

January 18, 2010

A work session of the Allendale Planning Board was held in the Municipal Building on January 18, 2010. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 p.m. by Mr. Quinn, Chairman, who announced that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were met by the required posting and notice to publications.

The following members answered roll call: Mr. Quinn, Mr. Fliegel, Mr. Herndon, Mr. Barra, Mr. Bernstein, Mr. Sirico, Ms. Sheehan, Mr. Zambrotta, Mr. Sasso and Mr. Walters. Mr. Yevchak was absent. Also present was Mr. Dunn, Board Attorney.

Mayor Barra said that on Thursday he will swear in Mr. Walters who has been appointed to replace Jay Gravina. He said Mr. Walters will be a huge asset to the Board and he wanted to thank him for agreeing to accept the appointment.

Mr. Quinn said the Board has received a referral from the Code Official with regard to APTUIT, 75 Commerce Drive. Tom Ashbahian, architect and engineer and the Facilities Manager for APTUIT appeared on behalf of applicant. Mr. Ashbahian said applicant is interested in adding a truck dock to the existing building, thereby displacing some parking spaces. APTUIT has been a tenant at this location since 1999.

The Facilities Manager said the dock is being proposed at the south end of the building where there is presently office space. They want to be able to bring a product in, package it in the center and ship it out on the other side. They do not have more than 5 trucks per day at the facility. They do packaging of pharmaceuticals for clinical trials. They do not do any manufacturing and do not sell any product. They want to put in a small loading dock to do some receiving for the small warehouse they are creating on one side of the building.

APTUIT occupies about 70,000 sq. ft. of the building. Basically they need to put a truck dock in the southern vicinity of the building to accommodate this packaging and warehousing. The dock does use parking spaces but if one were to enter the site and go to the southernmost end it is evident at any time of the day that there is no parking in the back of this building. There are about 100 employees but they are assigned over 200 parking spaces. If the Board is favorable to this any restoration of parking area could be easily accomplished. All the parking for APTUIT is in the front of the building.

Applicant said APTUIT is not a trucking operation. They are a service company with many different clients. The property is very long and runs north and south. There is a driveway on the eastern edge which is basically where all of the employees come and go. The driveway entrance for the trucks will be on the western edge. The trucks will basically back into that dock. Effectively they will be using up parking space to maneuver the truck into position. These are parking spaces they never use.

Mr. Bernstein asked if the ingress and egress is only accessible from Commerce Drive. Applicant replied affirmatively. Applicant said the entire building is probably 800 ft. long. Playtex is located at the northern end of the building closer to Commerce. He added that this is

not a trucking operation. If they bring in 5 trucks per day that is a lot. They work for about 800 different pharmaceutical companies and every project is unique. The products arrive in small quantities for packaging and go out in larger quantities.

Chief Herndon pointed out that at this location demising walls and loading docks change depending on the tenants. He asked if it would be easier if they decided to build another loading dock. Applicant stated that would put the truck traffic out into the normal parking area rather than relegating it strictly to the rear of the building.

Applicant stated that the landlord has given his approval for this project and is aware that he is before the Planning Board this evening.

Mr. Yakimik said he agrees that the lost parking space is inconsequential based on his observations at the site. The way this is proposed, it looks like only two spaces will be lost. The concern he does have is the blocking of the access road if there is an emergency. He believes the docks are recessed into the building to allow for those vehicles to pull into them so you can go around them to some extent. There might be a dock elsewhere that is flush with the façade of the building but he believes the original design was to have the docks recessed so that vehicles could pull around them. There is about 7-8 ft. for an emergency vehicle to get by.

A Board member commented that if APTUIT could commit to trucks of no more than 48 ft. that would allow for about 14-15 ft. clearance to the curb for emergency vehicles. Applicant stated that they could limit that dock to that size trailer and if they get anything larger they could bring it to the other dock. He added that they never allow any of the trucks to drop the trailer and leave. This procedure could be augmented with the striping of the pavement and signage. Mr. Quinn concurred that the Board would allow the 48 ft. limit.

Mr. Bernstein commented that the Board has to determine whether or not to treat this as a site plan – minor or major, or say it is so de minimus that it is below that standard. Mr. Dunn said in that event the Board would refer it back to the Construction Code Official to proceed as usual with a Certificate of Continued Occupancy or refer it back to him with some condition that it feels appropriate. Mr. Quinn said he believes the Board should determine whether or not it is de minimus. If it is, the Board can send it back to the Construction Code Official with recommendations. If it is not de minimus then the Board has to decide whether it is a major or minor site plan.

Mr. Ashbahian said he will be glad to present a revised plan to the Construction Code Official with any recommendations of the Board. He will prepare something for the Board's consideration on Thursday.

A Board member questioned whether applicant would have the ability to control the size of the inbound truck. Applicant replied affirmatively. Mr. Bernstein asked if adequate notice has been given to adjacent property owners. Mr. Dunn said there are no requirements under the ordinance for notice. Mr. Bernstein said he is concerned about the safety issue when the truck is there if it is preventing someone from coming through and wondered if the neighbors should be put on notice before the Board makes a decision. Mr. Ashbahian said he believes the landlord is

responsible for any enforcement issues. Mr. Quinn requested that applicant come back to the Board on Thursday with revised plans per this evening's discussions.

#### Discussion - Master Plan Review

Mr. Snieckus was present to continue discussion of the master plan review. He said he has taken the various review sessions he has had with the Board to update the master plan revision according to the comments and recommendations made at those times. He will not distribute it tonight but will focus on the open space and recreation plan that he has distributed this evening.

One of the things he has not done as yet is update the references to the housing plan and any amendments that will be made. He asked if any meetings have been scheduled to update the master plan according to the approval with COAH. Mayor Barra said not as yet. He emailed Mary Beth Lonergan over the weekend because a meeting was held with the architects and engineer with respect to the Foreit property. He will call her tomorrow to go over this in detail and ask her about the time line.

Mr. Snieckus said he wants to be sure the changes to the housing plan are reflected in the land use plan along with any goals and objectives the Board may want to add or update. He also wants to include anything that is to be added to the open space element and recreation plan. He will be coming to the Board at the next meeting with a sustainability element which allows the Borough to apply for additional grant funds to help review and do audits for municipal facilities for energy efficiency and things of that nature.

Mr. Snieckus said he would like to give the Board an overview of what is in the open space and recreation plan document. He said this is an element of the master plan that is permitted and guided by the Municipal Land Use Law as one of the optional elements of the master plan. This is a study of the open space and recreation needs of the community and it identifies the existing facilities, the nature features of the community, and areas that may be included as open space or recreation. This document is based on the 2006 open space and recreation plan that was provided by the Passaic River Coalition. It is his understanding that this document was never officially adopted by the Planning Board, but it served as a guideline and it has been adjusted and modified into the current document dated January 18, 2010.

On page 4 under Green Acres requirements there is reference to the ability to pursue grants and matching grants from the State to seek improvements to park areas. If there is an open space and recreation plan in effect and adopted and there is also an open space tax in place which the Borough currently has, the Borough has the ability to apply for a 50% matching grant to improve parks and seek improvements to park areas. If the community doesn't have both of those items in place they can only apply for a 25% matching grant.

There are open space and recreation plan guidelines that are typically followed by Green Acres. The ten items that a document should have are provided on page 5. All of these various items are covered other than the public participation and the planning adoption that he will pursue further in this document.

There are a series of goals and objectives listed in the document that help provide the background for policy and land use decisions. Page 10 contains the existing open space and recreation inventory. All of the various recreational components within the Borough are itemized including active recreation municipal tracts such as ball fields and swimming areas. Passive recreation includes areas such as the Celery Farm. Board of Education recreation parcels are listed on page 11. Private recreation features in the Borough are provided for informational purposes. For instance the Guardian Angel Church provides some of the backup soccer field locations that used. He said the Celery Farm is a passive recreation facility with about 105 acres contributing a significant amount of open space to the Borough.

Future potential open space acquisition areas are also listed. He said if a community is over a certain threshold on open space, it is necessary to show COAH why open space is not available for additional housing or municipally sponsored housing. He said, "If you put the parcels that you know you do not want to have any development on in the future on the ROSSI list, that provides legal bounds by which to challenge COAH and say these parcels are protected.

Mr. Snieckus said the natural resource assessment on page 17 provides a review of all of the various natural resources in Allendale. Page 19 talks about the need to protect ground water. He will be updating the numbers to represent current demand. The well head protection areas have also been identified in the document. Mr. Snieckus said the 2006 report also identified the need to protect the wells and also identified the known contaminated sites based on NJ DEP records. He has included that information in his report but is cautious about including it in the master plan document because these sites come and go as they are remediated to a level where they are no longer considered contaminated. He is open to the Board's discussion as to whether to include that information.

Mr. Snieckus said wetlands, flood plains and water sheds are listed in his report. The prior element went into the priority concerns for species habitat. He has listed where their potential locations may be within the borough. On page 23 there is an updated map based on GIS information that lists the 100 year flood plain, wetlands and slopes of 15% or greater. On page 25 there is a section which talks about environmental resources such as forest areas, certain valued vegetation, vegetated steep slopes, and wild life resources. Page 26 lists certain threatened and endangered species that have been observed in certain areas of the Borough. This means that the information has been documented at NJDEP and it may be something to pay attention to if there is a proposal for development near those locations. Vernal pools are also described. They are areas that are periodically filled with water but drain off over time. These have been documented as habitat areas for certain threatened species.

Preservation of lands with high natural resource values were identified and listed on page 27. Water resource value areas are classified as to their benefit to the environment. Mayor Barra said he believes well head protection will be a big issue in the future. There are private wells in and around Allendale and they may affect the aquifer. The Borough wells provide a major source of our water. He feels a document such as this would be helpful to a Council who might want to put an ordinance in effect to restrict private wells. If the Board agrees, he feels it would be helpful if something is included in the master plan to strengthen this position.

Mr. Snieckus said the resource assessment for open space and recreation was amended from the 2006 report that listed the Whitney site and the Orchard Common site. Those two locations were removed. The Levin property is still listed and the water tower site is also listed for potential acquisition. Mayor Barra said the water tower site has been changed to a residential site with a potential for two affordable.

Mr. Snieckus said the rear portion of the Black Millwork property is listed as a potential site for open space acquisition. He asked if the Board feels it should still be listed as such. A Board member asked what is the benefit of identifying this small piece when there is no access to it. Mr. Snieckus said it would potentially allow the Borough to do the expansion of a playground or tot lot. There may be the ability to secure an easement through an adjacent property for a walkway.

Mr. Snieckus asked if there are any other areas that should be included as a potential area for acquisition. The map on page 38 provides a full inventory of the existing open space and recreation sites as well as proposed open space potential acquisitions. He added that the map can be amended appropriately.

Page 40 gets into a needs analysis from the standpoint of open space and recreation. Population growth and projection table is listed to identify the trends in population growth.

Mr. Snieckus said he feels Allendale is very well served from the standpoint of size and area of open space. The Celery Farm puts it over the minimum thresholds in a lot of the categories. He is reviewing information with regard to the types of fields in the various parks, how much use they are getting, the projected needs for these fields and any comments and recommendations that are being offered from the various recreation committees.

After reviewing information with the various sports committees, he has provided specific identification of the types of fields the Borough may have in the various parks, the type of use they are currently receiving, and the projected needs for these fields and sports facilities. He will change and modify this table going forward. Soccer, baseball, football and softball activities are included. He is recommending the option of a long term potential for artificial turf as it provides the ability for fields being used sequentially without a recovery time. Turf fields require a recovery time after they have been used otherwise the turf degrades. Basketball was identified as a significant need in the Borough. There is only one court that is currently of regulation size that is used at Brookside School. Hillside School has an indoor court but he believes the ceiling height is too low for formal play.

Mr. Snieckus said the prior 2006 report included the well head ordinances he touched on before as a model provision in this document. He does not think it is an appropriate location. He is going to include it in the master plan re-examination report as an appendix item. They also included a conservation area ordinance that he believes is very important to talk about from the standpoint of including or not including it in the open space element. He believes it is important to be very careful with that type of document because it can run in conflict with current

regulations. He said it is important to be cognizant of an overlap between a conservation area designation and development regulations as they are currently crafted as being too restrictive or not restrictive enough.

A Board member asked if there is any conversation about converting the trail that runs along the old rail line to a hike/bike path. Mayor Barra said the Borough actually put in for two grants to do this but both were turned down. There were some residents who were not in favor because they felt the tracks were part of their backyards. He feels we should continue to pursue this.

Mr. Quinn said the discussions will continue at the meeting on Thursday.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Knapp