

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES
VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
June 17, 2021**

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Goodwin at 7:30 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

CHAIR GOODWIN ANNOUNCED THAT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE EXECUTIVE ORDERS SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR AND IN AN EFFORT TO FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES RECOMMENDED BY THE CDC, THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY FOR ALL BOARD MEMBERS, BOARD PROFESSIONALS, APPLICANT AND APPLICANT'S TEAM, ANY INTERESTED PARTIES AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO VIEW MEETINGS LIVE USING WEBEX WHICH ALLOWS THEM TO "RAISE A HAND" AND CONTRIBUTE WITH VOICE AND VIDEO DURING THE PUBLIC PORTIONS OF THE MEETING. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO ARE CALLING IN BY PHONE WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE WHEN CALLED UPON TO SPEAK.

ROLL CALL

Albrecht, C.
Bola, E.
Goodwin, M.
Hendry, D.
Kirk, T.
Mittleman, K.
Maurer, C.
Nees, S.
Tropello, S.

Others Present:

Board Attorney, Steven Warner, Esq., Board Planner, Emily Goldman, Board Engineer, Rob O'Brien, and Board Secretary, Ann Marie Lehberger.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Mittleman moved, and Mr. Tropello seconded, a motion to approve the May 20, 2021, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

Whitehouse Auto

Appl# ZB20-003 -Block 18 Lot 12 – 378 Route 22 West
Preliminary & Final Site Plan with "D" Variance - Canopy & Sign

Ms. Mittleman moved, and Mr. Tropello seconded, a motion to approve the resolution for Whitehouse Auto. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albrecht			X					
Hendry			X					
Kirk			X					
Mittleman	X		X					
Nees			X					
Tropello		X	X					
Goodwin			X					
Maurer (Alt #1)							X	
Bola (Alt #2)							X	

PUBLIC HEARING

LabCorp (Walgreens)

Block 8 Lot 13 – 420 Route 22

Appl# ZB21-004

Attorney Dean Donatelli was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Donatelli provided an overview of the property and explained that the proposal is to locate a LabCorp patient service center within the existing Walgreens. Mr. Donatelli stated that the applicant was seeking amended site plan approval with D (1) use variance relief for the patient services center use and also to allow for two principal uses on one lot.

The following were present and sworn in for the applicant:

David Shropshire, applicant’s engineer, and planner

Thomas Kennedy, representative of LabCorp

Tiffany Smith, representative of Walgreens

Board Planner, Emily Goldman, and Board Engineer, Rob O’Brien, were also sworn.

David Shropshire, the applicant’s engineer, and planner was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Shropshire described the existing conditions on the site and provided testimony as follows: The current Walgreens on the property is 12,300 square feet and has an attached drive through for the pharmacy. There are 47 parking spaces on the site. The Walgreens store hours are daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. with reduced hours for the pharmacy. Mr. Shropshire explained that based on his observation of the site during the mid-morning hours there was not a need for more than 21 parking spaces. The Walgreens typically has two employees in the morning, and five to seven employees during the evening peak hours of business. The busiest times are between 7 and 9 a.m. and 5 and 7 p.m. The proposal is to convert a small portion, approximately 396 square feet, into a specimen collection facility which will operate from Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and closed on Sunday. The Walgreens will be opening one-hour early to accommodate the proposed LabCorp use. The LabCorp is proposing to add approximately two employees for the facility, with an anticipated maximum of 50 customers per day.

The Board asked for clarification on the hours that LabCorp would be operating.

The Board questioned what the required number of parking spaces was. Mr. Shropshire stated that 62 parking spaces were required noting that they were previously granted a variance to allow a reduction to 47 spaces.

Mr. Shropshire explained that the peak activity for the LabCorp would be between 8 and 10 a.m. He stated that there are currently 263 Walgreens stores throughout the country that have LabCorp specimen collection centers similar to the proposed facility, 14 of which are located in New Jersey with several more proposed by the end of the year.

Mr. Shropshire provided planning testimony noting that two variances are required, 1 for multiple retail uses and the second for the medical service use which is not permitted in the zone. He explained that the peak trip generation times for the two principal uses complement each other and provide a synergy in that each principal use will have peak trip generation hours at different times during the day. He stated that there will be little interaction between the two uses and virtually no impact on parking. Mr. Shropshire stated that based on the data from ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) he is confident that the 47 spaces will be more than sufficient to accommodate the additional parking that will be needed for the LabCorp in the morning hours. He explained that the proposal will provide a needed service to the public, a more efficient use of the land, nominal additional traffic during the peak and no changes to the exterior except for minor sign plate changes. He further explained that the proposal meets MLUL (Municipal Land Use Law) standards and will create no substantial detriment to the public.

The Board noted that there were 5 employee designated parking spaces in the rear of the building that were a condition of the prior approval that must be used to ensure that there is adequate parking for customers. It was also noted that there should be signage indicating that these spots are for employees.

Tiffany Smith, representative of Walgreens stated that the employees had not been using the designated spaces due to safety concerns. She confirmed that she will reach out to the management on site to ensure that employees park in those designated spots.

Board Planner Emily Goldman questioned if the LabCorp was by appointment only or if walk-ins will be accommodated. Mr. Shropshire stated it would be both.

The Board expressed concern about people waiting in their cars.

The Board questioned if this model is unique to LabCorp and Walgreens. Mr. Donatelli stated that CVS and Target have a similar relationship.

Tom Kennedy, representative from LabCorp stated that this is a new trend that is much more convenient for patients.

The Board questioned how the specimens are processed. Mr. Shropshire stated that they are picked up once per day via a small van.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Shropshire confirmed that the LabCorp would not utilize the existing drive-through.

The Board questioned how they determined that they could accommodate 8 patients per hour. Mr. Shropshire stated that there are two employees, and they estimate 15 minutes per patient.

The Board expressed concern about people waiting around in the store and in their cars for their turn to have their blood drawn.

Mr. Kennedy stated that in his experience with the other locations there have not been any issues or complaints.

The Board questioned if LabCorp provides any other services. Mr. Kennedy stated that it is specimen collection only and no testing or vaccinations are done.

The Board questioned where the closest LabCorp is to this location. Mr. Kennedy stated that the closest LabCorp within a Walgreens is in East Brunswick and the closest standalone is in Bridgewater.

Board Planner Emily Goldman questioned if the loading area on site would be used for specimen pickups. Mr. Kennedy stated that since the specimens would be kept inside, the loading area would not likely be used for pickup.

Board Planner Emily Goldman questioned if there would be any change in the sewer capacity used. Mr. Kennedy stated that there will be a single restroom dedicated for LabCorp specimen use only and a small sink in the processing area.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien stated that since there is no increase to the building footprint, there would not be a need to increase the sewer capacity.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien questioned if there would be any hazardous waste. Mr. Kennedy stated that the only item would be sharps that would be stored on site and picked up weekly.

The Board questioned what space inside the Walgreens would be used for the LabCorp. Ms. Smith stated that they utilize existing stockroom space and noted that nothing on the sales floor would change.

The Board questioned how long construction would take. Ms. Smith stated that it would take between 3 and 4 weeks.

The Board asked for clarification on the square footage of the LabCorp space. Mr. Shropshire stated that it was 396 square feet.

Chair Goodwin opened the public portion of the meeting for questions. There were no questions.

Chair Goodwin opened the public portion of the meeting for comments. There were no comments.

Mr. Donatelli provided closing comments. The Board deliberated.

Ms. Hendry moved, and Mr. Tropello seconded, a motion to approve the application for LabCorp with the conditions discussed. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albrecht			X					
Hendry	X		X					
Kirk			X					
Mittleman			X					
Nees			X					
Tropello		X	X					
Goodwin			X					
Maurer (Alt #1)								
Bola (Alt #2)								

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Litigation James W. Hutton & Barbara J. Hutton v. Hunterdon County Construction Board of Appeals; Township of Readington; Bureau of Fire Prevention of the Township of Readington; Board of Adjustment of the Township of Readington
 Docket# HNT-L-000132-21

**ZONING BOARD
 TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON**

RESOLUTION

Open Public Meetings Act – Executive Session

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, the Open Public Meetings Act, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Zoning Board of the Township of Readington County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from the discussion of the hereinafter specified subject matters.
2. The general nature of the subject matters to be discussed is as follows:
 Litigation/Attorney-Client
3. It is anticipated that the above-stated subject matters discussed in closed session may be disclosed to the public upon determination of the Board that the public interest will no longer be served by such confidentiality.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Ms. Hendry moved, and Ms. Mittleman seconded, to adopt this resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Mittleman moved, and Mr. Tropello seconded, a motion to come out of closed session. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Albrecht moved, and Ms. Mittleman seconded, a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Lehberger
Zoning Board Secretary