

REGULAR MEETING OF THE EATONTOWN PLANNING BOARD
December 4, 2023

Call to Order

Mr. Woloshin called this in-person meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced that the meeting had been advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that the Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger have been notified and a copy of the agenda for this meeting had been posted on the bulletin board in Borough Hall and on the Borough website.

Roll Call

Members Present:

Chairman Woloshin
Councilmember East
Mr. Diedrichsen
Mayor Talerico
Mr. Regan
Mr. Alcott
Ms. Martinock
Mr. Roth

Absent: Vice-Chairperson Silva

Also present: Board Attorney, Marc Leckstein; Ed Herrman, Board Engineer; Board Planner, Christine Bell; Board Secretary Colleen Matthews

Approval of Minutes

Motion is made by Chairman Woloshin and seconded by Councilmember East to approve the minutes of November 20, 2023. All in Favor by those eligible to vote.

Absent: Vice-Chairperson Silva

Resolution to be Memorialized

Atty. Leckstein states that the US Home, LLC., Lennar Corporation (Liberty Pointe) PB 2023-05 should be finished for the next meeting. Atty. Leckstein states that he is awaiting the transcript from the stenographer and once it is received, he will be able to finish the resolution.

**PB 2023-10 Lowes Home Centers, Inc.
118 Highway 35, Blk 14.01 lots 7, 11, 22, 30
Amended Site Plan**

Atty. Leckstein states that, while legally not necessary, would like to add to the resolution, that the applicant cannot add on to something that this Board has stated they cannot do. For example, there might be a Lowes national campaign to sell trailers and they want to line up 50 trailers in the parking lot. This would exceed their approval and the Eatontown Lowes is held to this approval.

Motion is made by Ms. East and seconded by Mr. Roth to memorialize this resolution with the addition.

Ayes: Ms. East, Mr. Roth, Mr. Diedrichsen, Mr. Regan, Mayor Talerico, Mr. Alcott, Ms. Martinock

Nays: None

Abstention: Ch. Woloshin

New Business

**PB 2023-17 Eatontown Monmouth Mall, LLC (Monmouth Square)
Highways 35 & 36 & Wyckoff Road
Block 2201, Lots 1.01, 1.02, 2, 3, 4 and 5; and
Block 2202, Lot 1
Preliminary & Final Site Plan Application and Technical Subdivision Application**

Jennifer Krimko, states that she is the attorney of record for this application. Atty. Krimko reviews that this Board previously approved 700 units and over one million square feet of retail space under prior zoning. The Council has since adopted a redevelopment plan and this application is in keeping with this redevelopment plan. There are currently seven lots that make up the Monmouth Mall. We are going to focus on the Monmouth Mall as a whole and not by individual lots.

Atty. Leckstein marks the following into evidence:

- A-1 Site Aerial by Langan dated 12.4.23
- A-2 Architectural Plans-Retail by Dietz dated 10.5.23
- A-3 Whole Foods color rendering by Dietz undated
- A-4 Architectural Plans-Residential by Minno dated 10.6.23
- A-5 Residential color renderings by Minno dated 12.4.23
- A-6 Landscape Plans by Arterial dated 10.6.23
- A-7 Stormwater Management Report by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-8 Water System Engineer's Report by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-9 Sanitary Sewer Engineer's Report by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-10 Recycling Report by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-11 Environmental Impact Statement by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-12 Traffic Report by Dolan & Dean dated 10.6.23
- A-13 Rendered Site Plan by Langan dated December 2023
- A-14 Culvert Relocation Figure by Langan dated 12.4.23
- A-15 Phasing Plan by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-16 Existing Lot Configuration by Langan dated 12.4.23
- A-17 Proposed Lot Configuration by Langan dated 12.4.23
- A-18 Preliminary and Final Site Plan by Langan dated 10.6.23
- A-19 Updated Summary Charts by Langan undated
- A-20 Signage Calculations by Deitz dated 11.28.23
- A-21 Landscape and Hardscape Schematic Plan by Arterial dated 12.4.23
- A-22 Commercial Color Renderings undated
- B-1 Engineering Review dated 11.14.23
- B-2 Planning Review dated 11.20.23

- B-3 Environmental Commission Report dated 11.28.23
- B-4 Shade Tree Commission Report dated 11.24.23
- B-5 Traffic Safety Report dated 11.27.23

Christian Roche, Engineer, Langan Engineering, is accepted as an engineering expert and is sworn in by Atty. Leckstein. Mr. Roche reviews that the Monmouth Mall property consists of approximately 104 acres; 1.5 million sq. ft. of commercial retail; 82,000 sq. ft. of medical office space; 5 pad sites around the perimeter; 5 access points to the property, which will remain the same.

This application looks to build 1,000 residential apartment units, a clubhouse, as well as 915,400 sq. ft. of commercial space which is consistent with the Monmouth Mall Redevelopment Plan that governs the property. The residential units will be spread out across 10 buildings. Around the clubhouse is a large central green area which is approximately 2 ½ acres.

The four-lane ring road is looking to remain the same in the northern portion of the site but it is being proposed to reduce the ring road from four lanes to two lanes in the southern site area. This will make it a less appealing as a cut through and will slow down the traffic within the area and promote safe pedestrian movement throughout the site. It will also be more aesthetically pleasing.

The applicant proposes over 3 miles of sidewalk within the site, including the entirety of Wyckoff Road bordering the Mall. The existing bus shelter will be relocated to the northwestern area of the site, near the movie theatre.

The project proposes 4,750 parking stalls, where based on our shared parking study, we are required to have 4,473 parking stalls, which means we have a surplus of 277 stalls on site. There will be 90 ADA compliant parking stalls where 58 are required and we will be compliant with the electric vehicle charging stations. There is no underground parking.

The locations of Buildings 9 & 10 are discussed in relation to the existing buffer and the applicant will be supplementing evergreen trees to provide additional screening as well.

All of the residential buildings will be four stories high, meeting the height requirement. Each building will have their own trash rooms. There is a proposed two-story clubhouse area.

There is a central green with a large green area for all to access of approximately two acres with a splash fountain, terraced seating area and proposed playground.

To the western side of the retail, there is a proposed grocery store of approximately 40,000 sq. ft. which will abut a retail pad of approximately 31,000 sq. ft. To the east of this grocer area is the existing Macy's, which will be accompanied by five new pad sites totaling approximately 45,000 sq. ft. The existing pad sites around the perimeter will remain, including Joe's Crab Shak, Jarrods Jewelers, etc.,.

With regard to stormwater management, impervious cover has been reduced by about 10 acres, whereby reducing the amount of runoff from the property. The two existing infiltration basins will be rehabilitated and there are three new retention basins being proposed. There is an existing older culvert that will be relocated and rehabilitated.

With regard to landscaping, 816 new trees are proposed, 536 will be shade trees, 176 will be evergreens, 104 will be ornamental trees. They will be native species, no monoculture and there will be 18 different varieties. The 18 different varieties have been chosen due to location. For example, if near the road, a tree would be able to handle the salting of the roadway during winter months. The applicant has agreed to replace any dead vegetation along the perimeter of the site as well as cleaning up and planting vegetation where the gas station used to be, but now is just rocks.

From a lighting perspective, there will be over 300 LED fixtures added to the site. The lighting plan will be revised to add the suggestions from the engineer and the planner. There are no waivers or variances needed for the lighting plan.

There is a height difference on the property, the land is not flat. The applicant states that there will be significant excavation.

The phasing plan is reviewed. The plan shows what is being grouped together but not necessarily the order in which the developing will take place. The redevelopment agreement has certain requirements as to what needs to be constructed when. An example of a phase would be that the existing Barnes & Noble will be relocated from the northwest corner of the site to retail building A. After the Barnes & Noble has been moved, construction of the grocery store can begin.

After discussion, it is decided that there will be some green/landscaping along the perimeter of rte. 35 where there is no green landscaping at this time.

The property currently consists of seven lots. The subdivision will result in ten lots allowing for more efficient financing purposes and land lease purchases.

Mr. Roche reviews the variances and waivers requested, along with the existing non-conformities including a variance for parking spaces of 9 x 18 whereas 9 x 19 is required and a variance for drive aisle dimensions of 24 ft. wide drive aisles where 25 ft. is required.

It is discussed that the parking requirement number is as a result of shared parking for the area as a whole.

A possible elevated crossing is discussed and the location. The owner of Michael's Plaza has consented as well as this applicant. This project is on hold pending grants/funding

With regard to the ring road it is discussed how to make it safe for bicyclists and it is decided to have a sharro on the road. There will be a bicycle symbol with two arrows underneath it on the side of the road to raise alertness for the vehicular traffic to share the road with bicyclists.

Board Engineer Herrman reviews the stormwater management plan and is satisfied with the plan for this parcel.

Chairman Woloshin asks if there is anyone in the public that has questions to ask of Mr. Roche.

Ken Kretsch, 13 Kingsly Court, asks about the green space around the clubhouse. It is public space. Asks about replacing the existing culvert and digging up the parking lot. Asks if the demolition will be phased, the answer is yes.

Laura Bagwell, 24 Elizabeth Parkway, asks where will the snow go if there is a large snowfall. The answer is that it will be the management company's decision. Asks a question about existing hydrographs. The answer is that the existing is higher than the proposed because the impervious coverage has been reduced by 10 acres. About an acre of stormwater goes to each basin.

Landscape Architect, David Lustberg, is sworn in by Atty. Leckstein. He addresses the waivers requested and why they are needed and reviews the supplementing of certain areas. The intent is to have the site as diverse as possible. Over 800 trees and shrubs will be planted and Mr. Lustberg explains how the specific species are determined. With regard to the buffers, dead vegetation will be replaced and with regard to the "leggy" evergreens, low-lying shrubs will be planted. The locations of the terraced seating and concrete seating are discussed as well as other seating. The dog relief area is discussed.

Chairman Woloshin opens to the public questions regarding the landscape testimony.

Ken Kretsch asks how the pool located at the clubhouse will be shielded from the public. Mr. Kretsch asks what publication to use as a reference as to the trees/landscaping that can be used.

Break taken from 8:50 p.m. until 8:56 p.m. with no change in attendance.

David DelleDonne, Commercial Architect, is sworn in by Atty. Leckstein. The design intent is reviewed and the architectural color renderings of the project are reviewed. The only enclosed area will be the food court. The Whole Foods building is discussed and that the parapet is high for the Fire Department to drop a roof letter. It is stated that there will be roof access from the building.

Chairman Woloshin asks if there is anyone in attendance that wish to ask a question of the architect for the commercial space.

Ken Kretsch, asks if, when the plan was laid out, was there a consideration for the residents to not have to access the Whole Foods by automobile. The answer is that there is connectivity from the residential to the retail via sidewalks.

Laura Bagwell asks if there is going to be solar on any of these rooftops. The answer is that there is currently no plan to install solar.

David J. Minno, is sworn in as the architect for the residential aspect of the project. All of the residential buildings are four stories. The only basement is in the clubhouse. There will be elevators (big enough to accommodate a stretcher) and stairs. All 10 of the residential buildings have affordable units spread throughout (125 units in total). There are 15 garages at an extra cost for each building. The lobbies are approximately 1,300 sq. ft. to allow for common space outside of their apartment. There will be work from home spaces in the common area. Trash pickup is discussed. Mail and package pick-up is discussed. Residential amenities are discussed, as well as the possibility of rooftop amenities. The almost 40,000 sq. ft. clubhouse is discussed with its various amenities. Most of the units will have balconies.

It is asked if the residents on Sandspring Drive can see the residential buildings, as they are 4 stories high. It is stated that from the rear of the homes, it is almost 300 ft. to the residential buildings. For perspective, the Boscov's building is 60 ft. high and the residential buildings are 50 ft. high. It will not be an invisible building. There will be ground excavation at the site.

Chairman Woloshin asks if there are any public that wish to ask questions of Mr. Minno.

Ken Kretsch asks about work-from-home accommodations and if their Traffic engineer take into account people working from home. It is stated that they are trying to carve out a little alcove, even in the 1 bedroom floorplans for a work from home space and there are spaces in the common areas for this purpose as well. Also, all the courtyards have wi-fi so that, on fair weather days, people can work outside. Mr. Kretsch asks if the garages are just for first floor tenants – the answer is no, they would be rented separately to any tenant in that building. Mr. Kretsch asks how the recreation areas were sized and if they are large enough. Mr. Minno states his main business is creating multi-family communities and it is based on their experience. It is his professional opinion that the size of the recreation areas are absolutely large enough.

Ted Lewis, 227 Wyckoff Road, recommends taking a cross-section of the site near Boscov's to portray if the residents on Sandspring can see the residential buildings as the Boscov's building is three stories (60 ft.) looking from Wyckoff and two stories (40 ft), because of grading on the other side.

There is discussion at 9:53 p.m. as to whether to proceed beyond the regular 10:00 p.m. end time or to continue on a future hearing date.

After a poll of the Board members and a declaration by the applicant's attorney that she only has one more witness, it is decided to continue with the application in the hopes of finishing this evening.

Michael Sommer, Chief Development Officer of Kushner, reviews the history of this application. Mr. Summer addresses comments and questions thus far, including that they are trying to create a true town center type of environment. The Kushner company will be managing both the residential and retail spaces. On-site Security will be handled third-party and there will be over-night security. The residential units will be built as market absorption will allow. The phasing schedule is detailed in the re-development plan and has to be followed. Hours of operation are discussed at length. It is reiterated that any existing conditions via prior resolutions are still in place, for example, AMC Theatre is still bound by their original resolution of approval.

Landscaping along Rte. 35 and 36 is further discussed allowing for both some street trees and shrubs, while not looking to have a wall of trees.

Generators are discussed. There is an existing commercial generator and residential generators are not proposed.

With regard to the clubhouse, it is available to be used by all those who live in the residential buildings. It is stated that half of the rooftops will have some rooftop amenities in Buildings 1-8. Buildings 9 & 10 have their own amenities.

With regard to affordable housing, Mr. Sommer reiterates that they will be spread throughout all of the buildings and there will be no way to distinguish which units are part of affordable housing by walking down the hallways.

The central green is discussed and it is viewed as the centerpiece of the project. It has potential for an ice skating rink in the wintertime, farmers markets in the summertime, outdoor music events within the ordinances. All open to the public.

Chairman Woloshin asks if there are any public in attendance that wish to ask Mr. Sommer a question.

None heard.

Gary Dean, Traffic Engineer is sworn in by Mr. Leckstein. Mr. Dean states that their traffic estimates do not take into account work from home residents. The traffic counts are over-stated.

The traffic surrounding the mall is discussed. The proposed residential space actually requires less space than the pre-existing mall space. Over 600,000 feet of mall space has been taken out. The State traffic approval is still in place because the traffic number has actually decreased at this location, not gone up.

Chairman Woloshin asks if there is any public that wish to ask a question of Mr. Dean.

Ken Kretsch states that he thinks there is going to be a traffic problem on Wyckoff Road. Asked how light timings are determined on this county road. Mr. Dean states that they have been in contact with the county in order to recommend timings and also to allow for pedestrian crossings.

Laura Bagwell, states there is a ton of traffic in Eatontown and reviews the detriments of being stuck in traffic. Mr. Dean states, that with regard to this application, the difference in traffic between decommissioning 600,000 sq. feet of retail space and adding 1,000 apartments, results in a traffic decrease.

Chairman Woloshin asks if there is anyone in attendance who has any questions or comments regarding this application.

None heard.

The application is reviewed as to what has been agreed upon during discussion.

Mr. Roth makes a motion to grant the application as discussed and agreed upon, seconded by Mr. Diedrichsen.

Ayes: Mr. Roth, Mr. Diedrichsen, Ch. Woloshin, Ms. East, Mr. Regan, Mayor Talerico, Mr. Alcott, Ms. Martinock

Nays: None

Absent: Vice Chair Silva

Miscellaneous

None

Close Meeting

Motion is made at 10:50 p.m. to close the meeting by Mr. Alcott and seconded by Mr. Roth to close the meeting.

All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen Matthews, Board Secretary