

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

March 13, 2024

The pre-meeting of the Planning Board was called to order by Vice-Chairman Mr. Michael Pantalone at 6:00 PM in the Second Floor Caucus Room of City Hall.

Members Present:

John Casadia
David Catalana
Doug Menz
Michael Pantalone
Thomas Tobolski
Nilsa Rosario
Robert Odorizzi
David Manders

Also present were:

Amanda Moschillo, Substitute Planning Board Solicitor
Yasmin Perez, Planning Board Secretary
Kathleen Hicks, Supervising Planner
Elizabeth Jambor, Assistant Planner

PRE-MEETING

Hawk Pointe Townhomes– located on the northerly side of Walnut Road between Orchard Road and Delsea Drive, Block 4705, Lot 57.01, Tax Map Sheet #47, Project No. PBA-24-00007. Amended preliminary/final major site plan approval, to construct six (6) three- story townhouse buildings with a total of thirty-four (34) three-bedroom units.

Ms. Hicks explained that the board already approved this townhouse project. The applicant is back to revise their approved plan. Our ordinance requires every unit to be stepped back and they are proposing every two units. There still will have an articulated front but every two units would be stepped. The ordinance requires common driveways and trying to maintain grass significant. The applicant would like driveways at the end of each structure. They proposed 16 paired driveways with two singles, and now proposing 10 paired with 14 singles. There will still be green space. The applicant felt that we miscalculated parking. We said they needed 18 visitor parking stalls, and they calculate 17. They were deficient but they are proposing the 17 spaces utilizing street parking. They could achieve it with 20 foot long stalls instead of 23 foot long. The gaps between the drives are 20 feet so they can fit and meet the obligation for 17 visitor spaces if we can if they can count those 20 foot gaps between driveways. They represented that a landscape architect did a study, and a lot of the landscaping will not survive. Mr. Headley had an issue with eliminating all deciduous. He was hoping that they could at least spot some deciduous trees in the buffer area.

Redevelopment Area Amendment–Seth Mackannan-834 E. Elmer Street, Block 4004, Lot 7, Project No. PBA-24-00004.

Ms. Hicks explained that this is currently a duplex on East Elmer Street. It is formerly Dr. Sugar's office, and it is currently a duplex. The applicant would like to convert it to a triplex with two units downstairs one unit upstairs. Currently the second unit has first and 2nd floor with five bedrooms. They want to make it 3 dwelling units. Staff issued a report for the board. Aaron Melnick and Patrick Finley also took a tour of the building.

Staff is amenable to it being a triplex but suggested each unit have two bedrooms. Staff also recommended conditions. An exterior door at the northeast corner of the building that accesses a bedroom shall be eliminated, as this could be subject to abuse as another rental space. A plot plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Division that addresses the following issues: On-site parking at the rear of the lot labelled for each unit. Retention of greenspace in the backyard. Repair of the landscaping wall at the front of the structure. Repair of on-site sidewalk and curbing. Foundation landscaping along the front of the structure. The structure and soffits shall be painted. Siding is recommended, but not required.

FLAG SALUTE

Public notice pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act was given on December 22, 2023 by posting written notice on the Official Bulletin Board in City Hall, and mailing written notices to the Daily Journal, City Clerk, and the Board members.

MINUTES

Approval of minutes from the February 14, 2024 board meeting.
The Chairman made a motion to approve the minutes.

John Casadia: Yes

David Catalana: Abstain
Doug Menz: Abstain
Michael Pantalone: Yes
Thomas Tobolski: Yes
Nilsa Rosario: Yes
Robert Odorizzi: Yes
David Manders: Abstain

Approval of minutes from the February 29, 2024 special board meeting.
The Chairman made a motion to approve the minutes.

John Casadia: Yes
David Catalana: Yes
Doug Menz: Yes
Michael Pantalone: Yes
Thomas Tobolski: Yes
Nilsa Rosario: Yes
Robert Odorizzi: Yes
David Manders: Abstain

RESOLUTIONS

Approval of resolutions from the February 14, 2024 board meeting.
The Chairman made a motion to approve the resolutions.

Resolution #6636

John Casadia: Yes
David Catalana: Yes
Doug Menz: Yes
Michael Pantalone: Yes
Thomas Tobolski: Yes
Nilsa Rosario: Abstain
Robert Odorizzi: Yes
David Manders: Abstain

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Hawk Pointe Townhomes– located on the northerly side of Walnut Road between Orchard Road and Delsea Drive, Block 4705, Lot 57.01, Tax Map Sheet #47, Project No. PBA-24-00007. Amended preliminary/final major site plan approval, to construct six (6) three- story townhouse buildings with a total of thirty-four (34) three-bedroom units.

The applicant was represented by Mark Asselta, Esq. This project received a major subdivision approval in April 2023. The approval consisted of 6 three story townhouse buildings with a total of 34 three bedroom units. This is an application for an amendment to that prior major site plan approval. The amended application includes the addition of two street parking spaces, a different layout of driveways, a reduction in landscape buffering, and a marginally smaller unit configuration. There are no variances associated with this application but there are requests for design waivers. There are four waivers which are preliminary landscaping, guest parking down to the length of some of the parking stalls related to street parking, variation in front yard depth, and gang together driveway pairs. Only two of those waivers are mentioned in the Planning Report.

Chris Gammons, Landscape Architect, testified on behalf of the applicant. Planning Report, item 8, the project is part of the residential townhouse overlay, and as part of section 425:303.1. A 25 foot perimeter buffer is required in the townhouse overlay zone. Perimeter buffer and the buffer requirements meet the perimeter buffer requirement of the 25 feet. Those requirements involve as far as the plants a minimum plant density buffer per 100 lineal feet, a buffer width of 25, 5 large or medium trees, eight smaller ornamental trees, and additional 15 evergreens, and 30 shrubs in addition to that 100 lineal feet. The applicant is requesting relief from those standards. The request of the buffer is more typical of a reforestation type buffer, so they are asking for a waiver on the actual number of trees. They have averaged about approximately 30 evergreen plants per 100 feet. The plants will be upsized from the base size requirement, which is 7 to 8, 6 to 7, 4 to 5 to give a variety of different heights. Those materials would be more conducive and appropriate for this type of development. It gives you an immediate impact versus waiting three to five years to get to the same height. Exhibit A-1, depictions of proposed landscaping growth rates. They displayed a worst case scenario 10 year plan. The proposed plantings give a 3-5 year jump on growth. Some ornamental and shade trees can be included into the landscape plan.

Stephan Hawk, Professional Planner, testified on behalf of the applicant. He gave some historical context as far as Vineland's ordinance and Vineland's history on screening. He had over 2000 reviews of site plans. Most of them needed screening because they were they were commercial or industrial adjacent to residential.

Vineland had a very boring ordinance for that regard. It was just a fence or evergreens in a straight line or a staggered row usually somewhere in the vicinity of 9 to 12 per hundred. They would be one species of trees. The ordinance was improved with this residential townhouse ordinance with variety. There are 5 different species of evergreens. There is the requirement for the lower plantings that can take care of that screening down low. He also believes that the ordinance is actually more strict and more intense than what is required for an industrial or commercial use next to residential. The requirement is 58 plants per 100 feet and they are proposing 30. A project next to an industrial use or a commercial use against residential would require somewhere around 12. They can swap out some ornamentals and some deciduous. They thought there is a nice mix of the evergreen species to provide some level of screening. He does not believe that screening is really that important when you have a residential townhouse project adjacent to farm fields and a single home that is about 250 feet away. He practices in other municipalities in South Jersey, and he could not find any ordinance that was like this except for Deptford Township where the author resides. It is a new ordinance that is untested and now receiving pushback. They are also providing a lot of plantings throughout and around the basins.

John Baretta, Principal, testified on his own behalf. He agreed to add some ornamental and shade trees.

Mr. Hawk addressed Planning Report, Item 11, waiver for on-site parking requirement for the proposed development is based on the parking requirements outlined by the Residential Site Improvements Standards (RSIS). RSIS requires three-bedroom townhouses have 2.4 off-street parking spaces for each unit. With thirty-four (34) units proposed, eighty-two (82) spaces are required. The plan shows that two (2) spaces per unit will be provided with eight (14) additional spaces for guests. A total of eighty-two (82) spaces are proposed. They have 14 parking spaces in the common parking area and on the street. The length of the parallel space is 20 feet whereas 23 feet required. Line striping can be shown on the perfected plan, but the street is a private street.

There is a waiver required for ordinance Chapter 425-303.1E5M, requirement to have every single unit step back from the unit next to it to provide some articulation to the building. It does not allow for a flat boring building. This plan has every pair being stepped back from each adjacent pair. The difference is still reasonable and still meets the intent of the ordinance to provide visual interest.

There is a waiver request for Chapter 425-303.1E5D, ordinance to have driveways paired. This is all in relation to the one townhouse project that was built most recently in Vineland called King’s Crossing on Oak Road. There are a lot of double driveways with only about a foot or two feet of grass, and it is a sea of concrete in front of the buildings. This ordinance contemplates having driveways paired so there is 20 feet of grass in between driveways. The applicant has a little bit of a variation proposed. They had the maximum amount of pairs that they could possibly have with the original plan at 16 feet. Now they have 10 pairs, because there is a desire on the part of the developer to have their garages on the end building units beyond the exterior wall. It prevents pairing with those driveways, so it is a slight difference. The waiver was mentioned to Mr. Headley, and he thought that it was something that would be palatable to the staff.

The Chairman entertained a motion to approve the application. Mr. Pantalione so moved, Mr. Odorizzi seconded.

Roll Call:

- John Casadia: Yes
- David Catalana: Yes
- Doug Menz: Yes
- Michael Pantalione: Yes
- Thomas Tobolski: Yes
- Nilsa Rosario: Yes
- Robert Odorizzi: Yes
- David Manders: Yes

Redevelopment Area Amendment–Seth Mackannan-834 E. Elmer Street, Block 4004, Lot 7, Project No. PBA-24-00004.

Ms. Hicks explained that the application proposes that an existing duplex (one apartment on the 1st floor with 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, a complete kitchen and an enclosed porch and a second apartment, which has space on both the 1st and 2nd floors, with 5 bedrooms, 3 baths, a kitchen and an incomplete kitchen) be converted to a triplex (one apartment on the 1st floor with 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, a complete kitchen and an enclosed porch; another 1st floor apartment with 2 bedrooms, 2 baths and a complete kitchen; and a 2nd floor apartment with 3 bedrooms, 1 bath and a kitchen) at 834 E. Elmer Street (Block 4004/Lot 7). City staff recommended approval of the request, subject to conditions, one of which is making the 2nd floor apartment a 2 bedroom unit rather than a 3 bedroom unit.

The Planning Board of the City of Vineland recommends that City Council give positive consideration to the proposed amendment to the Center City Redevelopment Plan to allow for conversion of a duplex to a triplex at 834 E. Elmer Street (Block 4004/Lot 7), conditioned upon the following: The 2nd floor apartment shall be a 3 bedroom unit. (The Board felt that elimination of the third bedroom and making the space available for another purpose, such as a den or an office, would be too subject to abuse by tenants.) An exterior door at the northeast corner of the building that accesses a bedroom shall be eliminated, as this could also be subject to abuse as another rental space.

A plot plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Division that addresses the following issues: On-site parking at the rear of the lot labelled for each unit. Retention of greenspace in the backyard. Repair of the landscaping wall at the front of the structure. Repair of on-site sidewalk and curbing. Foundation landscaping along the front of the structure. The structure and soffits shall be painted. Siding is recommended, but not required. The developer must obtain a Zoning permit and all necessary UCC construction permits prior to occupancy.

The Chairman entertained a motion to approve Resolution #6637. Mr. Pantalione so moved, Mr. Odorizzi seconded.

Roll Call:

John Casadia: Yes
David Catalana: Yes
Doug Menz: Yes
Michael Pantalione: Yes
Thomas Tobolski: Yes
Nilsa Rosario: Yes
Robert Odorizzi: Yes
David Manders: Yes

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman entertained a motion to adjourn.

Roll call:

John Casadia: Yes
David Catalana: Yes
Doug Menz: Yes
Michael Pantalione: Yes
Thomas Tobolski: Yes
Nilsa Rosario: Yes
Robert Odorizzi: Yes
David Manders: Yes

TIME: 7:31 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Yasmin Perez
Planning Board Secretary