

**PLANNING BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

**June 28, 2022**

**CALL TO  
ORDER**

The was called to order at 7:05p.m.  
1 City Hall Plaza  
Rahway, NJ 07065

Adequate notice of this meeting, as required by the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, also known as the Sunshine Law, has been provided by an Annual Notice sent to the City's official newspaper NJ Star Ledger on January 8th, 2022 and posted on the bulletin board of the Municipal Complex, posted on the City website, and filed with the Clerk of the City.

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**FLAG SALUTE**

The Board will then salute the flag.

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**ROLL CALL**

On a call of the roll, the following Board Members and Officials should be present:

**BOARD**

Mr. Raymond Giacobbe, Mayor; or,  
Mr. Eric Miles, Mayor's Designee  
Mr. Jeremy Mojica, Commissioner  
Mr. Frank Spallone, Commissioner  
Mr. Robert Simon, Commissioner  
Mr. Thomas O'Reilly, Commissioner  
Mr. Alexander Shipley, Commissioner  
Mr. William Cladek, 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate Commissioner  
Mr. Christopher Brown, 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate Commissioner  
Mr. William Hering, Commissioner Vice Chairman  
Mr. Jeffrey Robinson, Commissioner Chairman  
Mr. Karl P. Kemm, Esq, Board Attorney  
Ms. Jacqueline Dirmann, Board Engineer  
Ms. Leigh Fleming, Board Planner  
Mr. Steven Decker, Board Secretary

Absent from this meeting: Commissioners Mojica, Spallone, O'Reilly, Cladek, Hering and Timmons which were excused absences.



**Motion: Commissioner Simon**                      **Second: Commissioner Shipley**  
**Yes: Commissioners Miles, Simon, Shipley, and Chairman Robinson**  
**No: None**  
**Absent: Commissioners Mojica, Spallone, O'Reilly, Cladek, Hering and Timmons**  
**Abstain: Commissioner Brown**

**Motion was approved.**

Meridia Rahway 1900 Urban Renewal  
1901 Elizabeth Ave.  
Application #02/14A  
Block 228 Lot 1.01 & 1.02  
Block 227 Lot 1 & 2  
Applicant seeking Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan approval (Amendment)

Commissioner Simon made a motion to memorialize the resolution for Meridia Rahway 1900 Urban Renewal PB #02/14 1839-1905 Elizabeth Avenue.

Commissioner Shipley asked about the meridian charging for parking spaces. Meridia will be guaranteeing one space included in rent. He was worried that residents may still park on the street if the parking spaces cost extra.

**Motion: Commissioner Simon**                      **Second: Commissioner Miles**  
**Yes: Commissioners Miles, Simon, Shipley, Brown and Chairman Robinson**  
**No: None**  
**Absent: Commissioners Mojica, Spallone, O'Reilly, Cladek, Hering and Timmons**  
**Abstain: None**

**Motion was approved.**

## **Hearings**

Bethel Real Estate Investment, LLC  
726 Stone Street  
Application #7/22  
Block 178 Lot 23  
Applicant seeking a Minor Subdivision and Bulk "C" variance

The board professionals, Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann and Board Planner Leigh Fleming were sworn in.

Attorney Stephen Hehl introduced the application. It is for a minor subdivision with variances. The lot is 12,000 square feet. One lot will be 7000 sq ft, and the other one 5000 square feet. The

new lot will meet all zoning requirements. They have remodeled the existing house on the first lot and will be demolishing a dilapidated garage.

Nicholas Graviano was sworn in as a planner. Mr. Graviano is from Graviano & Gillis Architects & Planners at 101 Crawfords Corner Road in Holmdel NJ. The Board accepted Mr. Graviano as an expert. Mr. Graviano explained this is a corner lot at Stone Street and Ferrell Terrace. The applicant proposes to keep the existing dwelling and demolish the garage. The newly created lot will be 50'x100', a total of 5000 square feet. The 2<sup>nd</sup> lot will be 70' x 100' and have the existing dwelling on it. The variances will be for 25 ft. required for rear yard setback, and 12.2 ft. is proposed. There is also 25 foot setback required from Ferrell Terrace and only 7.7 ft. proposed, that is a preexisting condition. The existing structure will also need a variance for location of the air conditioning unit. A parking variance for removal of the garage needs to be granted because of the demolition of the garage, but the driveway will still be utilized. Mr. Graviano explained that these are C1 & C2 criteria hardships. The exceptional situation is the placement of the house on the previous lot. C2 explains the specific piece of property is 12,000 square feet where only 5000 square feet are required. This large lot provides an opportunity of an extra lot.

The meeting was opened to the commissioners.

Commissioner Shipley asked where the driveway will be for the new dwelling. Mr. Graviano explained the proposed driveway is not shown on the plan, but they will stipulate that all proposals will comply with all zoning requirements.

Attorney Kemm explained that an applicant does not need to show the layout on a conforming lot. In order to receive permits from the City they will have to comply with all city ordinances.

Commissioner Brown wanted to clarify that the variances are only on the lot with the existing house. Mr. Graviano stated that all relief is due to existing dwelling next to the newly created vacant lot.

Engineer Dirmann asked if this application gets approved, does the garage and driveway need to be removed before the subdivision is executed. The applicant agreed that the garage will be demolished before the subdivision is created. They have no issue with this.

Commissioner Brown asked if the applicant plans on building on the new lot or selling the lot as vacant.

John Samsel, the applicant of 771 Stone Street was sworn in. Mr. Samsel stated this is still to be determined. They are not sure if they will build themselves or sell the lot.

Chairman Robinson asked if anyone currently lives in the house on the corner. Mr. Samsel stated that it is currently vacant. The applicant remodeled and redeveloped the house. It will be sold to a new family.

The meeting was opened to public.

The public portion of the meeting was closed.

Attorney Hehl believes this is a good opportunity for a new house and a remodeled house on conforming properties.

Planner Leigh Fleming explained the need for HVAC variance. She stated that the HVAC needs to conform with building setbacks. If the building doesn't conform to the setback lines (which it does not), then the air conditioning unit will not be able to adhere to setbacks. Asking for this variance will alleviate anyone having to go to the board regarding installing an HVAC unit at the existing property.

Commissioner Shipley made a motion to approve Application #7/22 726 Stone Street for Minor Subdivision with Bulk "C" variance and all conditions.

**Motion: Commissioner Shipley**

**Second: Commissioner Simon**

**Yes: Commissioners Miles, Simon, Shipley, Brown and Chairman Robinson**

**No: None**

**Absent: Commissioners Mojica, Spallone, O'Reilly, Cladek, Hering and Timmons**

**Abstain: None**

### **Motion Approved**

Planner Leigh Fleming presented the Esterbrook Avenue redevelopment plan.

Attorney Kemm explained that the planning board created a redevelopment plan of the Esterbrook area. The redevelopment plan is prepared by council to create a redevelopment zoning area. This must be reviewed to make sure it is not inconsistent with the Master Plan.

Board planner Fleming stated that Block 151 Lots 7, 20, 21, 22, 23 were determined to be an area in need of redevelopment by council. This is 1 acre of land on Esterbrook Avenue between Central Ave and Elm. The plan serves as the new zoning for this area. This will supersede the existing zone. There will be no D variances allowed in this area. Any development on this site would have to go before planning board. The proposal for the new area would be a 60 unit, age 55+ 100% affordable senior project. The area can also be used for a project for any special needs population.

There are a collection of bulk standards such as: height, area and yard requirements. The maximum height is 4 stories. The proposed project matches the building across the street, which is 51 units. It is across from a senior living area and one block from the senior center. All building materials and architectural style need to be consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. A 10-foot landscape buffer is required.

This was identified as an opportunity site on the strategic downtown plan. It is consistent with the Master Plan Re-examination from 2019. It is consistent with the neighborhood and will be replacing five dilapidated lots.

Meeting was opened to the board members.

Chairman Robinson asked about the long narrow lot in the middle that runs to Bryant Street.

Ms. Fleming explained that the city owns this lot. She believes it may be subdivided or left for the coverage. This will not impact the development.

Chairman Robinson believes it is an ideal place for a senior living.

Commissioner Simon thinks the location and preexisting senior housing and proximity to the senior center makes it an ideal use.

Commissioner Simon made a motion to adopt a resolution for ordinance No. O-20-22 The “Esterbrook Avenue Redevelopment Plan”.

**Motion: Commissioner Simon      Second: Commissioner Brown**

**Yes: Commissioners Miles, Simon, Shipley, Brown and Chairman Robinson**

**No: None**

**Absent: Commissioners Mojica, Spallone, O’Reilly, Cladek, Hering and Timmons**

**Abstain: None**

Chairman Robinson commented on the resolution passed in March regarding the Irving Street Bridge. The City received a letter from the Engineers designing the bridge, and the plans are in the City Clerk’s office. They are proposing a dual span concrete arch bridge.

Engineer Dirmann reported that the bridge is with the State Historic preservation office.

The commissioners would like a see a historically accurate parapet.

An update of the zoning board was given.

Commissioner Simon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion: Commissioner Simon      Second: Commissioner Brown**

**Yes: Commissioners Miles, Simon, Shipley, Brown and Chairman Robinson No: None**

**Absent: Commissioners Mojica, Spallone, O’Reilly, Cladek, Hering and Timmons**

**Abstain: None**

**Motion was approved.**

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:16pm.**