

STRATFORD JOINT LAND USE BOARD  
MINUTES  
October 24, 2019

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

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

ROLL CALL:

Present

A. Santora, Chairman Class IV  
J. Keenan, Mayor Class I  
F. Hartman, Councilman Class III  
J. Keenan Class IV  
R. Morello Class II  
P. McGovern Class IV  
R. St. Maur, Class IV  
T. Hall, Alternate 1  
L. Mount, Alternate 2  
M. Wieliczko, Solicitor  
A. DiRosa, Engineer  
S. McCart, Secretary

Absent

T. Kozeniewski Class IV  
M. Mancini, Vice Chairman Class IV

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was made by Mr. McGovern and seconded by Mr. St Maur to approve minutes of September 9, 2019. Roll call vote: Mayor Keenan, yes, Mr. Hartman, yes, Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Santora, yes.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS: Resolution 2019:06 Laurel Mills LLC, Block 116, Lots 14 & 14.01, Preliminary and Final Major Subdivision Approval to subdivide into 70 building lots, 3 open space lots, 1 common area lot, and Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval which include 80 townhouses and include 16 affordable units and 14,000 square feet of retail.

Motion was made by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. McGovern to approve Resolution 2019:06 for Laurel Mills LLC, Block 116, Lots 14 and 14.01 for Preliminary and Final Major Subdivision and Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval. Roll Call vote: Mayor Keenan, yes, Mr. Hartman, yes, Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Santora, yes. Motion passes.

BOARD ACTION: There is no meeting scheduled or advertised for November/December 2019. A discussion was held and it was decided that the board will notice and publish for an additional meeting to be held on December 12, 2019. All members voting aye.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Edward J. Balling, 62 Warwick Road, Block 95, Lot 17, Variance for parking lot for office use in a residential zone and office zone. Dr. Balling is looking for site plan approval and for a use variance. Mr. Wieliczko stated given that the use variance is being made he asked that the Mayor and Council Hartman step down from the dais. We are going to reconstitute ourselves as the zoning board. Mr. Wieliczko asked Mr. Hall and Mr. Mount to stay on dais and participate in the presentation and application and also vote. That will give us a full complement of the Zoning Board of Adjustment of seven members.

Thomas Ehrhardt, Attorney for Dr. Balling, introduced himself. The application is for an expanded parking lot that will serve Dr. Balling's dental office at 62 Warwick Road. The particular lot is a split lot that has a sliver on the street portion of Warwick Road that is in the residential zone. The remaining is in the Office Zone. He stated they will present some testimony from Dr. Balling and Mr. Galante, the engineer and planner for Dr. Balling.

Dr. Balling, Mr. Galante and Mr. DiRosa were sworn in by Mr. Wieliczko. Mr. Ehrhardt explained that Dr. Balling was before the board before and he and neighboring property reconfigured lot lines to square up the properties. Prior to application Dr. Balling's property was totally in the Office Zone. The nature of application is a parking lot. The use variance is because of the R1 zoning.

Mr. Ehrhardt asked Dr. Balling to tell the board about his dental practice. Dr. Balling stated a couple years ago we moved the property line, squaring it off, hoping to get additional parking. It worked out well. Dr. Balling is the third dentist to own the practice. The practice has been there for close to 50 years. Dr. Balling has been there since 2002. When he started it was the Doctor and two employees. He now has six employees and the practice has been growing. The challenges with that is we are getting squeezed for parking. He is looking for space to accommodate his employees and his patients. He also wants to improve the appearance of the lot as well. Mr. Ehrhardt stated you mentioned the number of dentist and employees. Is that changing? Dr. Balling stated not another doctor but lost a couple of employees so may add a couple back in.

Mr. Wieliczko stated for purpose of this application, you are aware of the count with regards to necessary spaces for employees. For every 2 employees, you need one space. For everyone 1 doctor, you need one space. Dr. Balling stated one for the doctor, three for the employees, one for each treatment room, there are four, and one for each 200 feet of waiting area. Dr. Balling stated the waiting area is approximately 160 square feet. Mr. Ehrhardt stated this is not a parking lot because of the number of employees, doctors or space of building, but to make better use of the space that is there.

Mr. Ehrhardt stated prior to the change in property line, you would have been able to reconfigure the parking but you would have been angled towards Warwick Road. Dr. Balling stated yes. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Dr. Balling if that section of Warwick Road is busy and Dr. Balling stated yes. Mr. Ehrhardt stated so reconfiguring the parking lot allows patients to get off of Warwick Road quicker making it safer for them. Dr. Balling stated yes.

Mr. Wieliczko asked Dr. Balling if he had any disagreements with the recommended conditions and recommendations contained in the Bach Association letter with the exception of the ADA parking space which we will deal with. There is a request for some improvements on the lot. Mr. Wieliczko asked Dr. Balling if he agreed to all the recommendations contained in the Bach review letter? Dr. Balling stated yes. Mr. Wieliczko stated as a condition of approval, will you work with Bach Associates, Mr. DiRosa, to come up with an acceptable parking plan and circulation plan that will address the location of the ADA parking space. Dr. Balling stated yes. Mr. Wieliczko stated the ADA space is located in front of the building. Dr. Balling stated it is located and has been located there. Mr. Wieliczko stated the proposed new parking and the proposed location of the ADA parking spot in the new parking plan is in the current location but also in the front of the building. Mr. Wieliczko stated there was a call out made by the engineer with concern to that ADA spot being in the front of the building, and they suggest that it should be on the side of the building. The applicant has agreed, as part of the approval, to work with our engineer and planner to come up with a parking plan and design that is acceptable to the Borough's architect and engineer. Dr. Balling stated he was agreeable to that.

Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante to state his educational and qualifications. Mr. Galante stated his qualifications as a licensed professional engineer in the State of New Jersey, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of Maryland. He attended school at Rutgers to receive Bachelors and Masters in Science. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante if he served as engineer for other clients. Mr. Galante stated he presently represents various clients and various municipalities within New Jersey. He is also a city engineer in PA and represents a township in PA. He reviews zoning and planning applications for those towns as well. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante if he had provided testimony as a professional engineer in

New Jersey. Mr. Galante stated yes. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante about his background as a professional planner. Mr. Galante stated he was a licensed professional planner in the State of New Jersey. He received his planning license approximately seven years ago. Mr. Wieliczko reaffirmed that Mr. Galante was a licensed engineer and planner in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Santora accepted Mr. Galante as an expert witness.

Mr. Galante displayed exhibit A-1 which was an aerial of the exhibit. The source of the Aerial is Google earth. The site is located on Warwick Road. It is mid-block, single frontage on Warwick Road and has one access. Mr. Galante displayed Sheet 2 of the Site Plan, dated August 2019. It is proposed to be milled and overlaid on this plan. The crosshatched area is the new impervious surface which is 2851 Square feet. We are proposing a total of 16 parking stalls. That may change depending on the ADA. We may need an additional ADA parking space. To the east of the Site plan, there is a residential home. There is a vinyl fence that wraps around the site and approximately 35 feet from the street. There are some landscape plantings on the adjacent property. There is a buffer of evergreen trees to the rear of the property. We are proposing to enhance that. We are going to provide additional buffering so that there will be no headlights that could shine on the adjacent property. The hours of operation for Dr. Balling's office are Monday and Thursday 9-6, Tuesday and Wednesday 8-5. Mr. Galante stated there will be a more efficient, safer parking design. With regards to Storm Water Management, applicant's engineer will work with Bach's office to reduce run off to adjacent properties. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante how many parking spots are new and how many are existing. Mr. Galante stated there are approximately ten parking spots. They are not really stripped and people end up parking on the grass. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante how the site is suited to what is proposed. Mr. Galante stated the site is located in an office district. The adjacent residential zone is part of parking lot. This was due to the change in property line from a previous application with the resident. Expanding the parking into the residential area would be more suitable to the zone and provide a more efficient parking circulation. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Galante if he saw any detriment from this plan. Mr. Galante stated he did not. The triangular piece of land could not be used for anything else but parking. The buffers that will be put in will minimize any head lights nuisances.

Mr. Wieliczko stated just for the record with regard to the proposed spaces, is it up to 17 spaces. Mr. Ehrhardt stated up to 17 spaces.

Mr. Galante stated another positive with the application. Since we are providing additional parking on the site, it keeps the patients in the office zone area. Patients will not have to park off site and have to walk. It is keeping the use on the site.

Mr. DiRosa reviewed the engineer's letter dated October 16, 2019. He noted on Page 3, there is a chart of zoning requirements. For the record the minimum lot area, we have 118,639 sq. ft. It is actual 18, 639 sq. ft. They still conform with zoning requirements. Our comments, that start on Page 4, the applicant has addressed the number of employees and doctors and waiting area and examination rooms. With that information an updated parking calculation will be on the plan. Their proposal does provide more than enough spaces per those requirements. There are about 15 comments and a lot of them are small notes or different plan items that have already been discussed with the engineer and they have agreed to all of them. Item #3 is in reference to the location of the handicap parking space. The maneuver to back out of the ADA parking space falls under 17.68.010. We will work with applicant's engineer to properly relocate that. Item #10, a residential buffer strip shall be added along residential property lines. The applicant has provided testimony that there is an existing row of arborvitae. Our office recommends it be extended along the full length of the property line. Mr. Wieliczko asked if that will be provided in the landscaping plans and lighting plans that will be provided. Mr. DiRosa stated yes. That goes along with item #13 in our letter. All parking areas shall be provided with a drainage system subject to review of the planning board and borough engineer. Mr. DiRosa stated they have agreed to that. Mr. DiRosa stated he had been to the site. The parking configuration now is very difficult to get into and out of. Putting a rectangular parking area with proper turn around is a major improvement.

Mr. Ehrhardt asked Mr. Balling how long has the ADA spot been in the front of the building. Dr. Balling stated at least as long as I have been there and well before. Mr. Ehrhardt stated the applicant is in

agreement to work together. Mr. Ehrhardt asked Dr. Balling is it your preference, if it is possible, to keep the ADA parking spot where it is. Dr. Balling stated yes.

Mr. Wieliczko stated there are no variance being requested with regards to this application with the exception of a use variance and site plan. He understood the concerns. Dr. Balling's concern is part of the record but to the extent that the professionals do work together and it ends up that the ADA space is moved no one should be surprised.

Mr. Santora just want to be clear that if the engineer deems it necessary to move the ADA space that you are ok with it. Dr. Balling stated yes.

Mr. Morello asked if the spot were too close to the side walk. Mr. DiRosa stated it is too close to the roadway. There is a provision in our ordinance that you are not allowed to have a maneuver within the first 20 feet of an ingress.

Mr. Keenan stated our action does not include a variance for that parking spot? Mr. Wieliczko stated no.

Mr. Wieliczko stated you have before you an application for preliminary and final site plan approval for the proposed expansion of a parking lot into the office district and from the office district into a residential zone and the request for a use variance. The applicant has provided testimony from both a professional engineer and planner and has addressed the positive and negative criteria for the use variance. You have also heard that the applicant has agreed to work with borough engineer with details listed in the Borough Engineer's letter.

Motion to approve the application was made by Mr. Morello and seconded by Mr. St. Maur. Roll call vote. Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Mr. McGovern, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes, Mr. Hall, yes, Mr. Mount, yes, Mr. Santora, yes.

PUBLIC PORTION: none

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made by Mr. McGovern and seconded by Mr. Keenan to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm. All members voting aye.