

**Township of Little Falls  
County of Passaic  
New Jersey**

Tel: (973) 256-0170

Municipal Building  
225 Main Street  
Little Falls, NJ 07424

**LITTLE FALLS PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF  
February 1, 2024**

Members Present:	W. Kilpatrick (Chairman) K. Barry (V. Chairman) R. Corage L. Damiano D. Cataldo M. Seber M. Pocius Dr. Abdi (1 <sup>st</sup> Alt.) R. Doland (3 <sup>rd</sup> Alt.) J. Ariemma (4 <sup>th</sup> Alt.)	Also Present:	Richard Briigliodoro, Esq. Michael Kobylarz (Engineer) Sanyogita Chavan (Planner) Valerie Laky (Secretary) (via zoom)
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Members Absent: Mayor James Damiano  
Anthony Sgobba (Councilman)  
Ahmad Awawdeh (2<sup>nd</sup> Alt.)

The meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Kilpatrick stating at least 48 hours' advanced notice of this meeting was given to The Herald & News, The Bergen Record, the Little Falls website, and filed with the Township Clerk.

**Council to address the Board:** No council member was present for comment.

**Approval of Minutes** – January 4, 2024 - Regular and Re-organization meeting

Ms. Cataldo motioned, seconded by Mr. Seber to approve the Regular and Re-organization minutes of the January 4, 2024 meeting of the Board as presented:

Poll of the Board: Ayes: Barry, Cataldo, Seber, Pocius, Doland, Ariemma and Chairman Kilpatrick  
Nays: None

The Chairman declared both minutes for January 4, 2024 APPROVED.

**RESOLUTION:**

None.

**APPLICATIONS:**

1. Zen Real Estate, LLC – 75 Harrison Street, Lot 8, Block 218. Industrial Zone. Bifurcated site plan with variances.

Steven M. Greenberg, Esq., attorney for the applicant came forward to state that this property generates a number of variances, it is a beautification site plan application for an addition to the building with height of 40 feet and increasing the height of part of the existing building to 40 feet, which application requires the following variances:

- 1) a side yard setback variance is required for a side yard setback of 10 feet where a minimum of 20 feet is required;
- 2) A building coverage variance is required for a building coverage of 43.9% where a maximum of 40% is required;
- 3) A building height variance is required for a building height of 40 feet where a maximum of 30 feet is required;
- 4) A parking setback variance is required for parking spaces 11.3 feet from a residential zone where the minimum requirement is 25 feet;
- 5) Where industrial district abuts a residential district a minimum residential buffer of 40 feet is required 11.3 feet is proposed;
- 6) A minimum rear yard setback, where 10 feet is required 8.2 feet is existing in an existing nonconforming condition.

Mr. Greenberg stated that if this bifurcated application is approved tonight, the applicant will be back to the board at a later date to complete the rest of the application with the site plan.

Mr. Marc Walker, Engineer for the applicant came forward next to state that the existing site consists of a 38,781 sq. ft. warehouse building with a paved area in front of the building. It contains loading docks and employee parking. He stated that the property abuts the township public works building on the easterly side, and the westerly side abuts the Duva Field and a single-family residential neighborhood abuts the northerly property line. He stated that the existing building is 22 ft. in height. The proposal is to put an addition to the existing warehouse and raise the roof to a height of 40 feet. The existing 25 parking spaces are 10' x 20' and is in compliance with the ordinance.

Members of the Board questioned Mr. Walker regarding the height requirements of the building at 40 feet, the flood litigations, and if they have reviewed the Board Engineer and Planner's reports? They have not received copies and a short recess was granted to do so. Upon their return, they stated that they reviewed the reports and will modify their key map and description on the Plans. They reviewed the Fire Official Report and stated that they will also correct the access to Harrison Street and make it an emergency access only with a gate and will provide a study team to address traffic complaints on Sindle Avenue at the time of their site plan application.

At this time, the meeting was opened for questions of Mr. Walker. Several members of the public came forward to address the excessive building height, truck access to the property, fire and police access to the property, etc. No others, the meeting was closed to the public.

Nassir Almkhtar, Architect for the applicant then came forward to state that this property has been vacant. They sell paper products and with the added height of the building, the paper products can be stocked up. The hours of operation are to be 8:00 am to 6:00 pm with no night shifts. He stated that the applicant is proposing screening from the neighbors with fences and landscaping. The Board attorney stated that the parking issue will be addressed at the site plan meeting. Board member Abdi asked if the tenant is part of the paper business? No, the tenant has no relation to the paper business, they are just leasing, and their lease will not get extended if this application is approved.

This portion of the meeting was opened to the public of Mr. Almkhtar. Several members came forward to address the storage area, the landscaping, and the truck access through Harrison Street. No others, this portion of the meeting was closed to the public.

Alex Dougherty, Planner for the applicant was next to state the variances needed for the application. In his opinion, the application will only improve the site. They will provide for screening, and it will establish the business to improve to better serve the community. He stated that this is an effective use of the land, and it will be cleaned up, with no detriment to the neighbors with trucks accessing the street.

Members of the Board discussed the cleaning up of the debris on the site. Asked if the building is being used for paper now? And how will doubling the height be a positive alternative? By adding more height, the products will be off the ground, and the height will allow the building to have a better vision/façade.

This portion of the meeting was opened to the public. Several members stepped forward to state their concerns regarding the traffic, building height, and landscaping. No others, this portion of the meeting was closed to the public.

Board member Barry questioned the building height and requested that perhaps the applicant can consider a 40 feet setback on the façade, keeping the 22 ft in the front portion of the building. Applicant says they will lose space inside.

After much deliberation, the applicant stated that they are willing to accommodate the Board's suggestion with regard to a decrease in building height and return to the Board at their next meeting with revised plans.

The Chairman stated that the applicant will return at their March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting to further discuss and provide the Board with plans of the suggested changes. No further notice of publication will be necessary.

At this time, the Chairman declared this application closed and is carried to the next regular meeting of the Board in March.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Approval of the Bills:** presented to the Township

**Adjournment:** 9:23 PM