

**MINUTES
OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
PLANNING BOARD
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY
MIDDLESEX COUNTY**

OATH OF OFFICE

Jason Mildenberg, Class IV, was given the Oath of Allegiance before the meeting and sworn in by Ms. Dragan, Board Attorney.

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The Meeting of the Cranbury Township Planning Board was held on February 1, 2024 at 7:00 pm at Town Hall, 23A North Main Street, Meeting Room.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Spann called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and presided over the meeting.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Under the Sunshine Law adequate notice in accordance with the open public meetings act was provided on January 18, 2024 of this meeting's date, time, place and the agenda was mailed to the Cranbury Press and Trenton Times, posted on the Township Bulletin Board, mailed to those requesting personal notice and filed with the municipal clerk.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Anderson, Deanna
- El-Badawi, Eman
- Ferrante, Michael
- Gittings, Bill
- Jones, Dominique
- Mildenberg, Jason
- Spann, Evelyn, Chairperson
- Stewart, Jason
- Wittman, Wayne, Vice-Chairperson

PROFESSIONALS IN ATTENDANCE

- Andrew Feranda, Traffic Engineer, Shropshire Associates
- David Hoder, Board Engineer, Hoder Associates
- Elizabeth Leheny, Board Planner, Phillips Preiss
- Sharon Dragan, Esquire, Board Attorney, Mason Griffin,
- Robin Tillou, Planning Board Administrative Officer

Mr. Butler introduced the application by stating they are requesting approval for the Phase II portion of the application only. The Phase III approval will be at a later date. There will be changes to the lighting and landscaping on the property for this application. The placement of utilities is the reason the landscaping will be changing.

Mr. Delany exhibited A-1 – Aerial of Existing Conditions dated 01/29/2024.

Mr. Delany explained that the 2018 original approval included an outdoor seating area on the western area for potential restaurant use with trees and landscaping being added in that location.

Mr. Delany exhibited A-2 – Lighting Plan – dated 08/28/2023.

Mr. Delany explained there are eight (8) post mounted light bulbs on one side and two (2) mounted light bulbs on the back installed in the outdoor patio area on the western portion of the property. With a total of ten (10) installed. The lights are 70 watts, they are not LED fixtures. The light levels are soft, so it does not impact the adjacent properties from the housing development to the west. The lights on the restaurant and freestanding street poles are brighter than the patio lighting. As per David Hoder's review letter, the applicant does not have an issue with putting guards or shields on the lights.

Mr. Delany exhibited A-3 – Landscape Plan, Sheet 2 of 4 – dated 08/28/2023.

Mr. Delany stated the top west of the plan shown had proposed 13 trees between the patio and the parking spaces and the ROW line in that location. The approval was for six (6) shade trees and seven (7) evergreen trees. The electricity company has required an easement on the frontage of Old Cranbury Road that took it from the ROW line 20 ft. back to the edge of the patio and the edge of the parking stalls. The electric company placed a transformer and underground conduit underground. The trees will be interfering with the conduit if planted. The requirement is for 10 trees each acre for non-impervious coverage. There is .7 acres including non-impervious surfaces requiring 7 trees. The original approval has 53 originally and now they have 40 trees with the removal of the 13 trees.

Chair Spann asked of the plantings against the retaining wall.

Mr. Delany responded that he did not see the plantings in that area when he passed it. He can put shrubs against the parking area to put screening in that area. They can speak with the electric company to see if they can put that there.

Mr. Butler advised the lighting they are proposing is installed and on and the proposal of the trees being removed on the plans have not been planted.

Ms. Dragan swore in the Board professionals.

Mr. Hoder addressed his January 26, 2024 review letter and he has no objections to the lighting. A condition could be to install house side shields that would be used if there are complaints. The landscaping being removed should be planted elsewhere.

Mr. Delany explained that the shield is put on the backside of the lighting and would be an outer covering that matches the outer coloring of the light fixture itself. It would restrict the light going in one direction. It can be a blackout or a pink that softens the light. The lighting is for when the patio is being used. The lights turn off no later than when the restaurant closes. The lighting analysis is at .2 footcandle at the sidewalk.

Ms. Leheny thinks something should be done for the landscaping on the easement due to neighbor's complaints of headlights going on their property.

Chair Spann asked if the lighting goes past the sidewalk.

Mr. Delany responded that it does not. It has a .2-foot candle.

Ms. Leheny has a concern about the area between the parking lot and the townhomes.

Mr. Delany stated any buffering on that area would be in the townhome's property. They would have to speak with the homeowner's association to request doing anything on that property.

Ms. Leheny stated the southwest portion can have something done.

Mr. Mildenberg asked why the 10 lights on the patio were installed but not on the plans.

Mr. Delany responded he did not know, the Township Engineer found the lighting on an inspection and determined they would have to go before the Board.

Ms. Jones asked if the original approval of the 13 trees was for screening the headlights from the residents.

Mr. Delany responded that the original approval was for six (6) shade trees to provide screens to the parking lot and pavement. The four (4) to five (5) evergreens would have provided some buffering, but not a continuous screen. They were each 25 ft. apart.

Ms. Anderson stated a relocation of the landscaping should be confirmed and not something that will eventually be done.

Mr. Gittings feels the Phase II approval should be closed out before the Phase III application is submitted. The landscaping in the front of the building needs to be finished.

Vice-Chair Wittman feels there should be a shield on the lighting to ensure there are no issues with the residential properties that are close. He would like confirmation that the trees across the street from the property to be planted at the Four Seasons development has been or will be done in the spring. The 13 trees that are proposed to be removed should be relocated. The landscaping needs to be finished in the front of the building.

Mayor El-Badawi indicated that the townhome residents adjacent to Cranbury Commons have advised there is traffic that turns into the townhomes in error and drives over to Cranbury Commons parking lot from their property. Trees could be planted in that area to prevent that.

Mr. Delany responded that the fire department did recommend putting something in between the properties to avoid vehicles going through there. They could install a chain or a fence in that area separating the two properties. He will consult with the fire department to decide what could be put there.

Mr. Hoder would like the PSE&G easement labeled on the plan.

Mr. Delany advised the easement runs 20 ft. wide from the front line to the back of the curb to the edge of the patio.

Mr. Hoder stated the plantings could be relocated to the center island.

Chair Spann feels the patio near Tony's restaurant should have lighting as well. The current landscaping needs to look finished. A condition should be to relocate the 13 trees being removed as per the Board Planner, Ms. Leheny's approval.

Ms. Dragan swore in Ofir Hillel, Cranbury Commons, LLC.

Mr. Hillel stated he will accept the condition of relocating the trees and working with their Planner.

Chair Spann stated the relocation of the landscaping condition must be approved with the application before them for Phase II.

Mayor El-Badawi stated the trees could translate to something else, other shrubbery.

Mr. Butler stated the applicant will plant suitable plantings.

Mr. Delany stated if shielding is needed for the lighting, they can install that if there is a complaint.

Mr. Hoder stated the applicant should ask if plantings can be put in edge of easement.

Ms. Dragan advised of the conditions set forth are as follows: changes of plans to reflect updated plantings, lights come off when businesses are closed, if there is a complaint the applicant will install shielding for the lighting, the landscaping to remove 13 trees from present location, but relocate to another location with equivalent plantings for screening, all previous approvals remain in effect and confirming the installation of the trees across the street at the Four Seasons property.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS: Mr. Wittman

SECONDED: Mr. Mildenberg

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Ms. Anderson, Ms. El-Badawi, Mr. Ferrante, Mr. Gittings, Ms. Jones,
Mr. Mildenberg, Mr. Wittman and Ms. Spann.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

MOTION PASSED

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of DRC Alternate

Chair Spann appointed Wayne Wittman to the DRC as the alternate for the Planning Board.

Ordinance § 150-61 Stormwater Management

Ms. Dragan advised the Watershed Institute's stormwater language is new and that is why municipalities have not implemented that into their ordinance. It was suggested to implement not considering the five (5) year rule and take the application as new for stormwater. Sustainable Jersey will be holding a free webinar on February 6, 2024 to discuss enhanced stormwater management.

Mr. Hoder advised that developers may not want to do business with the municipality that has a stormwater ordinance that is too strict.

Vice-Chair Wittman stated the ordinance should come close to the current standards.

Ms. Dragan advised the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is expected to address the additional changes this year.

Chair Spann stated they would be moving to modifying according to the watershed standard.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, Mr. Mildenberg made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Wittman, offering a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 8:45

pm.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do at this moment certify;

That I am duly elected and secretary of the Cranbury Township Planning Board and that the minutes of the Planning Board, held on February 1, 2024, consisting of seven (7) pages, constitute a true and correct copy of the minutes of the said meeting.

IN WITNESS of which, I have hereunto subscribed my name to said Planning Board this March 8, 2024.

Robin Tillou

Robin Tillou, Administrative Officer

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