

PLANNING BOARD
City of Orange Township
29 North Day Street
Orange, NJ 07050

MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 22, 2021

Vice Chair Antoinette Jones called the December 22, 2021 City of Orange Township Planning Board Meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Salute to the Flag. Compliance with the “Sunshine Law” was acknowledged. Oath of office. Roll Call. Meeting Notice.

Please note this meeting was held virtually via Zoom Meeting and all login information has been posted on the City of Orange Township website (www.ci.orange.nj.us) as well as the local newspaper “Transcript.”

Oath of Office: Board Attorney Joseph Wenzel swore in Member Enock Faustin, Callistus Onyiuke, Chris Mobley, Vice-Chair Antoinette Jones, Chairman Dwight Holmes.

Board Members Present: Enock Faustin, Callistus Onyiuke, Sharanda Bennett, Chris Mobley, Council Vice-President Eason, Mayor Dwayne D. Warren, Vice-Chair Antoinette Jones, Chairman Dwight Holmes.

Board Members Absent: None

Professionals Present:
Rich Wostbrock, Board Engineer
Gerard Haizel, Board Planner
Alexandra Reyes, Board Secretary
Joseph Wenzel, Board Attorney

Correspondence: None

MINUTES:

Motion made by Member Council Vice-President Eason **seconded** by Member Faustin to approve the November 29, 2021 minutes as written.

Those in Favor: Member Faustin, Member Mobley, Council Vice-President Eason, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

Those Opposed: None

Those Absent: None

Those Abstained: Sharanda Bennett, Callistus Onyiuke

Motion carries 6-0-0-2

Case #21-11 H.A.N.D.S. Inc - 523 Freeman Street Preliminary and final approval Major Site Plan approval. Minor Subdivision Review.

Attorney Benjamin Wine on behalf of the applicant presented the project. Two properties proposed are designated as Block 4007 Lot 1 523 Freeman Street and Block 4009 Lot 1 Scotland Rd with a parking lot owned by New Jersey Transit. The project site is located in District 4 of the Central Valley Redevelopment Plan. Applicant seeks a minor subdivision to subdivide an approximate 2,940 segment from New Jersey transit which will be leased on a 99 year ground lease. Applicant is proposing a 4 story mixed use Building with 9 residential units on 3 floors and commercial space on the ground level. Applicant as titled the project "The Gateway". Parking is not proposed directly on the 523 Freeman Street site. Applicant is seeking a variance for ground floor height were 13ft is proposed 14ft required. Other variances requested for parking space where 7.2 parking spaces for residential units are required 0 proposed on site, commercial parking spaces variance requested where 3.7 are required 0 proposed on site. Applicant will comply with the Board Engineer and Board Planners report.

Witness/Expert #1 Kiersten Osterkorn, was sworn in as civil engineer for the applicant. Ms. Osterkorn spoke as a Civil Engineer and presented A1 Exhibit 7-page civil set. Block 4007 Lot 1 consist of an Area totaling 4,203 S.F. Block 4009 Lot 1 consist of an Area totaling 77,375 S.F. Currently Block 4007 Lot 1 is a vacant lot next to the NJ transit train station with stairs accessing the station, Block 4009 Lot 1 is currently a parking lot. The mix-use building will consist of commercial unit on the ground floor and 9 residential units on floors 2-4 as well as a garden area open to the public. The NJ transit set back requirements were also presented by Engineer Osterkorn showing 15 FT to the West side of the building as required. Bulk regulations have been met for the proposed.

The gas, water and electric mark outs are proposed from the Freeman St side and the Sewer from the Scotland Rd. side. As per grading the applicant is proposing landscape walls. With respect to storm water, the applicant is proposing a drainage system, seepage pits to collect the water on the rear of the property with a rain garden above, bioswale on the West side of the building. Sheet 5 for landscape was also presented by Engineer Osterkon, showing the bioswale, evergreen and perennial mix at terrace planter. Lighting was also presented by Engineer Osterkon showing the building mounted lights as well as pathway lights. A2 Exhibit shows the loading zone 10x25 ft area.

Council Vice- President Eason raised concerns in regard to the noise coming from the train, will there be a particular material used to mitigate the noise. Concerns were addressed by the applicant architect.

Witness/Expert #2- Josh Uhl, was sworn in as the applicant Architect. A3 Exhibit consisting of 7 sheets was presented by Architect Uhl. Red brick as primary faced material and steel and aluminum, material in dark bronze. The building has two entrance, one for the commercial unit on the Scotland Rd side and the residential on the Freeman St side. Rain water retention tank is proposed for the garden area.

Architect Uhl Presented the commercial unit showing a height of 13 F.T. and an approximate of 1,400 S.F. in area. Private hauler for trash pick-up is proposed.

Bedroom units are proposed as followed:

1 Bedroom 1 Bath – 662 S.F.

2 Bedroom 2 Bath – 975 S.F.

Architect Uhl presented all mechanical equipment, heat pumps and condensing units located at the roof. 3 Sky lights are also proposed.

Board member asked questions in regards to:

Unit heating – Architect Uhl stated that the individual heating is proposed for each unit.

Laundry Units- There are none proposed in each unit.

Rain retention tank- Architect Uhl explained the process of the water retention.

Mural proposed on the train tracks side- There is not a specific art proposed as of yet.

How many commercial spaces – one commercial unit proposed.

Witness/Expert #3- Jake Modestow was sworn in as the Applicant Traffic Engineer. Engineer Modestow presented A4 Aerial Exhibit. Engineer Modestow stated the project is considered a low traffic project. The proposed reinforces and promotes the public transportation use. The applicant proposes to have tenants who don't require parking. Engineer Modestow stated the applicant is seeking to lease the parking spaces if it is needed from New Jersey Transit. Modestow stated that there will be minimum to no impact in traffic.

Board member raised concerns:

- Traffic during rush hour currently in that area
- Parking hours on the NJ Transit parking lot, will there be 24 hours' availability.
- Is there a contract in place for the parking spaces- there is no contract for the parking spaces, parking is available by permit rented by NJ Transit?
- No parking spaces
- At time of construction, how will the traffic be coordinated?

- How will the parking on NJ transit site Operate during snow days.

Board Member concerns were addressed by Engineer Modestow and Attorney Wine. Attorney wine stated there are 9 spaces available parking spaces on the NJ transit site.

Attorney Wine stated the applicant will request from tenants as a condition of leasing that they show proof of parking permit leased from NJ Transit.

Motion for 3-minute recess by Council Vice-President Eason second by Member Mobley

All in favor

Witness/Expert #4 Kiersten Osterkorn, was sworn in as the Planner for the applicant. Osterkorn explained the requested C1 variance. Osterkorn presented the Central Valley Redevelopment plan goals and objectives 1-12 explaining how the proposed meet the required goals and objectives, adding that the density permitted is not what the applicant is proposing. The applicant proposes a less density mixed used building to minimize parking requirement as well as generate less traffic.

The variances requested were explained by Planner Osterkorn and believes that there is no substantial detriment to the public good. The applicant is not proposing any new parking spaces which would generate more traffic flow and patterns.

Members of Board raised concern in regards to traffic and parking need due to the commercial space on the ground floor.

Board member concerns were addressed by Planner Osterkon.

Attorney Wine requested a 3 min recess to speak to his client in private at 9:50 PM. Motion Vice-Chair Jones second by Council Vice-President Eason.

All in favor.

Board Professionals

Gerard Haizel, Board Planner was sworn in to provide testimony. Board Planner does have a concern in regards to parking space. The applicant does not meet the requirement as per ordinance in regards to the parking using the alternative of the NJ transit parking.

Rich Wostbrock, Board Engineer was sworn in to provide testimony. Board Engineer stated the long term impact of the 99 year lease of the land. Parking on site is challenging on the site due to topography of the land and other variables, off-site parking makes sense however the permanency of the parking is a concern. Safety of parking corner is a concern.

Attorney Wine requested an **adjournment to January 26th 7:00PM** to consider the revision on the application for parking spaces. Waving the toll of time. Carried with no further notice.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Motion to adjourn by Vice Chair Jones and **seconded** by Council Vice- President Eason. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 10: 30 p.m.

Next regular scheduled meeting for Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. via virtually using Zoom Meeting.

Prepared by : Alexandra Reyes, Board Secretary