that still don't comply. It needs to go through engineering review. Just for your information so you can plan accordingly.

PAPAS: I will. Everything pending approval will go through....

MANCUSO: Mr. Lantelme has done numerous plans for the borough and he is very familiar with the requirements.

SALUZZI: I may also emphasize how important it is to keep these trucks clean before they enter the road. We have to be very careful of that.

MESIANO: That is one of the big issues that always comes up for whatever project. What we will do, unless you have anything else to add...

PAPAS: I don't know what to expect, I have never been here before.

MESIANO: We will review this and the attorney will write a resolution and because you have this time constraint...normally we would discuss it in two weeks and then approve it two weeks after that, but I think we can approve it in two weeks at our next meeting on September 9th.

SALUZZI: Is he cutting down any trees?

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MANCUSO: Yes, a couple of trees are noted to be removed, one within the pool and as Brigitte noted there are a couple immediately next to a retaining wall that as shown, they would need to be removed but if the wall meandered a bit around it or if tree wells were built as in the new Note #12 that was added to the plan, there is some flexibility. But most definitely when the pool is installed there is one tree in the footprint of the pool.

MESIANO: The next meeting is September 9th and we should be voting on the resolution at that point.

PAPAS: Thank you and just so I understand it, once the resolution is done, then that means I can apply for the permit?

BEER: You would apply to Mr. Saluzzi, at the Building Office and he will have a copy of the resolution the following morning.

BROUWER: How about the other plans that Mr. Papas has to do?

BEER: That's through Mr. Saluzzi.

BROUWER: He can submit them now.

TEN HOEVE: I believe if the board decides tonight that it wants me to prepare a resolution that even though a written resolution hasn't been done, he can submit that application to the building office.

BROUWER: Do you know what you need?

BEER: Yes, he has been working with the office.

PAPAS: Yes, Mrs. Beer and Mr. Saluzzi have been helping me tremendously.

MESIANO: Yes, keep moving with that and work it all into the two week time frame.

Coral Greshan, 282 Alpine Circle, River Vale, NJ came forward and was sworn.

GRESHAN: I do live directly behind and I do have a water problem and every time it rains I do have a pond, a pretty big pond and in the winter I have a skating rink. What recourse do I have if this starts due to the water problem, where do I go from there?

BROUWER: What is causing the water problem?

GRESHAN: I have three houses behind me and it grades up to almost seven feet high. His is pretty much level and if it is going to come, it is going to come. The other houses are pretty high. I think it goes down to me. I have a water problem to start and I came here to see if he was putting in wells and something to catch that water.

TEN HOEVE: The engineer can address this and I will ask her to make some comment but he is not adding soil to the property, he is actually removing some soil. So he is not going to raise the level of this property and cause water to run on yours and he is also providing seepage pits...

GRESHAN: Well, that's why I came here to make sure that would happen.

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TEN HOEVE: And the engineer can probably address any other concerns that you had with regard to whether this is going to create a drainage problem.

MANCUSO: If you look at the grading at the rear of the lot, it does show from the....

GRESHAN: Yes, we didn't get one of these.

MANCUSO: from the south rear corner to the north rear corner, there is a grade differential from 101 up to 106 & change...but the contours at the rear of the subject property are not changing in the rear yard. The condition is essentially going to remain the same. He is not going to contribute additional water because the storm water management calcs will require a seepage pit system designed to accommodate the new house and the pool, but if you currently have water in your back yard, this is not going to make it go away.

GRESHAN: No, I didn't think it would, I just didn't want it to make it worse.

MANCUSO: The regulations dictate that he will not make it worse but he's not obligated to make it better.

MESIANO: And he isn't raising his property

GRESHAN: I came here because I didn't know what he was doing and what I came here to find out; there was nothing to show me.

MANCUSO: In fact, all the trees in the rear yard, as of now, with the exception of one, are slated to remain. There are a number of large oaks in the back, which actually help toward absorbing water.

GRESHAN: And I have an equal amount on my property as well.

MANCUSO: I see it says Township of River Vale but that's all we see of your property. Actually the way the grades are showing, it looks like there is almost a swale cut in on the subject property at the rear of his lot that goes down to the neighbor to the south. And that water is still lower than you.

GRESHAN: Thank you.

MESIANO: That concludes this hearing.

TEN HOEVE: Do you want to discuss it now?

MESIANO: Sure.

Various board members spoke and felt the application was pretty straightforward and he had met most of the conditions as laid out by the engineer.

TEN HOEVE: I can prepare a resolution that includes all the standard provisions about clearing with the police and having adequate measures to make sure the roads are cleaned and providing that he has to pay for any damage if he does any damage or cleanup any mess. There are conditions that we put in resolutions for soil moving all the time and my only suggestion is we have Nick and Eve look at this again since it appears that the zoning officer might have missed something. Just to make sure that he either has to come back for a variance if there's a problem or change his plan before he starts building.

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MESIANO: At what point in the process would it go to the engineer? Is that a step that is coming down the line?

SALUZZI: When it comes in for a permit, before I can issue a permit I get engineering approval first, so I send these plans to my engineer for review. Until I get that approval I will not issue a permit.

BROUWER: So with what you have now is there any way you can issue a preliminary review?

SALUZZI: I can start the process of doing the review without his approval so that when I get his approval we're ready to go.

MANCUSO: The problem is, typically I would go into more detail because as the borough engineer I would have picked it up in building but now that goes to a different engineer, so I can certainly talk to Nick about it so he's alerted to the facts. That's one of the problems that we run into.

BROUWER: With his time restraint, maybe we can get the drawing out there for the changes that have to be made.

SALUZZI: We'll work something out and do it as quickly as possible.

MESIANO: So the plan of action is, Nick is going to move along as if the resolution will be approved in two weeks. Our attorney will create a resolution and we will take action in two weeks and that will help the applicant move his project along. It goes to Azzolina/Feury but they should pick up these things.

SALUZZI: Well, one of the other things we do besides engineering is also our zoning review before a permit is issued. So he has a couple of things he has to get approved before we can give him a permit.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made by Mr. O'Donoghue to approve the July 8, 2009 minutes as written. Motion seconded by Mr. Maguire.

AYES: Messrs. Browne, Brouwer, Maguire, O'Donoghue, Oppelt, Sadler

ABSTAIN: Messrs. Mesiano, Mital, Saluzzi

Motion made by Mr. Maguire to approve the July 22, 2009 minutes as written. Motion seconded by Mr. Oppelt.

AYES: Messrs. Browne, Brouwer, Maguire, Mesiano, O'Donoghue, Oppelt, Saluzzi

ABSTAIN: Messrs. Mital, Sandler

MASTER PLAN:

Planner distributed a draft circulation plan for Master Plan and explained that it would be the first time the borough had a circulation plan. She said at this point only the basics were being given; existing conditions, classifying roadway...accident data and traffic counts as received from the county...Park Avenue streetscape plan is identified...the Green Streets that are

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identified in the Open Space Plan...check the notes on the side as this is still a draft. With the roadway classification there is a circulation map which identifies, based on traffic counts, the type of roadways there are in the borough.

Planner said the board would be addressing a couple of topics; streetscape design, streetscape elements, streetscape furniture, benches, lanterns, aesthetic natures of all downtown. She said we would also be addressing the Park Avenue streetscape design that has been talked about. Roadway safety, traffic counts and the different circulation patterns that have been talked about for the downtown. Lastly, Green Streets and pedestrian safety, bicycle paths and how we plan to implement the green streets that will be identified in the plan. The five elements will be included in the Circulation Element. This will be more fully discussed at the board's September 9th work session.

Planner then handed out the narrative associated with the environmental map that was distributed at the last meeting. Pages 21 thru 23 explains all your environmental characteristics, topography, slope, wetlands, category 1 waterways and buffers and the threatened and endangered species. Planner said it will go in the Land Use Element.

Planner called notice to the back of the second page which contains the new Recycling Plan element. Ms. Bogart explained that it was required by the MLUL and is only about 4 pages long. She said you have to identify certain standards and goals for recycling, any ordinances we have in place, existing conditions and then it is broken down by materials...what was reported to the county. She said in 2007 the total tonnage reported dropped from the 8,000's to 3,000's and county felt it was because of the late leaf drop and the early snow. The borough just adopted a new Recycling Ordinance so there weren't too many suggestions or changes she had but the one or two she is making mostly pertain to being green and sustainability issues.

Planner distributed additional information stating it was a first attempt at writing a narrative to address the FAR volume issues. She identified some goals the board should achieve to encourage new development to be in scale with the character of the neighborhood; establishing some roof designs to emphasize the scale of the neighborhood and some architectural elements that the board may want to look at in an ordinance. Ms. Bogart said the entire ordinance would not be placed in the Master Plan but there would building setbacks and the setback of the buildings themselves. She called attention to the second page where it is recommended that there be a setback for the building and almost a setback zone for the second story, so that if a second story is built it would have to be stepped back an additional five feet. Planner said she would be submitting diagrams shortly to illustrate what she is suggesting.

The second category in the FAR narrative deals with neighborhood compatibility and just in general terms what we should be looking to discourage and encourage. She will also be submitting graphics to illustrate.

The last two things deal with garages and their setbacks to basically reduce their presence at the street level and encourage them to be setback behind the front façade or turned to the side. Planner said this still had to have some additions to it.

Fences and retaining walls were the last and Planner reminded all that the narrative was a draft and she was still working on the details but she wanted the board to have an update of where she was at.

Planner said all this was coming together and the Land Use Element, at this point, totaled about 50 to 60 pages without any of the diagrams or illustrations. She said it would probably be an 80 to 90 page document when finished, which is why she said she is giving it out piece-meal rather than 90 pages at one time.

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BROUWER: Do we have a time constraint?

BOGART: The Master Plan must be adopted by December 2009 and it is about 60% done.

BEER: Public hearing will be scheduled in November so the hearing can be held in December.

BOGART: I have most of the Land Use Plan written, I just didn't feel comfortable submitting it tonight. I have to make some modifications. The Recycling Element is basically 90% done. The Circulation Element is basically 50% done. I basically have the Environmental features, the one thing we have to discuss is what we want to do...do we want to recommend environmental regulations; are we going to encourage any additional zoning ordinances to be created based upon our base data...so that needs to be discussed, it is just recommendations and that is about 75% done. Open Space is basically done; the only thing I need to do with that is make sure it is coordinated at the end with the circulation element and circulation plan.

However, we may want to establish certain environmental goals for the topography, look at the extent of the steep slopes, maybe talk about wetlands in certain areas of town that we want to preserve...if we find areas in the borough with environmental constraints we may want to go back to the Open Space Plan and target that area for land acquisition.

I think there are a number of goals we are going to have to identify at the end but what I would like to do is build background information and print out another comprehensive draft document and we can just go through element by element and decide what we want to do.

MAGUIRE: Are we on track with this since the Mayor and Council still have to adopt.

BOGART: No, the Planning Board adopts, which has to be by December and we could do the public hearing in December and adopt in December if we had to.

I can definitely have the whole plan, without specific recommendations, by the end of September. So can aim for that and maybe sit down and go through the goals and objectives we want to achieve and things we want to pull out. Then we can get a first version of final draft in October and a final draft in November for public hearing.

BROUWER: Do we have a concise list of what kind of recommendations we are looking to do?

BOGART: I'll put that together. I will put the comprehensive draft together and then identify things that you may want to target. If you look at the Environmental Plan and the Circulation Plan, you will see notes that I have on the side that I'm still looking at and you may want to look at them as well.

We discussed a lot of issues with the Land Use Plan and what we are going to do with Broadway and how we are going to treat Park Avenue...that's one thing I'm still working on.

I'm also looking at zones and I think instead of doing a zone overlay, we may want to make an amendment to the zoning ordinance.

BROUWER: Whatever happened to the discussion about the permitted uses in that building on Park and Kinderkamack, whether a type of urgent-care or day surgery would be permitted under the ordinance?

TEN HOEVE: I haven't really looked at it. I have to check it.

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BOGART: The one other thing that I looked as is I went through and did a new comprehensive plan for the B-3 district to see how much density we have to get there to make it work. It was about 152 residential units, 33,000 sq ft of office and 47,000 sq ft of retail and a five-story parking garage.

BROUWER: That's to make it palatable to have a developer come in?

BOGART: Yes and at that point in time you couldn't require the developer to move the train station because that would be an additional cost to them or you would have to raise the density even further.

So we can either leave the B-3 district alone or put some language in there to suggest that we want to encourage this redevelopment.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the board a motion was made by Mr. Oppelt that the meeting be adjourned.

Second by Browne:

Carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Helyn N. Beer
Secretary

(9:13pm)