

**Borough of Ho-Ho-Kus
Bergen County, New Jersey
Planning Board Minutes
June 15, 2017
Combined Session**

Meeting Called to Order at 7:30PM by Chairman Hanlon

Open Public Meetings Statement: Read into the record by the Board Secretary.

Roll Call: Messrs. Berardo (absent), Pierson (absent), Reade, Newman (absent), Carrick, Policastro, Jones (absent), Councilman Rorty, Chairman Hanlon, Mayor Randall (absent)

Also in Attendance: Gary J. Cucchiara, Esq., Board Attorney; Ms. JoAnn Carroll, Board Secretary

Chairman Hanlon: stated the meeting this evening was a Combined Session for the month of June, 2017.

Oath of Office:

Mr. Cucchiara administered the Oath of Office to Member Policastro; unexpired term expiration 12/31/18.

Mr. Gavin McCloskey, Love Corn USA, Inc., 18 Sycamore Avenue, #2R, Block 1010, Lot 13: new business application

Marissa McCloskey: stated she was the co-owner of the business with her husband, Gavin McCloskey; Love Corn is a new snack brand that they launched in the UK and they are bringing it to the US this summer; it is a premium roasted seasoned corn snack; biggest customer at this time is a major airline; intention is to grow the business through retail in the US; they have 2 employees currently and could grow to 4; hours are 9AM-6PM Monday through Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday; strictly a management office; they have a warehouse in south Jersey; there will be no truck traffic for their Ho-Ho-Kus office; they do not grow their own corn.

Chairman Hanlon: stated authorization from the building owner was received with the application; instructed the applicant to make arrangements with the landlord to have their business name placed on the front of the building where there is a sign currently; a panel can be added with the name of the business; the applicant would not have to appear before the Board for this type of sign.

Motion to approve application: Councilman Rorty, Reade

Ayes: Reade, Carrick, Policastro, Councilman Rorty, Chairman Hanlon

Nays: None

Ms. Leah Van Blarcom, Van Blarcom Chiropractic and Wellness LLC, 500 Barnett Place, Block 1016, Lot 8: new business application

Ms. Leah Van Blarcom: stated she owns the chiropractic business which is currently located in Waldwick, NJ; she is also a certified animal chiropractor; looking to move to a smaller space; the new office in Ho-Ho-Kus would be for humans only, no animals; office hours would be Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9AM-6PM, but would be able to accommodate patients on Tuesdays and Thursdays in case of an emergency; there is plenty of parking available; the office staff would consist of herself and a receptionist; there is no specialized equipment; the one piece of equipment she does use is handheld.

Chairman Hanlon: stated the business name would be listed on the building; there would be no sign application associated with this business.

Motion to approve application: Councilman Rorty, Carrick

Ayes: Reade, Carrick, Policastro, Councilman Rorty, Chairman Hanlon

Nays: None

Conceptual Review:

Joseph & Carmela Alliota, 18 Sycamore Avenue, Block 1010, Lot 13: applicants seek to modify the existing building on the first floor.

Bruce Whitaker, Esq., applicant's attorney: stated he represents the applicant in connection with the conceptual review; under the MLUL, the Planning Board can hear conceptual reviews; non-binding review; done to get informal feedback and ideas before the client goes to the expense of a formal plan; thanked the Board for their time.

Chairman Hanlon: reiterated Mr. Whitaker's statement; the applicant is before the Board for a conceptual review only; no notice has been given; no specific details are discussed.

Mr. Whitaker: stated the Alliota's have owned the building for many years; the building is located in the downtown area of Ho-Ho-Kus; it is a well-designed building with a brick façade; the applicant has some tenant needs; discussions have been had regarding creating additional space; there is no expansion of the building proposed in regards to the footprint; over the years, the building owners have found the ingress and egress into the back parking lot is not

frequented; minor square footage could be added to create a better streetscape look to the building; no change to the front façade in regards to coming forward to the street; looking to take 2 portions of the building on the first floor and adding square footage to them; very modest ideas for additional offices; offices would be for administrative uses and other professionals; it does prompt some variance relief; the aisle width would be deficient and there would also be a small deficiency in parking; parking has not been a problem in the past; the street parking does help the downtown.

Mr. Gus Morpurgo, Morpurgo Architects: stated he has been a tenant at 18 Sycamore on the second floor for 27 years; the footprint of the building is not being expanded; the zoning envelope is unchanged; the proposal is essentially coming in under the sallyport on the south side and adding 820 sq. ft. and enclosing it and on the north 472 sq. ft.; proposing to come in in a combined egress and entry to the property; they are two office spaces with bathroom facilities and they are a very modest addition to the property; the existing building is currently 7,000 sq. ft.; the improved building coverage would be 8400 sq. ft.; the original plan that was approved had 20 parking spaces; the proposed plan has 21 parking spaces; plus one parking space would be picked up in the front; the parking space in the front is because of the addition of the office; the aesthetics of the building is quite consistent with what is currently there; improving the façade of the office space; the existing office space will have new signage and new windows; the new storefront will have a dark window treatment; darkish grey in character; three variances are being sought; the south portion of the parking is going to go right up to the property line which borders and existing parking lot; the north is also going to go to the property line which is the driveway; there is currently no buffer from the veterinarian's office; will be maintaining a 6 ft. strip in the back next to residential properties; another variance is for the actual parking calculation; the parking is currently at 21 spaces which is not based on the calculation of a 4 to 3 ratio which is required by the code; 8400 sq. ft. divided by 4 x 3 requires 6290 sq. ft. of parking which would require more parking than can be provided; are providing one additional parking space which was originally approved and one additional street parking space; the third variance is for a smaller space to get in and out of the back parking lot but 24 ft. would be maintained across the front; there is adequate means of ingress and egress for cars.

Mr. Whitaker: stated the final project is two-fold; upgrade of the entire façade; the drive thru areas will be filled in and they will not look like they were ever drive-thrus; it will blend in; will not look like an addition or something new; (a before and after photograph was distributed to the Board); there are many tenants that have been at this site for many years; the traffic flow is very minimal and it has worked for many years; (depiction of what the final product would look like distributed to the Board).

Mr. Cucchiara: asked how many spaces were required per the code.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated 40 parking spaces would be required.

Mr. Whitaker: stated he reviewed Mr. Donovan's resolution from 1988; he doesn't reference parking; even at that time the parking would have been deficient; there is always a recognition of downtown parking on the street; submitted an OPRA for the 1988 application which consisted of two hearings.

Mr. Cucchiara: asked for the parking aisle width that is provided and what is required.

Mr. Whitaker: stated it will be 24 ft. on the street; coming through the building the width will be 21 ft.; back area will be at 16.6 ft. in the one aisle and the other aisle coming back out will be 24 ft.

Mr. Carrick: asked for confirmation that one parking space was being picked up on the street because the driveway would be closed off.

Mr. Whitaker: stated that was correct; basically a 9-5 building; parking has never been an issue.

Mr. Carrick: asked how many tenants were currently in the building.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated four; the parking lot is hardly ever full; it is sometimes used as an overflow for local restaurants.

Mr. Policastro: asked if the tenants could remain during construction.

Mr. Whitaker: stated yes.

Mr. Policastro: asked if the upstairs would be affected.

Mr. Whitaker: stated no; the owners are looking at a substantial expense to upgrade the building which would upgrade the downtown area.

Councilman Rorty: asked if it was ever considered taking the wall that is going to be in the middle of the parking area, ingress/egress, put the occupancy instead of against the end wall up against the interior wall.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated there is a requirement in the code that there has to be 10 ft. between egress and ingress so you cannot have the veterinarian exit with the exit for 18 Sycamore; it would also affect two parking spaces in the rear as well.

Mr. Policastro: asked if the domestic sprinkler head that is underneath the pass through would remain.

Mr. Whitaker: stated yes.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated the building owner is actually considering taking the office space; he is a one person occupant.

Mr. Reade: asked if the brick work would stay as it is now on the front façade.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated yes it will be matched.

Mr. Reade: asked about the peak area.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated it is being considered; would like to do it; doesn't like the stucco but it depends on the cost.

Mr. Reade: confirmed the only brick addition would be on the top portion.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated yes.

Mr. Whitaker: stated along with the new window treatment.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated his preference would be to see the whole façade in brick.

Mr. Policastro: asked if there were tenants in the attic.

Mr. Whitaker: stated no, it is dead space.

Chairman Hanlon: stated he was one of the two people who voted against this application when it was first before the Board; the reasoning was how the application was laid out and the complaints people had about the two big tunnels; it looks good the way it is laid out in the drawing; will make it more acceptable looking; one concern is that the building is located in a flood zone; the new office on the ingress side doesn't look like it is above the elevation; those requirements will have to be met.

Mr. Whitaker: stated Mr. Schwanewede and Mr. Raimondi had as one of the conditions was getting approval because of the flood hazard area that was there.

Chairman Hanlon: stated on the new ingress/egress segment, the natural gas is on that one wall and that will be an expensive project to move.

Mr. Morpurgo: stated it has been acknowledged and taken into account.

Discussion:

Burgis Associates, LLC proposal to prepare a basic Re-examination report of the Master Plan

Approval of Minutes:

April 13, 2017: Policastro, Councilman Rorty

Ayes: Reade, Carrick, Policastro, Councilman Rorty, Chairman Hanlon

Nays: None

May 11, 2017: Carrick, Reade

Ayes: Reade, Carrick, Policastro, Chairman Hanlon

Nays: None

Motion to adjourn: Carrick, Councilman Rorty

All in Favor

Meeting adjourned at 8:20PM

Respectfully submitted by:

JoAnn Carroll

Planning Board Secretary