

STRATFORD JOINT LAND USE BOARD  
MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 22, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Chairman St. Maur at 7:00 pm and the public statement was read that the meeting was advertised in the Courier Post, Central Record and a notice was posted on the bulletin board at the Borough Hall stating the time and place.

The Chairman let the board in the pledge of allegiance and a prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Present

R. St. Maur, Chairman  
A. Santora, Vice Chairman  
F. Hartman, Councilman  
J. Keenan, Mayor  
R. Morello  
M. Mancini  
M. Goldin  
J. Keenan  
P. McGovern  
T. Hall, Alternate #2  
S. McCart, Secretary  
W. Roorda, Engineer  
A. Olizi, Solicitor

Absent

T. Kozenewski, Alternate #1

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made Mr. Mancini and seconded by Mr. McGovern to approve minutes of January 25, 2018 meeting with all member voted aye.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS: none

BOARD ACTION: none

PUBLIC PORTION: none

CORRESPONDENCE: none

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS: One Colby Avenue, B.3, L.1 Veteran's Village of Camden County

Mr. Olizi called Mr. David Wollman to make presentation for One Colby Avenue. Mr. David Wollman from Wollman Law Firm, High Ridge Commons, Suite 102, 200 Haddonfield-Berlin Road, Gibbsboro, NJ 08026. Veteran's Village is a long term lease

apartments for veteran's who don't have a lot of money to start out with. I have three witnesses, Mr. Frank Lauletta, 2001 College Drive, Suite 11, Clementon, NJ 08021. Mr. Theodore Wilkinson, ARH Associates, 215 Bellevue Avenue, Hammonton, NJ 08037. Mr. John Helbig, 215 Bellevue Avenue, Hammonton, NJ 08037. All three witnesses were sworn in my Mr. Olizi. Mr. Olizi stated that the applicant and board have agreed to accept conditions and waivers set forth in engineer's letter for completion of application. Mr. Lauletta stated his background.

Mr. Wollman asked Mr. Lauletta what drew him to project and he stated we have to help the vets to get into a facility with no security deposit and no utilities bills. One Colby Ave was originally built for medical office building and felt it was perfect for small apartments for vets. Twenty units with existing 20 front doors and utility meters and would be perfect for apartments. The Office zone sits between the residential zone and the White Horse Pike commercial zone. (Exhibit 1 Zoning Map) There would be 20 units, 16 regular units and 4 ADA units, all handicap accessible. Leases would be 6 month to 1 year. The units would max out at 2 people with principle resident being a vet.

(Exhibit 2 architectural drawing of apartments) Heat, AC, water, sewer, electric, gas would be all inclusive in rent. There would be no security deposit required and monthly rent would be \$900. All applicants would be screened for criminal background, credit checks and would be required to follow all rules and regulation. Other amenities would be small common area, laundry area with washer and dryer, small health club and outside seating. There would be an on-site manager who is a vet and support for tenants at site. There would be organizations that will provide services for vets, People for People Foundation, Veterans of Gloucester County, and 3 or 4 other organizations.

Mr. Mancini asked about combining 20 offices to make bigger offices. Mr. Lauletta stated he didn't see a need. Mr. Mancini said offices are all over the place, did you even explore it? Mr. Lauletta stated they really wanted to come up with units that were affordable for vets. Mr. Mancini asked the square footage of each apt and size of rooms. Mr. Lauletta stated 450 sq ft, 15'x30'. Bedroom is approx. 12'x11', bathroom is 5'x12' and common room 250 sq. ft. Mr. Mancini asked if there was any thought to doubling size of units. Mr. Lauletta stated the rent would have to be doubled. Veteran Village of Camden County is a non profit. If there was excess cash at end of year, we would have to lower rent. Mr. Mancini asked how the owner is making a profit? Mr. Lauletta stated \$10 a foot. Mr. Mancini asked if apartment manager would have any experience. Mr. Lauletta stated we are training a disabled vet. Mr. Mancini asked if we can hire someone. Mr. Lauletta asked does town want us to hire a more experienced person. We have a management company that handles repairs, collecting rent, etc. Mr. Mancini asked how do you manage to keep occupancy to 2? Mr. Lauletta stated the on-site manager would monitor that. Mr. Morello asked what would disqualify a vet. Mr. Lauletta stated we would turn down a vet who was violent, drugs, sexual misconduct. We would have to come up with a plan. Mr. Lauletta stated we do not have a written plan, but would agree to something that the town wanted us to adhere to. Mr. Goldin asked what kind of background do you have with these types of apartments. Mr. Lauletta stated we have small efficiencies in Philadelphia but with students in them. Mr. Mancini asked Mr. Lauletta if he can file for tax exempt status. He stated he did not think it would qualify. Mr. Olizi stated we cannot direct applicant to do. The board cannot stop that. Mr. Morello asked about outdoor space. Is there any green space

outside at all. Mr. Lauletta stated there is side and front yard. Mr. Hartman stated in the JLUB on February 28, 2002 board decided that there was not a need for shrubbery even though it was on original site plan.

Mr. Ed Wilkinson, Engineer, gave his qualification and the board accepted said qualifications. Mr. Wilkinson stated the site is across from Aldi, spot zone between residential and commercial. It is 130' deep which is very shallow and makes it difficult to develop. Property currently is 90% impervious coverage. As you can see on plan, Exhibit #3, we have added on front of property in center of horseshoe a 40' x 20' or 3' of all green space. It would include benches, flag pole and still have adjacent walk space. Building would provide shade in the afternoon. There is no buffer in alley. There is a 12' green space and could be improved with vegetation so residents to the left would have a better buffer. There would be no access in back. There would be one window per unit in back for air and emergency exit. I will have to check with fire safety. There are over 55 parking spots and it would only require 40. We are going to remove some parking and add green space. It would reduce impervious coverage and reduce runoff onto Colby down into public storm drain system. There will be one dumpster on lot and add a fence for buffer with at least 20' from residents.

There was a review of Bach letter, Exhibit #4. We agreed not to address any open issues which were already discussed. On page 4 there are 6 items we do agree to them. Page 5, landscaping and buffering plan, we will have to provide the board with a landscape and buffer plan. That plan would be to take every step possible to improve buffers wherever possible. That would be along left side closest to property B. 3, L.18.01. Increase landscaping on corner. Zoning on page 5, #2, we do need to apply for a variance. Any technical concerns will be addressed without objection. It will require 2 handicap parking, one ADA. Circulation plan will be provided. Drainage inlets will have to be addressed. We plan on keeping the exact size sign and replace with veterans associations that would be affiliated. Mr. Olizi asked with regards to fire issue, are there back doors? There is a standard window size for fire escape. Mr. Morello asked if there were any plans to resurface parking lot. To be ADA compliant, the parking is too steep, doesn't meet code so has to be repaved, resurface area that needs to be done before seal coat and restripping. The grade area has to be done. Mr. Roorda suggested connect all roof drains underground and pipe inlet which is already on property.

Mr. John Helbig, Professional Planner, gave his credentials and the board accepted said qualifications. Mr. Helbig gave testimony for positive and negative criteria for a D1 use variance. Positive site is well suited for particular use and location. Advantages are adjacency to the White Horse Pike, present a desirable visual environment, promotes coordination of public and private procedures aimed at shaping land development through lessen the cost and make the land more proficient. Mr. Wollman asked how site serves as a transition. The office zoning district is only one lot so this will serve as a transition zone from the commercial zone on the White Horse Pike and the residential zone. The negative criteria are need showing that relief if granted would not create a substantial detriment to the public good and secondly would not impair zoning plan or ordinance. I believe it promotes in both state municipal land use law as well as borough ordinance. Mr. Mancini asked is it the general welfare of the town. Mr. Helbig stated the general welfare extends beyond the borough of Stratford. Mr. Helbig stated you have to

weigh the benefits and the detriments of the plan. Mr. Morello if a 450 sq ft apartment is a good transition to a single family home. Mr. Helbig stated it was a better fit than going from commercial retail to office to residential. I believe it is a less intense use. Mr. Mancini voiced his concern that you move into a residential area without apartments and now they are putting apartments in neighborhood. Mr. Santora asked if they would be making building look more appealing to residents. Mr. Lauletta stated the façade would be changed along with new front door and windows. Mr. St Maur asked about traffic. Mr. Helbig stated he felt it would be less traffic.

Mr. Roorda asked how this related to fair share housing plan. Mr. Olizi stated units will all be affordable. Mr. Wollman stated they are not technically affordable.

Open to the public:

Steve Gagliardi, 13 College Circle, voiced concern about escape window for a disabled vet. Will there be fire alarms and will they be monitored? Mr. Lauletta said the ADA apartments would have back door.

Mr. Gentless, 111 Union, asked if subsidized by the federal or state? Mr. Lauletta stated no comments for federal, state or section 8 housing. Is Veteran Village of Camden County a non-profit? Yes. Is it a ratable? Yes. Do you have any intention of being a non-ratable in future? No. Vet would not qualify if they start a family? No. Do you have other plans if this doesn't get approved tonight? No. Who votes tonight? Mr. Mayor and Mr. Hartman cannot vote for the D variance and you need 5 votes.

Mr. Larry Talucci, 14 Colby Ave., asked what is long term or guarantee that this will continue to be for Vets. Mr. Olizi stated that it is specifically limited to veteran housing. It would have to come back before the board to change use. The infrastructure for sewer is serviced by the county, how does adding 20 more residence. I would be responsible for doing an analysis and make sure pipe is adequate. (It is actually 40 residents) The draining on property edge going to be maintained? An analysis would have to be done to see if something is wrong and if it is it would have to be addressed. Mr. Talucci stated he did not get a letter.

Mr. Lou Marchuk, 25 Pennsylvania Ave, asked if notice was put on board? Yes. He asked if Mr. Lauletta is sole owner. No. How many owners? 6 members. Who was individual who put application in. The attorney. Mr. Marchuk said application was signed by Srikanth Sankar. Who wrote planning analysis? The planner. Mr. Marchuk asked if all the members on identified? Mr. Lauletta stated I'm not sure. Is there any encroachment to the property? Not that I'm aware of. Was a title report done? Yes. Mr. Marchuk stated the engineer's letter was not in complete file.

Diane Brattelli, 15 Colby Ave, What is managements responsibility going to be? To monitor resident are following lease agreement. Does manager on site do repairs? There is a management company to do repairs. Are vets going to be left in apt and on there own. We have People to People Foundation for services for vets. Ms. Blackstock stated it is not rehab type housing, it is housing for everyday veterans. Is sign going to be same sign? It will be the same size sign.

Owner of 1014 N. White Horse Pike. How will you isolate general public from going into common area? Residents would have key.

Kathy Trommer, Turnersville, question washer and dryer area, what size is washer/dryer? Mr. Lauletta said they thought it would be sufficient. We could add more if needed. I agree that maybe we should be 2. Question was asked if it included renter insurance. The furniture and fixture would be covered under our policy not personal items. If 2 people live there is it 900 or 1800? \$900. If something breaks, how long before it gets fixed. We have a management company seven days a week. Is it one or two story? One story. Is rent a fixed price? Yes, for term of lease. Is there enough parking for 20 apartments? More than enough parking. How long is waiting? As soon as it is completed.

Mr. Goldin asked what process for picking vet was. Mr. Lauletta stated they apply and the first 20 to qualify get in. Mr. Hall asked if Stratford vets would have 1<sup>st</sup> choice. I would like to be able to do that as a condition.

Rick Sterno, veteran, in the lease is there a provision to bear arms? This has not been discussed. It would have to be within the law.

Harry Berry, 10 Cornell Ave., will the backdoor exit be able to get a 36" wheelchair through it. Yes. Will there be alarms, fire, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors? Yes. Is this a common roof? Will fire wall go to the rooftop? Whatever is required by international building code. If a vet passes away? It will be re-rented to another vet.

Agnes Moore, 152 Laureba Ave., did not feel that 2 handicap parking spaces would be enough. Mr. Lauletta stated they would put in 4.

Jack Brennan, Stratford resident, what is impact on taxes? Mr. Olizi stated taxes cannot come into consideration. Whatever is outback will be wide enough? It will be 4' wide and concrete.

Mr. Olizi gave Mr. Marchuk credit for point something out on application that was missed. There should be disclosure of everyone in application that has 10% partnership or interest or stock and has to be provided. Reopened record so that could be put in.

Srikanth Sankar, 56 Ridge Road, Lisa Regina, 281 Sunset, Barrington, Ron DeMuro, 11 Orchid Ct., Deptford, Sal, 6 Stag Run, Sewell. All were sworn in.

Stephanie Jesberger, 18 Colby Ave., asked that for clarification of Ordinance 176420 and waivers for the Codes. Mr. Santora stated they are looking to get residential use and then the building department will make sure it meets all building codes. What the zoning code says as long as that is an office use, no one can live in there. The zoning stays the same. They will have a variance to put residences in the office zone. Ms. Jesberger asked about traffic impact when apartments would double residence on street. Mr.

Helbig apartments would have a low traffic impact as oppose to offices.

Steve Brattelli, 15 Colby Ave., how does this benefit a vet? Cost as much as an apartment. It does not require a security deposit. How will we stop people from walking around neighborhood?

Frank Vespe, what was expense for town to put fire out? How many complaints to get for this property. Mr. Morello stated code violations. What about children? We have to comply with fair housing act.

Bill Devaroux, Laurel Springs, what is application process? Will you be taking in drug addicts, alcoholics? No

Mike Randall, 19 Colby Ave., Can you legally guarantee that only veterans are accepted? Yes. What if they start a family? They would be violating lease and occupancy load.

Testimony for or against. Anyone that was going to testify was sworn in. The following were for the Veterans Village. Greg Mirenda, Agnes Moore, Rosie Simpkins, Lisa Regina, Paul Lapresty, Ed Davis, Bill Grove, Bernadette Blackstock, Paul Hack, Emily Balog. Opposed to the project was Roger Whittington, 20 Colby Avenue.

Motion was made and seconded to approve D variance too allow veteran housing complex in Office zone. A roll call was taken. Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Santora, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes, Mr. Goldin, yes, Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes. D Variance passes.

Motion was made and seconded to approve buffer variance, set back variance, both preexisting and accept recommendation from borough engineer and all other compliance with all outside agency to include the entire parking lot be resurface and paved. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Santora, yes, Mr. Hartman, yes, Mayor Keenan, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes, Mr. Goldin, yes, Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes.

PUBLIC PORTION: none

Motion was made by Mr. McGovern and seconded by Mr. Goldin to adjourn. All members aye.