

READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
July 26, 2021

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Monaco at 7:00 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

CHAIR MONACO 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

Board Members in Attendance:

Albanese, J.
Allen, J.
Cook, J.
Monaco, R.
Mueller, A.
Hindle, J.

Board Members Absent

Filler, C.
Fort, B.
John, C.
Rohrbach, T.

Others Present:

Attorney Kathryn Razin for Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Esq., Board Planner Emily Goldman, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger.

MINUTES

Mr. Albanese abstained. Mr. Mueller moved, and Mr. Cook seconded, a motion to approve the June 28, 2021, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented for Board consideration

OTHER BUSINESS

Ordinance Referral

Ordinance#23-2021

An Ordinance Amending and Supplementing the “District Regulations” contained in Article IV of Chapter 148 “Land Development” with Respect to the ROM-2 Research Office and Manufacturing Park Zone.

Chair Monaco noted that he received a comment from Board Member Rohrbach who recommended that in Section 1, #2 the definition name be changed to “Warehousing” instead of “Warehouse” to be consistent with the body of the Ordinance.

Ms. Hindle noted some recommended formatting changes.

Ms. Allen moved, and Mr. Cook seconded, a motion to advise the Township Committee that the Board finds Ordinance #23-2021 to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan with the recommendations as noted. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese			X					
Allen	X		X					
Cook		X	X					
Filler						X		
Fort						X		
John						X		
Mueller			X					
Monaco			X					
Rohrbach Alternate #1						X		
Hindle Alternate #2			X					

Ordinance#26-2021

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 148 of the Land Use Ordinance of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey pertaining to Fire Protection Systems for Residential Development.

Mr. Mueller questioned the distances that were used. Mr. Albanese stated that these were recommended by the Fire Official.

Ms. Hindle noted some recommended formatting changes.

Mr. Cook moved, and Mr. Albanese seconded, a motion to advise the Township Committee that the Board finds Ordinance #26-2021 to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan with the recommendations as noted. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese		X	X					
Allen			X					
Cook	X		X					
Filler						X		
Fort						X		
John						X		
Mueller			X					
Monaco			X					
Rohrbach Alternate #1						X		
Hindle Alternate #2			X					

Mr. Cook recused himself and left the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

Whitehouse Veterinary Hospital

Appl# PB21-005 – Block 29 Lot 10-274 Main Street
 Preliminary & Final Site Plan with Variances – Addition

Attorney Christopher Erd was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Erd described the property and provided an overview of the application for preliminary & final major site plan with variances for a small addition on the existing building. He described the variances required as follows:

- Minimum Front Yard Setback- 15 feet is required, 5.14 feet exists, and 4.5 feet is proposed on the front yard that faces Kline Boulevard
- Maximum Impervious Coverage-50% is permitted, 74.13% exists and 74.83% is proposed
- Minimum Off-Street Parking-16 parking spaces are required and 8 parking spaces are proposed

Mr. Erd also stated that there are also several nonconforming conditions that exist relative to the property which are not changing as a result of the application as follows:

- Minimum Rear Yard Buffer-25 feet is required, no buffer exists or is proposed
- Minimum Side Yard Buffer-25 feet is required, no buffer exists or is proposed
- Minimum Lot Size-20,000 square feet is required; 12,998.02 square feet exists and is proposed

The following were present and sworn in for the applicant:

Dr. Karan Oberhansley-Newton, applicant
 Edward O'Brien, applicant's architect
 Ashley Vida, applicant's land surveyor

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

Dr. Karan Oberhansley-Newton stated that she has been a veterinarian on Main Street in Whitehouse Station for 36 years and a resident of the community for over 32 years. She hopes that her son will carry on the practice for another 30 years. She provided testimony as follows: The purpose of the proposed addition is to provide a more comfortable and safe working space for clients and staff. Currently the entrance is on Main Street with stairs that make it difficult to access for some clients. A new entrance is proposed at the back of the building with a handicap accessible ramp. A new waiting room and one additional exam room will be added to the first floor. A staff area and doctor's office will be added to the second floor. There will not be an expansion of services offered or any additional staff needed. The color of the house will be updated to white with black shutters and black roof with solar panels. The existing wood fence along Kline Blvd. will be replaced with a newer white vinyl fence and additional plantings will be added. Dr. Oberhansley stated that there has never been an issue with parking on site and confirmed that there will be no change in the number of parking spaces. She also stated that there is no change in sewer capacity needed because they are just updating an existing bathroom to make it ADA accessible.

In response to a question from the Board, Dr. Oberhansley explained that business hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Board questioned if the applicant considered installing a fence also in the rear of the property. Dr. Oberhansley stated that there are no plans to build a fence there noting that there is already a row of trees existing there.

Board Planner Emily Goldman requested that the plans be updated to include the details and location of the proposed new fence. The Board agreed to grant a variance if needed for the fence to allow the applicant to replace it with the same height as currently exists. The applicant also agreed to work with the Board Planner regarding the type of plantings used.

The Board noted that any trees planted should not interfere with the existing power lines.

The Board asked if any new lighting was proposed. Dr. Oberhansley stated that they will just be replacing what is existing.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for questions.

George Liothake, Main Street stated that he was in support of the application.

Daniel Romeo questioned if any of the Board members had an issue with ADA requirements being put in place.

Arlene Naya, Kline Blvd. asked if additional parking was going to be added. Dr. Oberhansley confirmed that they were not adding any additional parking spaces.

Edward O'Brien, the applicant's architect was accepted by the Board as an expert witness.

Mr. O'Brien explained that since the clients park in the rear that it made sense to add the new ADA entrance there. He further explained that the intent is to provide a better experience for clients and update the facility to current veterinary standards. He noted that the existing facility would remain open and functioning during construction.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. O'Brien confirmed that the details of the ramp will match the existing building and it will fully comply with all ADA requirements.

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

Ashley Vida, the applicant's surveyor confirmed that the plans could be updated to show the minimum lot circle as requested by the Board Planner.

Chair Monaco opened the public portion of the meeting for comments.

Lindsay Salaj, Kline Blvd. was sworn and stated that she lives directly behind the Veterinary Hospital and is in favor of the application. She also stated that a fence in the back is not necessary.

Mr. Erd provided closing comments. Board Attorney Razin reviewed that relief requested and the conditions of approval.

Mr. Mueller moved, and Ms. Hindle seconded, a motion to approve the application for Whitehouse Veterinary Hospital with the conditions as discussed. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese			X					
Allen			X					
Cook								X
Filler								X
Fort								X
John								X
Mueller	X		X					
Monaco			X					
Rohrbach Alternate #1								X
Hindle Alternate #2		X	X					

Chair Monaco announced that the next meeting will be in person.

Mr. Mueller explained that there are new regulations regarding EV charging stations and suggested that the Board consider putting an Ordinance in place regarding this. Chair Monaco requested the Board Planner investigate further and provide a draft for the Board to review.

Mr. Mueller moved, and Ms. Allen seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Lehberger
Planning Board Secretary