

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
September 13, 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.

ROLL CALL

Board Members in Attendance:

Albanese J.
Allen, J.
Cook, J.
Fort, B.
Filler, C.
John, C.
Monaco, R.
Mueller, A.
Hindle, J.
Rohrbach, T.

Others Present:

Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Esq., Board Planner James Clavelli, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger.

MINUTES

Mr. Albanese and Ms. Fort abstained. Mr. Cook moved, and Ms. Allen seconded, a motion to approve the August 9, 2021, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

Ryland Developers LLC- Resolution#2021-03
Appl# PB20-001- Block 14 Lots 29.02 & 29.03, Old Route 28
Final Major Subdivision

Ms. Allen moved, and Mr. Albanese seconded, a motion to adopt Resolution#2021-03 for Ryland Developers LLC. The roll call vote follows:

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

Whitehouse Veterinary Hospital-Resolution#2021-04
 Appl# PB21-005 – Block 29 Lot 10-274 Main Street
 Preliminary& Final Site Plan with Variances – Addition

Mr. Albanese moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded, a motion to adopt Resolution#26-2021 for Whitehouse Veterinary Hospital. The roll call vote follows:

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

PUBLIC HEARING

CF Warehouse LLC

Block 17 Lot 8- 388 Route 22 Appl# PB21-001-Preliminary Major Site Plan-Retail Furniture Showroom and Warehouse with Offices

Attorney Guliet Hirsch was present on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Hirsch provided some history of the site and reviewed the prior approvals on the property. Mr. Hirsch explained that the use proposed by the applicant is a retail furniture use with a storage area that will support this location only.

The following were present and sworn in for the applicant:

- Leon Kitovsky, applicant
- John Hansen, applicant’s engineer
- Po Wu, applicant’s architect

Board Planner, James Clavelli, and Board Engineer, Rob O’Brien, were also sworn.

Exhibits presented:

- A-1 Colorized version of site plan overlaid on an aerial photograph
- A-2 Colored marked sheet 19 of site plan showing the area with over 2 feet change in elevation proposed
- A-3 Colored sign exhibit
- A-4 Architectural plans sheet A-1 dated 1/21/21
- A-5 Architectural plans sheet A-2 last revised 8/25/21
- A-6 Architectural plans sheet A-3 dated 1/21/21
- A-7 Architectural rendering of showroom area and building

A-8 Sample of proposed awning material and color

A-9 Proposed building color sample

Leon Kitovsky, president and owner of CF Warehouse LLC provided some history on the company stating that all their manufacturing is done in Italy and Germany because of the high quality and standards they provide. Mr. Kitovsky stated that the proposal is for a high-end boutique retail furniture showroom with a storage area and small office space. He explained that their first boutique retail store opened in 2008 and they currently have five retail locations with plans to open two more locations in New Jersey. He noted that it is not a typical furniture store but rather a high-end operation offering furniture and other items such as bathrooms and kitchens serving predominantly designers, architects and wealthy clientele.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Kitovsky stated that the hours of operation for the showroom would be 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the storage area. He stated that they would be closed on Sunday.

The Board questioned if more than one customer could be in the showroom at the same time. Mr. Kitovsky explained that there would likely not be more than three customers at the same time.

The Board questioned where the furniture gets delivered before going to the customer's home. Mr. Kitovsky explained that is sent to one of their warehouses and then shipped directly to the customer.

The Board questioned which showroom locations have warehouses. Mr. Kitovsky stated that there are three retail locations that also have a warehouse.

The Board questioned how many people work in the warehouse daily. Mr. Kitovsky stated that it was usually one person unless a big delivery was expected. He explained that there would be no more than fifteen employees total on site daily between the office, storage area, and showroom.

The Board questioned how the furniture is delivered. Mr. Kitovsky explained that they have two box trucks on site that deliver the furniture noting that large trailers are only used when sea containers are delivered to the site.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Kitovsky explained that the location in North Plainfield is only a showroom, and they use a warehouse that is located in Edison. He further explained that they move the furniture as little as possible to avoid damage.

The Board questioned where the products sold online are shipped from. Mr. Kitovsky stated that they do sell products on sites such as Amazon and Wayfair and all these products are shipped from the warehouse located in Edison.

The Board asked for further clarification on the term "distributor".

The Board questioned if the showroom was open to the public. Mr. Kitovsky stated that it is open but noted that due to the high prices they do not get many people just walking in.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Kitovsky stated that trucks are scheduled for delivery by appointment during regular business hours. He confirmed that there are no nighttime deliveries. He explained that there are approximately 2-3 deliveries per day via box trucks and approximately 1 delivery a week via tractor trailer.

The Board expressed concern about noise from trucks backing up on the site. Mr. Kitovsky noted that they are also looking into electric vehicles.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien questioned how electric trucks would be charged.

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

Lorraine Woolever, 19 Old Highway 28 questioned the location of the loading docks. Chair Monaco explained that the applicant's engineer would cover that in his testimony.

John Hansen, PE, the applicants engineer was accepted by the Board as expert witness. Mr. Hansen described the existing conditions at the property. He described the applicant's proposal as follows: The building footprint is staying the same. The goal is to clean up the site and bring it back to usability. The plan proposes an expansion of the loading area by adding two additional loading docks and overhead doors to the two existing docks and loading doors. It also includes driveway access modifications to accommodate truck movements, site and wall mounted lighting, masonry trash enclosure, plantings, and stormwater management facilities. The site will be repaved and restriped to bring it up to ADA requirements. Mr. Hansen explained that the proposed loading area expansion will result in an increase in impervious coverage. He also noted that the applicant plans to disconnect the well and connect to New Jersey American Water.

The Board questioned if there would be a hot box required by New Jersey American Water. Mr. Hansen confirmed that there would be and described the proposed location. In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Hansen stated that he did not inquire about locating the equipment inside.

The Board questioned where customers would park. Mr. Hansen explained that there are eight parking spaces in the southwest corner of the property with a direct walkway to the showroom entrance.

In response to question from the Board, Mr. Hansen explained how water will flow on the property.

The Board questioned if there would be a retaining wall. Mr. Hansen confirmed there would be a small retaining wall near the south edge of the loading dock.

Mr. Hansen also explained that the entire vegetative area between the building and the residential properties will not be disturbed. He confirmed that the applicant will work with the planner regarding the landscape plan and to enhance the buffer.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Hansen confirmed that additional plantings can be added in the existing lawn area.

The Board questioned where employees would park. Mr. Hansen stated that they would park the spots on the west side of the property.

Mr. Hansen described the lighting plan. He stated that the lighting will be brought into compliance, and they will work with Board's professionals to ensure no light spillage onto the neighboring properties.

The applicant agreed to make the two overhead doors on the west side of the property closer to the residents inoperable since there are no plans to use them.

The applicant also agreed to make the truck delivery log accessible to the Township Zoning Official if needed.

Board Planner James Clavelli questioned if the gravel was included in the impervious coverage calculations. Mr. Hansen stated that it was not included but confirmed that it can be removed.

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

Lorraine Woolever, 19 Old Highway 28 questioned the lighting that would be on the rear of the building. Mr. Hansen explained that the lighting will be directed downward to avoid spillage onto the residential properties.

Andrew Marinelli, 32 Old Highway 28 expressed concern about the existing lighting on the rear of the building noting that it shines into his home in the evening and requested that it be turned off.

The Board questioned if there would be security cameras. Mr. Hansen confirmed that there would be.

Mr. Hansen stated that they would provide the Board with a security lighting plan.

Mr. Hansen described the location and colors of the freestanding sign and building signage proposed. He confirmed that the letters would be backlit and would not be on during off hours.

Po Wu, the applicant's architect was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Wu stated that the total building is approximately 62,000 square feet, 6,000 of which will be used for the showroom. Mr. Wu explained that the architectural plans were revised as a result of their meetings with the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Wu noted that the rear of the building will be brick as it currently exists, and the remainder of the building will be stucco.

The Board asked for clarification as to the number of overhead doors. Mr. Wu explained that there will be four overhead doors in the loading dock area.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Wu confirmed that the proposed awning would be made of a stretchy fabric material and would not be retractable.

The Board questioned how many feet the awning would extend from the building. Mr. Wu stated that it would be eight feet high and extend four feet out.

The Board requested the applicant confirm if the showroom and storage area would need to be sprinklered.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien questioned if there would be air conditioning units on the roof of the building. Mr. Wu confirmed that there would be. The Board noted that they would need to be screened.

The Board requested some additional information and detail be added to the plans when they are revised.

Ms. Hirsch stated that they would like to meet with the Board's professionals prior to the next hearing to discuss the review letters provided.

Board Attorney Drill announced that the application will be carried to the meeting on Monday, November 22nd at 7:00 p.m. with no further notice. The applicant granted an extension of time for the Board to act through December 31, 2021.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Fort moved, and Mr. Cook seconded, a motion to appoint Cheryl Filler as Vice-Chair to replace Liz Duffy who resigned from the Board. The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance Referral Ordinance#31-2021 An Ordinance Amending and Supplementing the District Regulations contained in Article IV of Chapter 148 entitled "Land Development" of the Code of the Township of Readington Land Use Volume to create a zone also known as the Village Residential-1 Zone (VR-1)

Ms. Fort moved, and Ms. Filler seconded, a motion to advise the Township Committee that the Board finds Ordinance #31-2021 to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan. The roll call vote follows:

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

Discussion- Accessory Structures

The Board discussed the size of accessory structures that are currently permitted by Ordinance to determine what revisions are necessary. The planners will look into further and provide information back to the Board for further discussion.

Ms. Filler moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Ann Marie Lehberger
 Planning Board Secretary