

**Borough of Pitman  
Combined Planning/Zoning Board Meeting  
Council Chambers  
Minutes of  
February 20, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

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

**ATTENDANCE:**

Chairman Aspras, Council President Fitzpatrick, Mrs. Stech, Mr. Ryder, Mrs. Kelley, Mr. Slenkamp, Mr. Owen, Mr. Romick, Mr. Franchi, Mr. Austin

**ABSENT MEMBERS:**

Mayor Razze, Mr. Fijalkowski, Mr. Scutt

**ADVISORS PRESENT:**

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

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2024 MINUTES**

Mr. Owen stated that there is some discussion in the community that this Board gave the landlord of the Pitman Jewelry store permission to remove a box sign. The minutes correctly state that this Board acted on a Historic Preservation Commission application as it was presented.

Chairman Aspras recapped the action taken by the Board on Historic Application 2023-55.

Council President Fitzpatrick advised that it cost the Borough money to have the Board Solicitor review the information in the application, and that should be considered in the future, especially on what was a civil matter. Chairman Aspras noted that this is another reason that a discussion on fees is necessary.

Mr. Romick motioned, second by Mrs. Kelley to approve the January 2024 minutes.

Roll call

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Council President Fitzpatrick: **ABSTAIN**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **Yes**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Zoning Officer Duffield commented on the sign application for the Pitman Jewelry Store. His understanding was that in addition to the new sign, the old sign was going to stay up. Chairman Aspras advised that is incorrect, the old box sign is being removed.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:**

Solicitor Clancy swore in Walt Madison, Chairman of the Borough Historic Preservation Commission. Mr. Madison reviewed Historic Preservation Commission Application 2024-01, Milkweed Table + Market, 134 S Broadway, Block 25, Lot 3. The application is for an outdoor tent seating area. Mr. Madison advised that the HPC had approved a temporary tent at this location a year ago, but no other required permits (construction, fire, etc.) were ever obtained. Mr. Madison advised that the Commission denied this application without prejudice.

Chairman Aspras advised that the Historic Preservation Commission reviews for historic appropriateness; and the other approvals should not affect the decision. Mr. Madison advised that the Commission was not sure what the final product on this was going to be, and that was the reason for the denial. Mrs. Kelley stated that she does not see how this type of structure could fit historic guidelines at all. This is not in keeping with Historic guidelines.

Additional discussion among the Board members, Mr. Madison and Zoning Officer Duffield on the history of this business – what has been applied for and approved in the past and what is currently on premises.

Motion made by Mrs. Stech, second by Mrs. Kelley to deny, without prejudice, Historic Preservation Application 2024-01

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Council President Fitzpatrick: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Madison reviewed Historic Preservation Commission Application 2024-02, 102 West Ave. This application is for windows, siding and paint. The application was approved with changes to the windows: 1 over 1 windows on the first floor and 2 over 2 windows on the second floor.

Motion made by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Franchi to approve Historic Preservation Application 2024-02 with the changes noted.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Council President Fitzpatrick: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Chairman Aspras advised that the next agenda item is an application for bulk variances for Phyllis and Denese Kiser, 143 Woodland Avenue, Block 195, Lot 23.

Solicitor Clancy swore in Denese Kiser and Phyllis Kiser.

Chairman Aspras noted that there are 3 sheds (accessory structures) shown on the plan. Denese Kiser acknowledged there are presently 3 sheds on the property. Phyllis Kiser noted that they meet the impervious coverage limits. Chairman Aspras advised that only 2 sheds are permitted by Ordinance, and the additional shed requires a variance. Solicitor Clancy advised that while they are before the Board at this time, the Board can act to legitimize the additional shed by approving the required variance. Zoning Officer Duffield noted that Ordinance provides for a maximum of 2 sheds with a total square footage for all sheds (combined) of 750 square feet. Solicitor Clancy asked Ms. Kiser the total square footage of all the sheds – she advised 256 square feet. Solicitor Clancy advised the Board no variance is needed for the square footage – a variance would be required for the 1 additional accessory structure.

Phyllis Kiser described the addition – it will be a 4-season sunroom. Ms. Kiser described the dimensions of the property, which is an odd shape: 100' X 84' X 155' X 125'. Solicitor Clancy noted the application for the variance is a 20' setback when 30' is required, and asked if everything on the lot would be within that setback – Denese Kiser testified that is correct.

Discussion on the 1993 approvals. Solicitor Clancy asked what mechanicals would be installed in the addition – Ms. Kiser testified electric, heat and air conditioning. There will be no plumbing. Mr. Slenkamp inquired on lighting – Ms. Kiser testified no decision has been made on that yet. Mr. Ryder inquired on demolition work.

Solicitor Clancy swore in the contractor for Ms. Kiser – John J. Tustin. Mr. Tustin testified that the demo is to remove some paving. Mr. Tustin provided detail on dimensions, setbacks and improvements from the submitted plans. Mr. Tustin noted that the building coverage is 17.8 %, under the maximum of 20%. Mr. Tustin noted there is an existing fence on the property. Chairman Aspras opened the meeting to the public. There being no public comment, Chairman Aspras closed the public comment portion on this application.

Engineer/Planner Kernan advised he has reviewed the application and has no concerns. Mr. Tustin did note there will be one outside light mounted near the rear exit door which is required by code.

Solicitor Clancy reviewed the previously approved variances which should be refreshed – 33.6' in the front, 11.4' on the side and 20' in the rear. A fourth variance for the additional accessory structure is also being requested. Solicitor Clancy noted this will be a vote of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Motion made by Mr. Owen, second by Mrs. Stech to approved the requested variances.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Chairman Aspras noted the next agenda item is the memorialization of the approval resolution for Babatunde Odusami, 78 West Avenue. Solicitor Clancy recapped the conditions of approval detailed in the resolution.

Motion by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Romick to approve Resolution 2024-09, Resolution of the Borough of Pitman Combined Planning/Zoning Board of Adjustment of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Granting Bulk Variance Relief to Bancrest Realty Investment, LLC for 78 West Avenue, Block 188, Lot 3.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Chairman Aspras noted the next agenda item is the memorialization of the resolution on the Sony redevelopment area.

Mrs. Stech expressed her concern with certain wording in the resolution. Solicitor Clancy and Mr. Kernan advised that while they recognize Mrs. Stech's concern, this resolution is a recommendation to Borough Council, and nothing is final until the redevelopment plan process has been completed and approved by this Board and Borough Council.

Motion made by Mrs. Kelley, second by Mrs. Stech to approve Resolution 2024-10, Resolution of the Planning Session of 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**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Council President Fitzpatrick: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mrs. Kelley: **YES**

Mr. Ryder: **YES**

Mrs. Stech: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Chairman Aspras asked Mr. Kernan for an update on the Fazzio site. Mr. Kernan advised that he has begun his preliminary investigation. Fazzio hired a different attorney for this matter, and that has created a delay. Mr. Kernan has also asked the Borough for 5 years history on violations at the properties.

## **ZONING OFFICER REPORT**

Mr. Duffield stated that everyone should have a copy of his report. Mr. Duffield advised he would entertain any questions at this time, and he is available to Board members at any time in addition to the meeting.

Mr. Duffield updated the Board on his actions with regard to free standing board signs in the Borough. Last year, Mr. Owen suggested the use of these signs be reviewed, which Mr. Duffield did. Just this week, 5 of the "sandwich" type signs have appeared on Broadway. One of the signs is for a business that is located on Second Avenue. One of the regulations for these signs is that they touch the building of the business that is being advertised, which is not possible in this case. Mr. Duffield advised that if the

business community does not agree with enforcement of the sign regulation, the regulations are spelled out very clearly in the ordinance. Any business can submit an application for a sign and if compliant, a permit will be issued. Discussion on the sign size and other regulations.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Mr. Owen provided the Board members a sample of the EDC's latest project – a promotional envelope that will be handed out at events that protects credit cards and that also has a QR code on it that can be used to access a parking map of Pitman. The EDC is working on a new promotional video to highlight businesses other than those located on Broadway and will be working with the South Jersey Small Business Office of Rutgers to have another business seminar on growing businesses and starting a business in Pitman.

#### **SITE PLAN COMMITTEE**

Chairman Aspras noted that Mr. Fijalkowski is not in attendance. There are no pending site plan applications that the Chairman is aware of.

#### **SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Kelley advised there is no report.

#### **MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE**

Mr. Romick noted that the last re-examination of the Borough Master Plan was completed in 2017 and that was the culmination of a 3-year process. It appears that a re-examination report may be due.

Mr. Kernan advised that he should meet with the Master Plan Committee this Spring. A discussion item should be legislation that is about to become law that permanently abolishes the Council on Affordable Housing and establishes rules for Round 4.

Mr. Owen suggested that a member of the Master Plan Committee be included in the discussions on the Sony redevelopment plan.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

Mr. Slenkamp advised that the Environmental Commission is working on 3 things – Earth Day on April 20, a tree planting at Alcyon Park on April 27 and an increase social media presence for the Commission. The Commission is using a \$1,500.00 ANJEC grant for the tree planting event.

#### **COUNCIL REPORT**

Council President Fitzpatrick noted that the Board has already had a discussion on the Sony property. Mayor Razzo has been contacted by several parties interested in the Armory property. Discussions on the Borough 2024 budget will be held next month.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Aspras advised that there has been a meeting to discuss fees. Included in the discussion was charging Historic Preservation Commission fees for only businesses, not residential properties.

Mrs. Kelley advised that another consideration would be to pull the commercial district out of the Historic District so they come to Planning Board for approvals.

Additional discussion on possibilities for a special commercial district and researching how other municipalities with similar commercial/historical/residential districts handle zoning.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Stech motioned, second by Chairman Aspras to adjourn at 8:24 pm.

All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Abdill  
Recording Secretary