

**Borough of Pitman
Combined Planning/Zoning Board Meeting
Council Chambers
Minutes of
January 16, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Aspras at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Aspras announced that this meeting has been advertised in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Mr. Aspras advised that the re-appointed Board members should be sworn in. Mayor Razze swore in the re-appointed members in attendance: Mr. Owen, Mr. Slenkamp, Mrs. Kelley, Mr. Fijalkowski, Mr. Romick, and Mr. Austin.

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Aspras, Mayor Razze, Mrs. Stech, Mr. Ryder, Mrs. Kelley, Mr. Fijalkowski, Mr. Slenkamp, Mr. Owen, Mr. Romick, Mr. Franchi, Mr. Austin

ABSENT MEMBERS:

Council President Fitzpatrick, Mr. Scutt

ADVISORS PRESENT:

Solicitor: Brian Clancy, Historic Commission: Walter Madison, Engineer/Planner: Tim Kernan

Solicitor Clancy accepted nominations from the Board for the position of Chairman for the year 2024. Motion by Mayor Razze, second by Mr. Slenkamp to nominate Nick Aspras as Chairman. There being no further nominations, Solicitor Clancy closed the nominations. Solicitor Clancy asked the Board to accept, by acclamation of the full Board, Nick Aspras as Chairman for the year 2024. Ayes all.

Solicitor Clancy accepted nominations from the Board for the position of Vice Chairman for the year 2024.

Motion by Mrs. Kelley, second by Mr. Owen to nominate Barbara Stech as Vice Chairman. There being no further nominations, Solicitor Clancy closed the nominations. Solicitor Clancy asked the Board to accept, by acclamation of the full Board, Barbara Stech as Vice Chairman for the year 2024. Ayes all.

Solicitor Clancy turned the meeting over to Chairman Aspras.

Chairman Aspras accepted nominations from the Board for the position of Secretary. Motion made by Mr. Owen, second by Chairman Aspras to nominate Jack Franchi for the position of Secretary. There

being no further nominations, Chairman Aspras closed the nominations. Chairman Aspras asked for a voice vote for Mr. Franchi as Secretary. Ayes all.

Chairman Aspras nominated the firm of Dasti and Associates as the Board Solicitor for the year 2024. Motion by Chairman Aspras, second by Mrs. Stech to approve Resolution 2024-01, Appointing the Board Solicitor.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mayor Razze: YES	Mr. Ryder: YES
Mrs. Kelley: YES	Mr. Fijalkowski: YES
Mr. Slenkamp: YES	Mr. Owen: YES
Mr. Romick: YES	

Chairman Aspras nominated J. Timothy Kernan of the firm Collier Consulting, PA as the Board Planner for the year 2024.

Motion by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Romick to approve Resolution 2024-02, appointing J. Timothy Kernan as Planner for the year 2024.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mayor Razze: YES	Mr. Ryder: YES
Mrs. Kelley: YES	Mr. Fijalkowski: YES
Mr. Slenkamp: YES	Mr. Owen: YES
Mr. Romick: YES	

Chairman Aspras nominated J. Timothy Kernan of the firm Collier Consulting, PA as the Board Engineer for the year 2024.

Motion by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Romick to approve Resolution 2024-03, appointing J. Timothy Kernan as Engineer for the year 2024.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mayor Razze: YES	Mr. Ryder: YES
Mrs. Kelley: YES	Mr. Fijalkowski: YES
Mr. Slenkamp: YES	Mr. Owen: YES
Mr. Romick: YES	

Chairman Aspras nominated Maureen Abdill for the position of Recording Secretary. Motion by Chairman Aspras, second by Mrs. Stech to approve Resolution 2024-04, appointing Maureen Abdill as Recording Secretary for the year 2024.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mayor Razze: YES	Mr. Ryder: YES
Mrs. Kelley: YES	Mr. Fijalkowski: YES

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Solicitor Clancy read aloud Resolution 2024-05, Establishing Meeting Dates for 2024.

Motion by Mr. Owen, second by Chairman Aspras to approve Resolution 2024-05, establishing the meeting dates for 2024.

Solicitor Clancy noted that with the exception of the two Monday holidays in the year, all meetings will be held on the third Monday of the month.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Fijalkowski: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Solicitor Clancy read aloud Resolution 2024-06, Establishing Official Newspaper.

Mayor Razze asked if the Borough should be using two newspapers, not one as noted in the Resolution.

Solicitor Clancy advised that his office prepared this resolution to mirror the 2023 resolution. Mayor

Razze noted that Borough Council uses two newspapers – Chairman Aspras advised he agrees that the

Board should advertise in two papers. Discussion on using two newspapers for advertising. Solicitor

Clancy advised that the Board can add another paper at a future meeting.

Motion made by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Owen to approve Resolution 2024-06, Establishing Official Newspaper for the Board.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Fijalkowski: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2022 MINUTES

Mrs. Kelley motioned, second by Mrs. Stech to approve the December 2023 minutes.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mayor Razze: **ABSTAIN**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Fijalkowski: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **ABSTAIN**

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

Mr. Madison advised that no Historic Preservation Commission Applications were reviewed at the last HPC meeting.

Mr. Madison read aloud the Historic Preservation Commissions Standards. Mr. Madison noted this is read at every Historic Preservation Commission meeting. Mr. Madison stated that when the Historic Preservation Commission was formed many years ago, houses in the Grove were in a bad state of disrepair. Prior to the standards being put in to place, repairs were made with no guidelines. Houses in the Grove have come a long way, and are now selling for \$100,000.00, some for over \$200,000.00. Ten or twenty years ago, no one could have imagined houses in the Grove selling for those amounts. This is due in part to the guidelines in place and the work of Borough Council and this Board.

Chairman Aspras advised there is one application for consideration by the Board at this meeting – the application was continued from last month.

Solicitor Clancy swore in Mr. Madison.

Chairman Aspras advised that this application is for signage on the Pitman Jewelry Store. Solicitor Clancy has done research on the issue, and the landlord (owner) of the building has jurisdiction over the sign. Dave DeClement, a friend of Jeff Penuel, who operates the jewelry store, asked for an explanation. Solicitor Clancy advised he has reviewed the lease provided by the owner and Borough ordinance on this subject to reach his determination on jurisdiction with regard to the sign.

Mayor Razze inquired on Mr. DeClement's right to speak on this application when the landlord was ready to address the Board. Mayor Razze also asked Solicitor Clancy for clarification on the matter before the Board.

Solicitor Clancy advised that the Planning Board has force of law in this matter – the Historic Preservation Commission is an advisory Board to the Planning Board.

Solicitor Clancy swore in the applicant, Aaron Beaucher. Mr. Beaucher advised he has nothing further to contribute if the Board is going to approve his application.

Mr. Madison confirmed to the Board that the application approved by the Historic Preservation Commission was to remove the box sign and install a new hanging sign. Chairman Aspras advised the Board that they are voting on what is proposed in the Historic Preservation Commission application. Discussion among the Board members on the type of sign proposed and details on the new sign. Solicitor Clancy swore in Jeffrey S Penuel.

Extensive discussion between Mr. Penuel and Mr. Beaucher on their communication regarding the sign. Chairman Aspras advised that this Board will not get in the middle of a tenant/landlord issue. If the parties want to continue this matter for 30 days to resolve the issue, that can be done. Chairman Aspras noted that an existing box sign can remain on the building, but 2 signs on the building could present a zoning issue. Mr. DeClement raised concerns regarding ownership of the sign. Solicitor Clancy advised

that ownership is a civil issue and ownership of the sign is not before the Board. If the owner of the building is properly before the Board with an application, the Board can act on the application.

Mr. Beaucher asked that the Board vote on what is before them so that he can move forward with signage for the sign. Mrs. Kelley wanted the record clear that if there is a change to what is approved tonight, the Applicant will have to re-apply to the Historic Preservation Commission and come back to this Board. Mr. Beaucher stated that if he and Mr. Penuel reach an agreement on alternate signage, he understands that he would have to re-apply to the Historic Preservation Commission on any proposed signage if different than what is approved tonight.

Mr. Madison confirmed that the Historic Preservation Commission approved what was presented in the application – removal of the box sign and installation of a hanging sign. Chairman Aspras confirmed that this Board is reacting to the application before them, not on the removal of box signs. Mr. Owen asked for the exact verbiage on the application – Mr. Beaucher read aloud from the application.

Motion made by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Fijalkowski to approve the sign portion (hanging sign) of Historic Preservation Application 2023-55.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **ABSTAIN**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **NO**

Mrs. Kelley: **ABSTAIN**

Mr. Fijalkowski: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **NO**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **ABSTAIN**

Mr. Romick noted his abstention is due to the fact that he knows the Applicant.

Mrs. Kelley encouraged both parties to come to a resolution on this matter.

Mayor Razze asked Solicitor Clancy if members voting to abstain should give a reason for the abstention? Solicitor Clancy advised stating a reason on an abstention is not required.

Chairman Aspras advised that the next matter on the agenda is an application for bulk variances by Applicant Babatunde Odusami, 78 West Avenue. The Applicants' Attorney, Dave DeClement noted that the application is actually in the name of Bancrest Realty Investment, Inc.

Solicitor Clancy swore in Babatunde Odusami, 12 Creek Lane, Mt. Royal, NJ.

Mr. DeClement stated that the Applicant has made application to rebuild a home in the Grove on the same footprint as the previous structure with the exception of a small bump out in the back for a kitchen.

Mr. Odusami testified that he intends to rebuild the house in keeping with the historic nature of the Grove and as close to the previous footprint as possible, with a 6 foot extension.

Mr. DeClement noted that the extension is for the kitchen. The extension will not increase the impervious coverage on the lot, because a garage has been torn down.

Mrs. Kelley advised that the Subdivision Committee has reviewed this application. Mrs. Kelley asked if the garage will be rebuilt – the Applicant testified it will not. Mrs. Kelley noted that there is a lot of concrete on the drawing, and the houses are so close together that drainage is a concern. Parking is also needed for this house.

Discussion on options to deal with drainage concerns, including grading, swales and adding grassy areas. Mr. Kernan asked if any of the concrete will be cleaned out with the demolition process. The Applicant advised it will, and the concrete will not be put back. Mr. Slenkamp asked about the slope of the property. Mr. Kernan advised that he would need a grading plan to address these concerns. Chairman Aspras advised that requiring a grading plan could be made a condition of approval. Mayor Razze asked if there will be parking on the property. The Applicant testified that there will be a gravel space for parking where the garage was.

Chairman Aspras asked what variances are needed. Mr. DeClement advised this is an R 2 zone, variances are being requested for lot area, width, building area and front and side yard setbacks.

Chairman Aspras noted that this application is for planning board action, zoning board of adjustment approvals are not required.

Mr. Ryder requested clarification on the lot lines depicted on the survey.

Chairman Aspras asked Mrs. Kelley if the proposed structure is consistent with the rest of the neighborhood – Mrs. Kelley confirmed it is.

Chairman Aspras asked the Applicant to describe the house, including elevations.

Mr. Odusami testified that the proposed structure is a 2 story single family residence consistent with the other houses in the neighborhood.

Chairman Aspras advised that the proposed structure has received Historic Preservation Commission approval. Chairman Aspras asked the Subdivision Committee to detail the variances requested. Mrs. Kelley made a motion to grant the variances needed for this nonconforming lot. The proposed setbacks are consistent with the surrounding homes and recommends approving the variances for setbacks.

Approve what was presented with the addition of a lot grading plan because of concerns regarding runoff. There is also a concern on the percentage of impervious coverage.

The Applicant asked if a French drain could be used for drainage – Mr. Kernan advised that will be decided at a later time based on the grading plan.

Discussion on impervious coverage percentages. Solicitor Clancy advised that the Board cannot make that a condition of approval, and Mr. Kernan noted that the code only covers building coverage, not lot coverage. Solicitor Clancy recommends that the Board require that there is no increase in impervious coverage.

Mrs. Kelley requested clarification on parking – Mr. Odusami testified there will be at least 2 spaces available. There will be no paved parking area.

Solicitor Clancy asked for detail on the proposed setbacks. Mr. Kernan stated that as Mr. Ryder pointed out, because the property is not perpendicular, the setbacks vary – approximately 6.56 to 7.16 feet on the left side, 4.41 feet on the right side.

Mr. Ryder stated that as shown, the building is not square with the lot. Should the building be square with the lot lines?

Mr. Kernan noted that the building could be squared up because the lot is square to West Avenue. Mr. DeClement advised that the old building wasn't squared up on the lot, but the new building could be.

Mr. Kernan confirmed the setbacks to square the building with the lot: 4.50 feet on the right side, 6.50 feet on the left side.

Solicitor Clancy recapped the variances needed. Mr. Kernan detailed the lot coverage at 0.335%.

Motion made by Mrs. Kelley to approve the variances needed for front yard and side yard setbacks and lot coverage. A grading plan will be required. Second by Mr. Owen.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mayor Razze: YES	Mr. Ryder: YES
Mrs. Kelley: YES	Mr. Fijalkowski: YES
Mr. Slenkamp: YES	Mr. Owen: YES
Mr. Romick: YES	

Chairman Aspras stated the next agenda item is the Sony rezoning update. Chairman Aspras advised all that based on the discussion that took place at last month's meeting, the Solicitor has prepared a Resolution. Solicitor Clancy summarized the Resolution under consideration. Solicitor Clancy advised this would be a vote of the Board of Adjustment. Chairman Aspras advised that the Resolution specifies mixed use for the site.

Motion made by Aspras, second by Kelley to approve Resolution No. 2024-07, Resolution of the Planning Session on the Planning/Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Recommending Borough Council Review and Amend the Redevelopment Plan for Sony Properties, Block 138, Lot 1.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mr. Ryder: YES	Mrs. Kelley: YES
Mr. Fijalkowski: YES	Mr. Slenkamp: NO
Mr. Owen: YES	Mr. Romick: YES

Chairman Aspras advised that another motion will be required to authorize Mr. Kernan to undertake the Sony amendment. Chairman Aspras noted that a committee should be formed to discuss the redevelopment issues on this property.

Motion made by Aspras, second by Romick to authorize Mr. Kernan to undertake the amendment to the Sony Redevelopment Plan.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: YES	Mrs. Stech: YES
Mr. Ryder: YES	Mrs. Kelley: YES
Mr. Fijalkowski: YES	Mr. Slenkamp: NO
Mr. Owen: YES	Mr. Romick: YES

Chairman Aspras stated that the next agenda item is the Resolution regarding the Fazzio site as an area in need of redevelopment. Solicitor Clancy summarized the Resolution under consideration.

Mr. Kernan advised he has started background work on the site. Mr. Owen asked if this plan will include all of the Fazzio properties – Mr. Kernan advised this will be more than what has been before the Board previously. The area will be everything that Borough Council included, and it looks like it will include all the lots, and he is just starting to map it.

Motion made by Aspras, second by Fijalkowski to approve Resolution 2024-08, Resolution of the Planning Session on the Planning/Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing an Investigation for Designation as a Non-Condernation Area in Need of Redevelopment for the Frank J Fazzio & Sons Inc Site, Block 142, Lot 6, Also Known As 458 Elwood Avenue, Pitman, New Jersey.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mr. Fijalkowski: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Chairman Aspras advised that the next agenda item is a discussion of site plans and site plan waivers.

Mr. Fijalkowski asked the Chairman if the Board could move ahead to Item 15 on the Agenda – Site Committee, since the Applicant is in attendance. Mr. Fijalkowski noted this is site plan waiver Application 2023-20. Mr. Fijalkowski stated that Brandon Hedenberg has purchased the old Pitman Printing operation. Mr. Fijalkowski advised the Board that the Site Plan Committee has reviewed the application, and the Committee is recommending a site plan be required. There will be extensive changes to the outside of the building, and items such as landscaping and lighting should be reviewed. Fijalkowski provided a handout to the Board on the proposed changes and also noted there will be a change of use. Chairman Aspras inquired on parking – Mr. Fijalkowski advised the plan does include a parking proposal for 3 spaces, which does not meet requirements.

The Applicant, Brandon Hedenberg, was sworn in by Solicitor Clancy. Mr. Hedenberg testified that he has purchased the property at 14 Simpson Avenue, the old Pitman Printing building. He has cleaned up the site, and the building is in need of repair. Mr. Hedenberg has submitted an application for a site plan waiver.

Mr. Fijalkowski advised that this will be the same footprint to the building, with changes to the outside of the building. There is a paved parking area, but it will not be striped. The Applicant testified that there is ample lighting already on site, and if the Board wants the parking area striped, that can be done. Chairman Aspras advised that the Board would not be able to approve a site plan at this time, that would have to be advertised. The Applicant testified that this application is for site plan waiver. Discussion on proposed use of the building and parking. The Applicant testified that with the onsite parking and the public parking and nearby municipal lot, there would be adequate parking. The Applicant testified that the proposed uses include a space for a personal trainer and something like yoga that would complement the personal trainer use. He estimates 10 people maximum at the building at one time.

Mr. Fijalkowski noted that these businesses could result in 20 to 25 people per day at the location – the Applicant noted they would not all be at the location at the same time.

Mr. Ryder inquired on the parking exit – would cars have to back on to Holly Avenue to exit? The Applicant testified that is correct. Mr. Ryder advised that would be a County approval. The Applicant testified that he has a site plan application before the County.

Chairman Aspras asked the Solicitor to confirm the Board’s course of action – the Site Plan Committee recommends a site plan be submitted, and the Applicant is requesting a waiver of site plan. Solicitor Clancy advised the request before the Board is to approve the request for site plan submission waiver. Additional discussion to detail the motion before the Board. Chairman Aspras advised that any site plan submitted should be a full site plan, not limited to certain aspects of the property.

Motion made by Mr. Fijalkowski, second by Mrs. Stech to deny Application 2023-20, request for site plan waiver.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mayor Razze: **ABSTAIN**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Fijalkowski: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Chairman Aspras advised that the next agenda item is a discussion on site plans vs. site plan waivers, including parking variances.

Chairman Aspras stated that he and Mr. Fijalkowski have had a discussion on parking requirements and waivers for parking. Mr. Fijalkowski advised that the original intent of the waivers was for parking on Broadway, but now waivers are being granted throughout the Town.

Extensive discussion on parking. Chairman Aspras advised that land use law permits requests for waivers. Solicitor Clancy advised Borough Ordinance and Municipal Land Use Law both provide for waiver requests. Mrs. Kelley noted that advertising site plan and variance applications can be expensive – Solicitor Clancy advised advertising is an essential element in MLUL.

Extensive additional discussion on parking, waivers and existing parking in the Borough. Chairman Aspras noted that there has been a discussion on implementing parking impact fees. Discussion on the fees and use of the funds.

Mr. Fijalkowski advised that the Site Plan Committee will take in to consideration this discussion, meet as a Committee to discuss this further and come back to the Board with recommendations.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT

Chairman Aspras noted that Zoning Officer Duffield is not in attendance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Owen advised that the Economic Development Committee meets this Thursday, January 19 at 7:00 pm and thanked Borough Council for a full complement of voting members.

SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE

Mrs. Kelley advised there is no report.

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Mr. Ryder advised there is new Chairman for this Committee, Mr. Romick. Otherwise, there is no report.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Mr. Slenkamp advised there is nothing new to report. The next meeting will be February 1.

COUNCIL REPORT

Mayor Razze advised that Council had first read on two ordinances, with second reading and public hearing scheduled for the 1st meeting in February. The ordinances address one way traffic and water and sewer fees.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Stech motioned, second by Mrs. Kelley to adjourn at 9:30 pm.

All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Abdill
Recording Secretary