

**BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS**  
Planning Board Regular Meeting  
**MINUTES**  
April 5, 2021  
VIA REMOTE MEETING ACCESS ONLY

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Rochat called the virtual meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and read the Open Public Meetings statement in accordance with the law.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Chairman Tom Rochat, Vice Chairman Richard Rinzler, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Robert Lewis, Marilyn Layton, John Lawlor, Jack Koury, Alt. #1 and Suzanne Humbert, Alt. #2

Also Present: Peter Henry, Board Attorney, David Banisch, Planner, Steve Bolio, Engineer and Shana L. Goodchild, Secretary

Absent: Mayor Paul Vallone

There were approximately three (3) audience members present.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

Mr. Henry administered the Oath of Office for newly appointed Board member Jack Koury, Alternate #1.

It was also noted on the record by Mr. Henry that John Lawlor took and subscribed his Oath of Office by the Borough Clerk first as Alternate #1 member and subsequently as a Class 4 member.

The Board welcomed Mr. Koury as a new member.

**BILL LIST**

- April 5, 2021

Vice Chairman Rinzler made a motion to approve the Bill List. Councilwoman Tweedie seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

**Roll Call Vote**

Those in Favor: Vice Chairman Richard Rinzler, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Robert Lewis, Marilyn Layton, John Lawlor, Jack Koury, Alt. #1, Suzanne Humbert, Alt. #2 and Chairman Tom Rochat

Those Opposed: None

## MINUTES

- February 20, 2021 Special Meeting – Site Walk (tabled from March 1, 2021)

Ms. Goodchild confirmed that she listened to the recording of the meeting and the minutes reflect what was stated by the applicant both related to the structures served and the kW of the system. With that clarification, Ms. Layton made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2021 Special Meeting for content and release. Councilwoman Tweedie seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- March 1, 2021 Regular Meeting

With a minor edit noted by Mr. Henry to change "closed the public meeting" to "closed the public comment", Councilwoman Tweedie made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2021 Regular Meeting for content and release. Vice Chairman Rinzler seconded the motion. All were in favor.

## RESOLUTION

- **Resolution No. 2021-14** – Appl. No. PB2021-02, Block 14, Lot 2 – Branch Home, LLC  
*Those eligible: Mayor Vallone, Councilwoman Tweedie, Vice Chairman Rinzler, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Layton, Mr. Lawlor, Ms. Humbert and Chairman Rochat*

Mr. Banisch noted that the resolution represented the approval and conditions discussed. He reminded the Board that there was a condition related to the re-striping of the parking lot to bring the property back into conformance with the original approved site plan. When asked by Mr. Lewis if Mr. Bolio had reviewed and approved the plan, Ms. Goodchild was able to confirm that Mr. Bolio approved the re-striping plan.

Councilwoman Tweedie made a motion to approve the resolution as written. Ms. Layton seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

### Roll Call Vote:

Those in Favor: Councilwoman Tweedie, Vice Chairman Rinzler, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Layton, Mr. Lawlor, Ms. Humbert and Chairman Rochat

Those Opposed: None

- **Resolution No. 2021-15** – Finding proposed ordinance No. 2021-07 not inconsistent with the Master Plan and should be adopted by the Borough Council

Mr. Henry noted that the Borough had adopted an ordinance that prohibited any variation of growing, wholesaling or warehousing cannabis materials. Subsequently the State law went into effect which provided a 180-day period during which municipalities must take action. Ordinance No. 2021-07 essentially replaces the Borough's previous ordinance and satisfies the State law by taking action within the 180-day period. Vice Chairman Rinzler and Mr. Henry noted a few grammatical and spelling corrections to be forwarded to the Borough Clerk.

There being no additional comments, Vice Chairman Rinzler made motion to approve the resolution as written. Ms. Layton seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Those in Favor: Vice Chairman Rinzler, Councilwoman Tweedie, Mr. Lawlor, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Layton, Ms. Humbert and Chairman Rochat

Those Opposed: None

Abstained: Mr. Koury

**APPLICATIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- Appl. No. PB2020-04 – ADJOURNMENT TO MAY 3, 2021  
Lakehaus, LLC  
Block 4, Lot 5  
100 Lake Road  
Use and Bulk Variances for Ground Mounted Solar

Chairman Rochat announced that the attorney for the applicant requested an adjournment of the public hearing to May 3, 2021 with new notice to be provided.

- Appl. No. PB2021-03  
Back 2 Basics Ministries  
Block 15, Lot 1.01  
49 Route 202, Suite #14  
Change of Use/Occupancy/Site Plan Waiver
- Appl. No. PB2021-05  
Back 2 Basics Ministries  
Block 15, Lot 1.01  
49 Route 202, Suite #13A (Office #10)  
Change of Use/Occupancy/Site Plan Waiver – Subscription Application

Anthony Melillo, was present on behalf of both Back 2 Basics Ministries applications and sworn in by Mr. Henry. Mr. Melillo noted that the tenant, Dian Price, was interested in occupying the Suite 14space for leadership training for both one on one and small group segments with a maximum of three (3) people; the bible is intertwined into her leadership thesis. To provide some occupancy history, Mr. Melillo noted that the previous occupant of the space was a gym use. He noted that Appl. No. PB2021-05, Suite 13A, Office 10 is for the same occupant to conduct her administrative use. The hours of operation for Suite 13A would operate 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday and the training in Suite 14 would operate Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. No signage or site modifications are proposed for Suite 13A and the

existing signs for Suite 14 would be re-messaged. The number of visitors for Suite 14 would be 2 to 3 people along with the owner therefore a maximum of four (4) cars are expected. The number of parking spaces required for the other uses on site total 89 with 90 existing. Eleven parking spaces were allocated to Suite 13A, Office 10, one (1) for each office and the occupant would use one (1) parking space.

When asked by Mr. Banisch if the applicant would agree to the series of conditions that the Board attached to the approval for Suite 13A, Mr. Melillo responded in the positive. For the benefit of the new members, Chairman Rochat explained that Suite 13A was approved to have 11 individual offices for lease.

When asked by Mr. Lewis about the clientele for the business, Mr. Melillo opined that it would be attractive to individuals with entrepreneurial spirit wanting leadership training and is tailored towards Christian leaders; it is not a church service or house of worship but a spin on leadership principals. When asked if it is a not for profit, Mr. Melillo responded in the positive. Vice Chairman Rinzier questioned the 6 a.m. opening hours but also asked if there would be any religious services conducted. Mr. Melillo confirmed that the use is training and no religious services would be provided. As for the hours of operation, Mr. Melillo noted that he encourages tenants to broaden the hours of operation so as not to get caught up in discrepancies with the approval. When asked by Mr. Lewis if people pay to participate in the training, Mr. Melillo responded in the positive. Mr. Banisch opined that it is a safe interpretation of the use approved by the Board to occupy the space and noted that the tenant falls within the hours of operation approved by the Board. When asked by Ms. Humbert if the clients are children or adults, Mr. Melillo responded adults.

There being no additional questions by the Board, Chairman Rochat opened the meeting up to the public for questions.

Skip Schwester, 410 Lake Road had no objection to the proposed tenant but noted that he would like to see Mr. Melillo design the Pulte Homes project with the same quality as his recent project in Far Hills.

There being no additional questions or comments, Chairman Rochat closed the public comment.

Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve Appl. No. PB2021-03 and Application No. PB2021-05 for the Change of Use/Occupancy and Site Plan Waiver and re-messaging of the signage for Suite 14 with the following conditions: 1) payment of all taxes and fees, 2) all other permits and approvals being obtained and 3) consistency with the general conditions that were imposed on the original site plan approval. Councilwoman Tweedie seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Those in Favor: Councilwoman Tweedie, Mr. Lawlor, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Layton and Chairman Rochat

Those Opposed: None

Abstained: Vice Chairman Rinzler, Mr. Koury and Ms. Humbert

Ms. Humbert abstained from voting out of concern that she may reside within 200 feet of the project. It was noted by Mr. Henry that anyone within 200 feet from the project should recuse themselves from participating and voting.

- Appl. No. PB2021-04  
ECM Partners Inc. dba Advisors + Consultants  
Block 15, Lot 1.01  
49 Route 202, Suite #13A (Office #8)  
Change of Use/Occupancy/Site Plan Waiver – Subscription Application  
Click link to view application material:  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9hab4gsoedets6s/AABB4EUDx3aqqwKsbqGviieOa?dl=0>

Ms. Humbert was recused from the application.

Anthony Melillo, again present and still under Oath explained that the applicant, Vikram Reddi was approved by the Board approximately one (1) year ago to occupy space at 27 Route 202 however, as a result of the pandemic was concerned with occupying a space of that size and decided to settle for a single office scenario. He would occupy one (1) of the eleven parking spots designated for the Suite 13A approval. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday for a generic professional office use for a term of one (1) year. There would be no signage and no required site modifications. Mr. Henry pointed out that the summary sheet indicates 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday however the application form reads 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mr. Melillo corrected his statement and asked for approval for 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and noted that the site allows three (3) offices with office hours until 8 p.m. (Condition No. 5 of the original approval); this would be the first office of those three (3). When asked, Mr. Melillo agreed to create and forward a matrix of the tenants. Mr. Banisch noted that the Borough was concerned with identifying and contacting the occupants of the spaces so Condition No. 7 of the original approval requires a log that identifies the name, contact information and hours for each private office subscriber which will be continually updated as there are successive changes of use and occupancy within Suite 13A. Mr. Melillo agreed to provide the log to the Borough Clerk. Mr. Banisch suggested that Mr. Melillo provide the log as part of each application moving forward.

There being no additional questions by the Board, Chairman Rochat opened the meeting up to the public for questions.

There being no questions or comments from the public, Chairman Rochat closed the public comment

Vice Chairman Rinzler made a motion to approve Appl. No. PB2021-04 for the Change of Use/Occupancy and Site Plan Waiver with the following conditions: 1) payment of all taxes and

fees, 2) all other permits and approvals being obtained and 3) consistency with the general conditions that were imposed on the original site plan approval. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Those in Favor: Vice Chairman Rinzler, Councilwoman Tweedie, Mr. Lawlor, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Layton, Mr. Koury and Chairman Rochat

Those Opposed: None

- Appl. No. PB2021-06  
Laura Clare Design  
Block 15, Lot 1.01  
49 Route 202, Suite 9  
Change of Use/Occupancy/Site Plan Waiver

Ms. Humert was recused from the application.

Anthony Melillo, again present and still under Oath explained that the applicant is a florist that is currently located in Bernardsville, NJ and looking to relocate to Far Hills. Her use is retail with a maximum number of employees being two (2), including the owner. Based on her years of business, anywhere from one (1) to two (2) patrons visit the store at once therefore four (4) parking spaces have been allocated to the use; this use still falls within the total 89 spaces and less than the 90 available on site. Hours of operation are Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and would be considered a retail sales and service use and comply with Section 709b.3 & 4 of the Land Management Ordinance.

When asked by Chairman Rochat about deliveries, Mr. Melillo noted that deliveries would be off hours however, if deliveries happen during hours of operation the deliveries can be accommodated in front of the space. When asked if she has delivery vehicles, Mr. Melillo responded in the negative and noted that she offers retail/pick-up only. When asked if she offers deliveries for weddings/events, Mr. Melillo responded in the negative. When asked by Mr. Banisch if the existing sign will be re-messaged, Mr. Melillo responded in the positive; no additional signage.

Discussion ensued regarding the parking matrix and Mr. Melillo agreed to continue to provide an updated matrix so the Board has a firm understanding of what parking space allocation remains.

There being no additional questions by the Board, Chairman Rochat opened the meeting up to the public for questions.

There being no questions or comments from the public, Chairman Rochat closed the public comment.

Councilwoman Tweedie made a motion to approve Appl. No. PB2021-06 for the Change of Use/Occupancy and Site Plan Waiver with the following conditions: 1) payment of all taxes and

fees, 2) all other permits and approvals being obtained and 3) consistency with the general conditions that were imposed on the original site plan approval. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Those in Favor: Vice Chairman Rinzler, Councilwoman Tweedie, Mr. Lawlor, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Layton, Mr. Koury and Chairman Rochat

Those Opposed: None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Henry asked that the correspondence from the County regarding the Matheny project be forwarded to the Clerk.

1. A letter dated March 19, 2021 from Frederick Zelle re: request for an adjournment for Appl. No. PB2020-04, Lakehaus, LLC, Block 4, Lot 5 – 100 Lake Road.
2. A letter dated February 26, 2021 from the Somerset County Planning Board re: 10 Peapack Road, Block 13, Lots 2 & 3.
3. A letter dated February 26, 2021 from the Somerset County Planning Board re: 46 Peapack Road, Block 8, Lot 1.
4. The NJ Planner, January/February – Vol.82, No. 1.

**ZONING UPDATE**

- Zoning memo dated March 29, 2021 – Kimberly Coward

There were no comments on the zoning update.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**— *The Planning Board welcomes comments from any member of the public. To help facilitate an orderly meeting and to permit the opportunity for anyone who wishes to be heard, speakers shall limit their comments to 5 minutes.*

Ms. Goodchild referenced the two (2) meeting dates that fall on Tuesdays due to holidays and noted that Mr. Henry and Mr. Banisch are unavailable. It was agreed that the Board professionals would report back at the May meeting regarding their availability for other dates to be determined

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, asked if the correspondence received by the Planning Board and Borough Council is posted on the webpage. Ms. Goodchild noted that it is not posted on the webpage but is available through an Open Public Records Act request.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Vice Chairman Rinzler and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

  
Shana L. Goodchild, Planning Board Secretary

APPROVED 5/3/21

