

**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
VIRTUAL MEETING WAS CONDUCTED
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF
August 5, 2021**

Members Present:	W. Kilpatrick (Chairman) R. Greco (Vice Chairman) K. Barry L. Damiano M. Seber R. Corage (2 nd Alt.) M. Pocius (4 th Alt.)	Also Present:	Mayor James Damiano Anthony Sgobba (Councilman) Richard Brigliadoro, Esq. Thomas Lemanowicz (Engineer) Valerie Laky (Board Secretary) San Chavan (Planner) Paul Cancilla (Planner)
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Members Absent: C. Gaita
J. Strothers
D. Cataldo (1st Alt.)
D. Damiano (3rd Alt.)
Ryan Conklin (Planner)

The “virtual” meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Chairman stating at least 48 hours’ advanced notice of this meeting was given to The Herald & News, The Bergen Record, the Little Falls Website, filed with the Township Clerk, and a copy of the notice was placed on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building.

The Chairman stated that the application for Route 23 Realty, LLC (215 Newark Pompton Turnpike) will not be heard tonight, as the applicant requested it be carried to the next regular meeting of the Board.

Council to Address the Board: Council stated that no members of the public came before them at their meeting with questions or statements.

Approval of Minutes: July 1, 2021 (regular meeting) and July 19, 2021 (Special meeting)

Mr. Greco motioned, seconded by Mr. Barry to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2021 regular virtual meeting of the Board.

Poll of the Board: Ayes: Greco, Barry, L. Damiano, Councilman Sgobba, Seber, and Kilpatrick
The Chairman declared the Minutes for July 1, 2021 Approved.

Mr. Barry motioned, seconded by Mr. L. Damiano to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2021 special virtual meeting of the Board.

Poll of the Board: Ayes: Greco, Barry, L. Damiano, Mayor Damiano, and Councilman Sgobba,
The Chairman declared the Minutes for July 19, 2021 special meeting Approved.

RESOLUTIONS:

1. **Skender Gjevuka, SEAR HOUSE GRILL** – 1 Newark Pompton Turnpike, Block 51, Lot 7. Site Plan for a 607 Square open deck causing a parking deficiency.

Mr. Barry motioned, seconded by Mr. L. Damiano to approve the Resolution as presented.

Poll of the Board: Ayes: Greco, Barry, L. Damiano, Councilman Sgobba, Seber, and Chairman Kilpatrick
Nays: None

The Chairman declared the Resolution Approved.

2. **Ordinance No. 1415** – Amending the Township Code Chapter 280 entitled Zoning.

Mr. Greco motioned, seconded by Mr. Barry to approve the Resolution as presented.

Poll of the Board: Ayes: Vice Chairman Greco, Barry, L. Damiano, Mayor Damiano, and Councilman Sgobba,
Nays: None

The Chairman declared the Resolution Approved.

3. **Ordinance No. 1416** – To establish Article XIV-A Special Commercial District.

Mr. Barry motioned, seconded by Mr. L. Damiano to approve the Resolution as presented.

Poll of the Board: Ayes: Vice Chairman Greco, Barry, L. Damiano, Mayor Damiano, and Councilman Sgobba,
Nays: None

The Chairman declared the Resolution Approved.

APPLICATIONS:

1. **The Manor at Little Falls, LLC** - 115 Main Street, Block 97, Lots 5, 9, 9.10 and 11. 3 story mixed use building consisting of 56 dwelling units with ground floor retails (Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval with variance “c” or bulk variance relief needed). Located in the TV-CBD Zone.

Mr. Scrivo, Esq., attorney for the applicant came forward to state that the applicant is proposing to construct a 3-story mixed use building consisting of 56 one-bedroom units. The applicant is proposing to retain approximately 3,634 sq. ft of the existing Bank building and utilize the remaining space of the existing bank to create a retail space along with residential use.

Patrick McClellan, Engineer for the applicant came forward to state that that the existing bank building is fully developed with three (3) frontages, *i.e.*, Center Avenue, Warren Street and Main Street. Behind the building is a parking lot and a drive-thru. He said that the applicant is proposing two (2) access points to enter the property on Center Avenue. He further stated that the property raises up 10 feet from Main Street to Warren Street. He also said they are proposing 100 parking spaces (7 compact cars, 4 ADA spaces and the remainder of the spaces will be 9 x 18 ft.

Mr. McClellan further stated the following variances they will needed for this proposal:

1. Two (2) tower features for aesthetic purposes (Ordinance permits only 1) (on Main Street façade);
2. Variance for rear yard for 4.83 ft. and 9.28 ft. in another area (10 ft. is required);
3. Corner of building requesting 9.28 ft. (10 ft. is required);
4. Variance for access to continue on Center Street;
5. Parking is ample. 84 spaces required (100 proposed);

6. Seven (7) compact spaces (8 x 18 ft) and remainder 9 x 18 ft – variance needed.

Mr. McClellan further testified that there will be one (1) level of parking below grade (not visible), one (1) level of parking (visible) on Main Street with two (2) levels of living space above. He stated that the structure will be three (3) stories in height. He stated that their original proposal included 102 parking spaces, but has included a bicycle rack for seven (7) bicycles which reduced the number of spaces to 100. He stated that the number of reduced parking spaces to 100 would reduce the number of required ADA spaces to four (4). He testified that the applicant is in compliance with the Board's Engineer Report. He stated that the applicant provide a report regarding the groundwater elevation at the site if special considerations are required to keep water out of the lower garage level. He said that they will match the streetscape in the area as required by the Board.

This portion of the meeting was opened to the Board for questions of Mr. McClellan. Mr. Greco asked about the drive-thru lanes. Is it a standard size that is existing there. (answer – yes). What will the height of the basement level be (answer: 10 ft.), and will a sprinkler system be imposed for fires (answer: yes). Mr. Seber asked if the stop gages are sensed? (answer: it is operated by a key fob during the evening hours only. Mr. L. Damiano asked if the applicant is willing to update the sidewalks? (answer: yes). Is there dedicated guest parking? (answer: yes there are extra spaces for the guests. Mr. Barry asked if there is underground ventilation for exhaust fumes? (answer: yes, through exhaust system and vents through roof to the building). This portion of the meeting was closed to the Board.

Steven Corso, Architect for the applicant came forward to state that an exhaust system, located in the middle of the building, will vent through the roof of the structure. He further stated that a sidewalk will be designated to the residents going out to Warren Street. He stated that the applicant is proposing 28 one (1)-bedroom units on each floor ranging from 800 sq. ft. to 1,100 sq. ft. stating that ten (10) of the units will include a study room (windowless and no closets so as not to be used as a bedroom). He also said that the height of the building conforms to the height requirements in the TV-CBD Zone of the Ordinance. The air conditioning units will be located in the middle of the roof of the building so as not to be visible to the public. He also stated that guard rails will be installed along the slope area of the property.

This portion of the meeting was opened to the Board for questions of the Architect. Mr. Kilpatrick requested that gooseneck lighting be provided along with the type of building materials and colors to be used for the hometown aesthetic. The Board's Planner, asked if the units will be affordable units? Mr. Brigidoro questioned the size of the units for the 2 and 3 bedroom units. (answer: there will only be 1-bedroom units). Mr. Rocco requested that elevations be sent to the Board. (answer: they were submitted).

8:45 p.m. At this time a 10-minute recess was called by the Chairman.

Upon the return of the meeting, the Chairman stated that the application for Notch Road/Jackson Lane, LLC (634-636 Lackawanna Avenue) will likely not be heard tonight due to the time constraints of this meeting. Council for Notch Road/Jackson Lane, LLC agreed to carry the matter to the September meeting of the Board.

Joseph Staiger, Engineer for the applicant came forward to testify that the site currently consists of a drive-in bank. He stated that he factored in the 56 one-bedroom residential units. he indicated that the primary change is a reduction from a larger bank to a smaller bank. He further stated that the area in which the site is located is a dense multi-use area and a transit-oriented area. Further, he stated that based on the mass transit availability, this would have a significant impact on traffic. He factored in a 1/2 parking space per bedroom. He also examined the census data and the calculation is one car per rental unit for parking and 2.1 parking spaces for owner occupied. As a result, he concluded that 70 parking spaces are needed however 100 parking

spaces are being provided. With regard to refuse collection, it was stated that the owner had similar buildings and the best method is that a small truck will go into the garage and pick up the garbage and remove it from the site. At this time the mayor represented that council is in the process of moving forward with a resolution or an ordinance to provide for “don't block the box” intersections at Main Street and Center Ave. He further stated that the applicant is in compliance with Mr. Lemanowicz’s review letter.

This portion of the meeting was opened to the Board of Joseph Staigers report. Some of the questions of the board were, will the garage door beep? Answer: the door will be opened during the day and closed at night. Will the garage door be noisy? Answer: no, it will be on rubber chains. How will the garbage collection be handled? Answer: by private management and it will not be exposed on Center Avenue. Mr. Luke Damiano asked the question, who will monitor the cars for the bank and residents? Answer: they will put up towing signs. There were no other questions of the Board this portion of the meeting was closed.

Jeffrey Stiles, Planner for the applicant came forward to state that the site is irregular in shape. The site has three frontages on Warren Street, Center Avenue and Main Street. He stated that he visited the site and reviewed the Township Ordinances and the Municipal Master Plan. Mr. Stiles stated that the bank currently existing today and the parking lot is underutilized for a bank the way bank businesses operate today. He further stated that the applicant is seeking to maintain the existing access to the building through Center Avenue, however designating Center Avenue as the front yard would trigger variance relief as stated. He said Center Avenue is best from a traffic standpoint, and Main Street would be better for pedestrian access and for aesthetics of the building. He stated that the positive criteria for this applicant has been met. He testified that the proposed development of the site is consistent, the density is consistent, and that the commercial component of this project is low intensity and is also consistent. He also testified that the negative criteria has also been met and that variance relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public. Overall, he stated that traffic, noise, and light is all in compliance.

This portion of the meeting is open to the public for questions. Many members of the public we're present at this meeting. They came forward stating their concerns for traffic flow, water elevation, noise, lighting, security, parking garage egress, parking, parking stall size, the number of units, widening the sidewalks, and the location of the main entrance on Warren Street. All of their questions were answered by the representing expert witness. This portion of the meeting was closed to the public after hearing everyone's concerns at 12:21 am.

Mr. Greco motioned, seconded by Mr. Barry to approve the application as presented with the following requirements: “c” variance for front yard on Center Avenue, two (2) tower features for aesthetic purposes on Main Street façade; variance for rear yard for 4.83 ft. and 9.28 ft.; variance for access to continue on Center Street; and variance for seven (7) compact spaces (8 x 18 ft) and remainder 9 x 18 ft. Also, the applicant shall provide a geotechnical report to the Board Engineer, the applicant shall replace the clay main pipe with a more modern PVC pipe, the applicant shall match the streetscape as developed along Main Street, the applicant shall enlarge the water service size to accommodate the sprinkler system in the parking garage, the applicant shall provide gooseneck lighting on the building, and the applicant shall address affordable housing with a court appointed Special Master.

Poll of the Board: Vice Chairman Greco, Barry, L. Damiano, Mayor Damiano, Councilman Sgobba, Seber, Corage, Pocius, and Chairman Kilpatrick

Nays: None

The chairman declared the application Approved.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Approval of the Bills: presented to the Township.

Adjournment: 12:30 A.M.