

1 Minutes of the meeting of the Linden
Planning Board, January 14, 2020, 7 P.M.

2 The meeting was called to order by the
Chairman, Joseph LaPlaca.

3 B O A R D M E M B E R S P R E S E N T :

4 JOSEPH LaPLACA, CHAIRMAN
5 GEORGE DONEY, SECRETARY
6 BARRY JAVICK, COUNCILMAN
7 NOYO EDEM
8 MICHAEL ANDERSON
9 FELIPE CABEZAS
NICHOLAS PANTINA
FRANK DELLA FEMINA
CURTIS HUMPHREY
DEREK ARMSTEAD, MAYOR

10 ANTHONY D. RINALDO, JR., BOARD ATTORNEY
11 PAUL RICCI, BOARD PLANNER
MARILYN COPLAN, RECORDING SECRETARY

12 (Roll call.) By motion made by Mr. Pantina
13 to approve the minutes of the previous meeting,
14 seconded by Mr. Cabezas, all voted in the
affirmative, Mr. Della Femina, Mr. Javick, Mr.
Anderson and the Mayor abstained, motion passes.

15 The Chairman stated the requirement of the
Open Public Meetings Act has been satisfied.

16 With regard to Resolution SD744, Grunwald
Propoerties, by motion by Mr. Pantina, seconded by
17 Mr. Cabezas, by majority vote, resolution is
adopted.

18 Re: Resolution SP-1110 Penn Jersey
Concrete, upon motion by Mr. Pantina, seconded by
19 Mr. Cabezas, by majority vote, the resolution is
adopted.

20 APPLICANT: 1700 South Stiles Urban Renewal
SP-1088-18

21 PREMISES: 1700 South Stiles Street
22 TO PERMIT: Apartment building

Gregory Juba, Esquire, appeared for the
applicant and stated the application was granted a
23 year ago, and since there's a design waiver, the
applicant is before the Board again.

24 Nicholas C. Sottos, 28 Lefferts Road,
Clark, New Jersey, is sworn and testified there is
25 a movement of the building in a southeasterly

1 direction 10 feet. Drawings are marked A-1 and
2 A-2. (Refer to transcript.) Mr. Pantina
3 questioned with regard to parking. It was
4 testified there are "No Parking" and "No Idling"
5 signs presently and Ms. Edem questioned with
6 regard to traffic flow. Mr. Sottos testified
7 traffic flow would not be affected.

8 Mr. Ricci requested Mr. Juba to submit a
9 letter to the Board regarding any need for
10 additional signage. No one appeared from the
11 public.

12 Upon motion by Mr. Doney to approve the
13 application, seconded by Mr. Cabezas, by unanimous
14 vote, the application is approved.

15 APPLICANT: DDO Enterprises SP1112
16 PREMISES: 1728 St. Georges Avenue
17 TO PERMIT: Commercial/Retail use
18

19 David D. Nasta, Esquire, appeared for the
20 applicant. Mr. Nasta opened to the Board stating
21 the applicant is seeking preliminary and final
22 site plan approval for an application consisting
23 of four retail stores of five thousand square feet
24 and to expand medical space that will account for
25 88 hundred square feet of total space.

Affidavit of Service and Proof of
Publication is found to be adequate. Rajeswara
Donepudi is sworn and testified as the owner of
1728 East St. Georges Avenue that two of the
stores are unoccupied, one store is a pharmacy and
he is the proprietor, that the hours of operation
are eight to eight, Monday through Friday,
Saturdays nine to four, and there are three
employees and a pizzeria occupies the other store
with four employees, that there have never been
any complaints with regard to parking. Mr.
Anderson was concerned the property has been owned
for two years and there are several violations.

(Refer to transcript.)

Ronald Sadowski, Edison, New Jersey is
sworn as engineer and is qualified. Plans are
marked A-1. He described the general layout. He
referred to Engineer Pantina's letter and stated
the questions or concerns raised in the January
11, 2019 letter will be complied with, that three
parking spaces are proposed. He testified with
regard to the parking spaces for the medical, it
will be behind the building, including two ADA and

1 nine feet wide compliant spaces and the retail
2 spaces would be eight foot four. He foresees no
problem with parking.

3 Lee Klein, a parking consultant, stated he
4 would prefer a parking utilization report done. A
5 discussion with regard to parking continued. Mr.
6 Sadowski testified under current conditions 23
parking spaces will not be required and 34 are
7 provided. Under proposed, 38 is required and 27
8 are provided. Mr. Klein questioned whether there
9 would be alternative parking onstreet and Mr.
10 Sadowski answered he is not aware of any.

11 Mr. Pantina suggested the Board's traffic
12 consultant did not look at the parking and there
13 is no traffic expert to testify to same and
14 perhaps a traffic report could be provided. Mr.
15 Cabezas suggested that a vote not be taken tonight
16 but to come back with more information about
17 parking. The Chairman stated he thought that was
18 a good recommendation.

19 Attorney Rinaldo stated the case will be
20 continuously listed, with no additional notice, to
21 provide more information with regard to the
22 doctor's office, and if there is a traffic report,
23 the Board's expert, Mr. Lee Klein, could review
24 it. The Chairman stated the parking lot floods.
25 Mr. Pantina made a motion to continue the
application to bring in more information with
regard to traffic, seconded by Mr. Anderson.
Motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPLICANT: SP-1114 Meridia 1001 Urban Renewal
PREMISES: 1001 West Elizabeth Avenue
TO PERMIT: Mixed use with residential units.

18 Allyson M. Kasetta, Esquire, of Prime &
19 Tuvel appeared for the applicant. Ms. Kasetta
20 stated this is a preliminary and final site plan
21 approval hearing asking for relief for one
22 deviation from the requirement of the
23 Redevelopment Plan. She reviewed the history of
24 the property, that the application is for a mixed
25 use development containing 402 residential units,
amenities, commercial space and 530 off-street
parking spaces, and they are requesting relief for
one deviation for lack of landscaping on the east
and west sides of the building.

24 She stated the previously proposed wireless
25 telecommunication antennas on the roof were
intended to be removed from the plan.

1 Christiano Pereira, 6401 Park Avenue, West
2 New York, New Jersey, was sworn and qualified as
3 an architect. A-1 Plan is marked. A-2, A-3
4 renderings are marked. He described the property
5 and testified as to two levels of parking, that
6 two hundred units will be on the first phase.
7 Exhibit is marked A-4. Exhibit A-5 is marked
8 Sheet A001. Exhibit A-6 is Sheet A002. Exhibit
9 A-7 Sheet A100. Sheet A101 is A-8. He testified
10 to the dropoff zone and Uber pickups and fast
11 deliveries. He discussed the access to the
12 building. (Refer to transcript.)

13 He described parking spaces on the first
14 floor and described the circulation. He referred
15 to the bicycle storage and a large utility room.
16 A-9 is Sheet A 102. He testified to 294 one
17 bedrooms, 108 two bedroom units. Sheet A 103 is
18 marked A-10. The roof plan sheet A 104 is marked
19 A-11. Sheet A 200 is marked A-12. Material board
20 is marked A-13. Sheet A 201 is marked A-14.
21 Sheet A 210 is marked A-15. He described the
22 facade. (Refer to transcript.)

23 He referred to two banners as the property
24 is built to advertise the units available. He
25 referred to blade signs on the building and a
canopy that spans across the entire retail space.
An exhibit is marked A-16, A-17 Sheet A200.2 and
A-18. An exhibit is marked A-19. Email from the
fire official dated 1/13/2020 is marked A-20.

Exhibit A-17, Sheet A 200.2 shows the
position of the CMU colors. He testified the
second floor is all parking with the exception of
two residential units, a management's residence as
well as a live-in super. Mr. Cabezas questioned
the quality of the material to be substituted.
Mr. Pereira stated that pallets change every year.
Mr. Humphrey questioned with regard to the depth
of the pool and it is three feet. Mr. Cabezas
questioned with regard to charge stations for
electric vehicles and they are provided. The
windows are triple pane.

In answer to Mr. Klein's question, Mr.
Pereira testified with regard to the circulation
to provide access from the garage to the retail
spaces and that a system will be installed to
increase oxygen in the garbage room.

Arthur Kuyan, Stonefield Engineering, is
sworn and qualified and testified he prepared the
site plan and testified as to existing conditions.

1 He described the proposal in detail including an
2 eight hundred square foot dog run with 12 foot
3 wide permeable pavers to increase the stormwater
4 quality. He testified to Sheet C5, Grading and
5 Drainage and referred to C6, Utility Plan, and
6 Sheet C7, Lighting Plan, Sheet C8 Soil Erosion and
7 Sedimentation Plan, Sheet C9, Landscaping Plan.

8 Mr. Kuyan testified the fire official
9 required a 20 foot wide access lane around the
10 building clear of any obstructions and requested
11 two fire hydrants within the rear of the property
12 as well as a fire department connection in front
13 of the building, and those requests will be
14 complied with.

15 Charles D. Olivo, Stonefield Engineering
16 and Design, Rutherford, New Jersey is sworn and
17 qualified and testified the garbage trucks and
18 loading vehicles, UPS, Fed Ex are contained on the
19 site. He testified as to 10 parking stalls with
20 seven to nine foot long drop-off pick-up area, and
21 each of the four hundred two units is allocated
22 one stall as part of the lease. A second stall is
23 optional.

24 Kathryn M. Gregory, Planner, 96 Linwood
25 Plaza, Fort Lee, New Jersey, is sworn and
qualified as a planner to discuss one deviation
from the Redevelopment Plan, where the goals and
objectives of the Redevelopment Plan would be
advanced for the benefit of the public and the
deviation would outweigh the detriment, and
regarding the landscaping variance, it is
basically for fire safety and the benefits
outweigh the detrimnts of not having a landscaping
in particular locations.

Mr. Ricci stated he agrees with the
planner's testimony, that the need for fire
equipment paramounts landscaping but suggests
there may be pockets where the applicant can
infill additional landscaping.

Councilman Roman, 15 Munsell Avenue, wanted
to know if the project has union labor, the costs
of the project, what is the plan to combat excess
overflow parking into the residential areas. The
first two questions couldn't be answered and there
is no plan for overflow parking since it is not
anticipated. Mr. Roman referred to the large size
of the restaurant and referred to the first
building built in Linden, that there are numerous
complaints and referred to traffic putting more

1 cars on West Elizabeth Avenue and questioned if
2 there are any other off-site improvements being
mandated to West Elizabeth Avenue and/or Stiles
Street.

3 Mr. Olivo testified there is no mitigation
4 proposed. Mr. Roman questioned if there are
sewer upgrades. Mr. Kuyan stated a new sewer
5 lateral will be provided. Mr. Roman questioned
with regard to the parking spots bundled into the
6 rent and could the parking be free as part of the
lease. Mr. Olivo stated it's up to the applicant
how the lease agreements are structured.

7 John Kaczor, 23 West Munsell Avenue, is
8 sworn and stated Meridia I and II are failing and
stated this is Meridia's plan not Linden's plan.
A discussion ensued between Mr. Kaczor and the
9 Board. Mr. Kaczor concluded by saying Meridia is
destroying Linden.

10 Ed Kaminski, 201 Maple Avenue, is sworn and
is concerned the construction will take many
11 years, that the timing is open-ended. Ms. Kasetta
read from the Redevelopment Agreement setting
12 forth project schedules.

13 John Barsnica, 115 East Thirteenth Street,
is sworn and is concerned about the size of the
parking spots, that he has a pickup truck and may
14 not be able to park in certain spots. He's
concerned about keeping the signs on the side of
15 the building until full occupancy which could be
years and requested a finite period of time.

16 Upon motion by Mr. Pantina to approve the
application, Mayor Armstead reminded the public
17 the property was vacant for 40 years and no taxes
paid and this project will bring millions of
18 dollars to the city in taxes, that the Meridia
people learn from past projects.

19 Motion is seconded by Mr. Cabezas and upon
unanimous decision by the members, the motion
20 passes with all the stipulations and conditions.

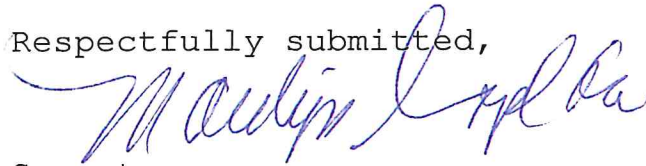
21 At this time, the Brunswick Avenue
Redevelopment is presented by Mr. Ricci. Mr.
22 Ricci presented the Preliminary Investigation
Report regarding Block 513, Lots 4.01 and 4.02.
23 He reported the buildings are in a state of
disrepair and untenable for their intended
24 purpose, that vacancy exists for more than two
years and there's a shortage of parking as well as
25 sharing of tractor-trailer and vehicular

1 circulation routes which results in an unsafe
2 circulation condition. He reported the site meets
3 the B, D and H criteria. He stated there needs to
4 be a motion to recommend to Council to approve the
5 redevelopment for the Brunswick Avenue site, that
6 you agree with his recommendation and conclusion
7 that the area is an area with regard to local
8 Redevelopment Housing Law.

9 Mr. Pantina made the motion and agrees with
10 the recommendation of Mr. Ricci, seconded by
11 George Doney, all members voted in the
12 affirmative.

13 Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at
14 10:40 P.M.

15 Respectfully submitted,

16 

17 Secretary