

**BOROUGH OF PARK RIDGE
PLANNING BOARD
February 10, 2016
REGULAR MEETING**

The Public Meeting of the Planning Board of the Borough of Park Ridge was held at Borough Hall on the above date.

Chairman Schwamb stated that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. He then asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call Board:

Chair Donald Schwamb	Present
Mayor Terence Maguire	Present
Councilman Keith Misciagna	Present
Mr. Robert Ludwig	Present
Mr. Donald Browne	Present
Mr. Von Bradsky	Present
Mr. Mark Bisanzo	Present
Mr. Robert Metzdorf	Present
Mr. Kieran Lynch	Present

Also Present:

Mr. William Rupp	Board Attorney
Ms. Eve Mancuso	Board Engineer
Ms. Brigitte Bogart	Board Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 27, 2016

A motion was offered, seconded and approved by all to approve the minutes.

REZONING REQUEST

Request referred from Governing Body

Chairman Schwamb stated that the Board would be hearing from the new owner of the former Sony property headquarters located on Brae Blvd. on the west side of town. He further stated that the owner, Hornrock Properties MPR, LLC, has submitted a rezoning request to the Governing Body and that this request has been referred to the Planning Board for consideration and review. The Planning Board then has an obligation to report back to the Mayor and Council with an opinion on the request.

Sam Gershwin of Hornrock Properties stated that his company had purchased the property in question from the Sony Corporation about one year ago for \$16M, about ½ of the current assessed value. He stated that although it has been on the market as commercial office space they have not had any interest in such a use. He stated that they wish to bring the land back to active use and are therefore requesting a zoning change to allow for residential development of the property. He further stated that the proposal will provide Affordable units that help the Borough satisfy the state requirement that, while not yet known is estimated to be between 280-400+ units.

He described the property as 37.23 acres in total. The property crosses the borders with Montvale and Woodcliff Lake. The majority of the property, nearly 30 acres, is located within the Borough of Park Ridge. Approximately 7 acres in Montvale and less than an acre is a wooded area in Woodcliff Lake. There are also 9 acres of the property that is wetlands and thus not buildable. The owner has already obtained the necessary LOI from NJDEP.

Mr. Gershwin continued that their first proposal, submitted to the Governing Body was for 785 dwelling units. Mr. Gershwin explained that he Governing Body's first major concern was that the buildings crossed the municipal border between Park Ridge and Montvale and would present several problems including utility service. In response to that concern, the current plan that is being proposed is for 714 units (555 of which are located in Park Ridge) and none of the buildings intersect the municipal boundary.

Mr. Gershwin then introduced Mr. David Minno, professional Architect and Planner. Mrs. Minno further described the proposed development. He stated that there would be approximately 1000 square feet per apartment and the complex's amenities would include a fitness center and yoga room, a club room for use by the residents only for larger gatherings, walking paths and benches, offices and a walkway around the pond. He further stated that the existing pond would be enhanced. There would be a bikeway to Brae Blvd, bike storage, a dog walking area and some outside guest parking. Hornrock would manage the building. There are also plans for a shuttle to the downtown area and train station. The following is the initial proposal for apartment size and bedroom mix:

- 5% studios
- 35% one-bedroom
- 10% one-bedroom + den
- 40% two-bedroom + den
- 10% two-bedroom + den

The affordable housing requirement when dictated by the State may affect that ratio and necessitate three bedroom units.

The buildings would be served by elevators. Mr. Minno indicated that studies have shown this would minimize the number of families with children. Families

with children tend to prefer garden apartments contained on one floor, without elevators. He further stated that using the calculations from a 2006 Rutgers University Study the complex would produce between 85-90 school age children.

Mayor Maguire stated that while the possibility of a change to residential zoning in the area was discussed he had envisioned townhomes and a less dense development.

Ms. Bogart asked for clarification on the height of the buildings. The proposed building is approximately 47.5 feet and 52.6 feet at the highest point while the Sony building is 57.2 feet in height. Ms. Bogart suggested that the applicant work in cooperation with the Open Space Committee on the trails that are proposed.

In response to questioning from Mr. Rupp the applicant stated that 2 parking spaces per unit would be provided and the units' rental costs would be approximately \$1700-\$3300 per month.

Mr. Ludwig asked if the proposal is in compliance with any of the objectives of the Master Plan. The applicant stated that it is not and would require a Master Plan amendment.

The meeting was then open to the public for comment.

The following members of the public spoke in opposition to the plan:

Steven Williams
102 Colony

Mr. Williams would prefer to see upscale townhomes in the area.

Adam Kida
2 Kyle Ct.

Mr. Kida asked what the benefits to the community would be from such a development.

The applicant's attorney stated that he feels there is a need for upscale rentals in the area.

Chris Moran
42 Kinderkamack

Mr. Moran is concerned about the impact on the schools and possibly overcrowded classrooms.

Lisa Muller
244 Ellin Dr.

Ms. Muller is also concerned about class size and school impact.

Jessica Riccio
76 Highview

Ms. Riccio is also concerned about class size and school impact. Additionally, she thinks this type of development devalues other homes in the area and has a negative impact on the community.

Keri Cooper
41 Circle Dr.

Ms. Cooper is also concerned about class size and school impact. Additionally, she thinks an influx of renters may put a strain on emergency services.

Maura Wagner
164 Midland Ave.

Ms. Wagner is also concerned about class size and school impact. Additionally, Ms. Wagner is doubtful of the community involvement of renters as opposed to homeowners.

Carinne Murphy
226 Doxey Dr.

Ms. Murphy thinks it may be a good spot to fulfill the Borough's Affordable Housing obligation, however she is concerned that the influx of renters might put a strain on the Borough's emergency services.

Mayor Maguire interjected that he believes the borough has made a good faith effort to fulfill the as yet undetermined Affordable Housing obligation.

David O'Sullivan
252 Capri Terrace

Mr. O'Sullivan asked the amount of taxes being collected from the site now.

Mayor Maguire stated that at the current \$30M assessment the Borough collects approximately \$730,000 in taxes. The proposal would potentially provide \$3M in taxes on a \$133M assessment.

Additionally the Borough collects \$390,000 in electric fees with a potential of \$690,000 for the proposal.

Bill Scully
61 South 5th St.

Mr. Scully asked if age restricted units were a possibility to mitigate the amount of school children moving in.

Ms. Bogart stated that the laws have changed and age restricted deeds can no longer be enforced.

Rob Stewart
5 Spring Valley Rd.

Mr. Stewart asked what other options may be viable.

It was explained that the Borough is under no obligation to rezone the area but must consider the financial implications of the site being vacant.

The applicant stated that while they are still marketing the building for commercial use, they have had no interest and don't anticipate being able to rent it as such and will continue to work with the Borough to find a solution.

There being no other members of the public wishing to speak the meeting was closed.

The Chairman thanked those who came out to voice their opinions and the applicant for the presentation. The Board discussed their reservations and concerns about a dense residential project but looks forward to working with the applicant to come to an agreement to benefit everyone.

There being no other business before the Board the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Falkenstern
Land Use Administrator