



**CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
500 Mill Road
Absecon, New Jersey 08201**

PLANNING & ZONING
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**JANUARY 27, 2021
PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Bob Preston at 7:00 p.m.

Flag Salute

Notification of Meeting

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Aleli, Gersh, Horton, Howell, Kirk, Reilly, Thompson, Strugala, Clinkscale, Tiberio, Preston

ABSENT:

OLD BUSINESS:

Vote: Minutes of January 13, 2021 meeting

Motion to approve: Nick Tiberio – second – Michele Kirk

ROLL CALL: Aleli, yes; Gersh, yes; Horton, yes; Howell, yes; Kirk, yes; Reilly, yes; Thompson, yes; Strugala, yes; Clinkscale, yes; Tiberio, yes; Preston, yes

NEW BUSINESS:

Appl. #1-2021 for 408 Absecon Blvd. LLC; Block 177 – Lot 4 – 408 Absecon Blvd. for Minor Site Plan with Variances Approval

Brian Huhn, attorney for applicant appeared as well as Jay Sciullo, engineer and applicant Ken Schaffer. Jay and Ken were sworn in.

Brian – gave a brief explanation of the location of the site, past use and when Ken purchased it.

Jay – went over a colored rendering of the site plan that was submitted with the application. The details of the property, the site itself and the operations that he would like to put in the two units was

discussed. One use would be a Martial Arts Studio and the other an auto detailing shop. The front parking lot pavement will be repaired and the overflow parking be in the rear. The limit of the site work is that besides some landscaping, which he will explain later. This building has been there since before the 1950's, with prior uses of a gas station and most recent Art Merrill Marine since the 1970's until a few years ago. There is no landscaping at the site other than some grass. They propose a row of evergreen trees in the rear having a 5 ft. wide buffer against the existing fence towards the residential in the rear of this property. A tree will be planted on the side and some shrubs in the front and the corner of the building outside of the paved area and also around the freestanding sign, which is proposed in the small landscaped island. From the rear corner of the property to the rear of the property is enclosed by fence, which will stay. These would be less intense uses and they will have different use times, so the parking should not be an issue. There are 7 existing parking spaces out front that will be restriped and cleaned up with one handicapped spot. There are 10 over flow in the rear of the property on the gravel area and they will put parking stops at those spots. They are requesting two storage units to be used for jet skis, wave runners, paddle boards, etc. As you can see, he has started to clean up the property and make it look better. There is a freestanding sign that meets the requirements and no relief for that, but we are asking for relief for the building mounted sign.

Nick – questioned the rise out front of the property which is not part of their property. Asked if they are planning to have a rear entrance or a secondary ingress or egress for either use.

Jay – the applicant plans to put a door on the back corner of the building, but to access the rear, there is a 24 ft. wide driveway that wraps around the site. There is an entrance off of Wynnewood, but that's mainly for the boat storage access.

Nick – who will determine the items that will get stored so it doesn't look like a junk yard?

Jay – Mr. Schaffer owns a marina business in Brigantine. Boats will get prepped and wrapped for the winter and then towed to this property to be stored. There won't be random people coming in. There is no maintenance to be done at this property. We don't have plans now for the detailing person to work on boats.

Andy – asked about a sign saying there is additional parking in the rear.

Jay – we will do that if you'd like.

John – asked if all the remediation work is done.

Ken – the work is underway and it is being monitored by the DEP and will be ongoing with natural remediation at this time.

John – asked if they felt if it was sufficient parking for the martial arts studio because he doesn't want them parking in the residential area or along Wynnewood Drive. Putting up a sign that says additional parking in the rear might be a good idea. They will have 17 spots.

Ken – we are more of a club and families come together and don't have high volume of people.

John – asked to address the storage units

Jay – these are repurposed containers and not junky boxes. They will be prepped, cleaned and painted. One is 8 ft. wide and 40 ft. long and the other is 8 ft. wide and 20 ft. long. They will be placed side by side with the doors facing towards the rear so that the access will be from the boat yard side. One is 3 ft. off the side yard setback and the other adjacent to it and 24 ft. from the existing building and set back off the road from about 80 ft. They are 9 ft. 6 inches high. Nothing other than dry storage will go in them.

Holly – asked if there would be any stackable storage

Ken – no

Betty – with the detailing shop, people will drop off overnight or pick up after hours. Do you think that is going to present a problem if that happens?

Ken – doesn't feel it will be an issue. We plan to have the teachers park in the back and leave the front open.

Bob – how do you envision the driving circulation happening?

Jay – showed on the plan the two entrances. We hope they come in from the Wynnewood entrance and then exit onto the pike.

Bob – drove around the neighborhood and he feels there will be an increase of traffic in the residential area. He asked about the trash and how it will be handled.

Jay – we will have a trash enclosure in front of the last storage container.

Bob – what is the capacity of boats that you think you will store?

Jay – between the driveway and the buffer is 18 ft., they will be backed in and parked on an angle along the edge. If larger boats can fit in the triangular corner between the driveway and the back, we might get up to a 36 ft. boat.

Ken – I have 15 useable boat slips in Brigantine and they are only 22 ft. in length. None of his clients' boats would have a problem. He doesn't see himself storing a large boat or anything. I bought this property because it complimented my Brigantine property so well. He explained how he came before the board tonight for approval.

Bob – he is also concerned about the adjoining residential properties. Privacy needs to be maintained and that they're not adversely impacted by your success. The proposed buffer seems narrow and it says opaque.

Deb – she used to store a boat there and it was a mess. There was no safety or protection for anyone or anything. This looks like it's more planned out and reasonable.

Ken – it will be safer and we are going to have lights and cameras around the property.

Jay – spoke about the relief that they are asking for.

Joe – we have a report from Rob with a list of variances on page 10. He asked if they agreed with that.

Jay – yes, we do. He had a first letter and some of those were addressed, so on page 10 there are some that are not requested relief.

1. Front setback – 30 ft. is required. They have two fronts. They can meet it at Rt. 30, but along Wynnewood, it's 12.5 ft.
2. Flexible "C" variance – if granted, it won't substantially impact the surrounding area of the neighbors or the general public or the intent and purposes of the Master Plan. He then went through 224-69K
3. 224-69J – minimum distance between buildings on the same site -need 35 ft. have 24 ft.
4. Parking – 21 needed – have 17 and explained that it can be justified by the type of uses
5. Drive aisles – need 25 ft. have 24 in the rear and 22.5 out front
6. Need 1 tree and will be placed on the side of the property
7. Lighting – minimum of 1.5 ft. wide candles for the parking area. Propose a minimum of .5 ft. candles and feels it's sufficient and they didn't want to adversely impact the neighbors
8. 224-71A-2 – minimum perimeter buffer of 8 ft. adjacent to the residential zone. They are proposing 5 ft. and right now there is no buffer. The existing fence is on the lot line and former boat yard used all the space up the fence. They didn't originally propose this, but in talking to the professionals, they were convinced to do it.

9. Parking spaces – if more than 3, should be paved. Asking for relief in the back of the property for overflow parking to be kept gravel.
10. Parking stalls – should be 9 x 19 – asking 9 x 18, which is an industry standard and this type of use.
11. Asking for permission for a roof sign that is not permitted.

He then stated the positive and negative criteria for the application.

John – with regards to the landscaping, can you explain what the buffer will be?

Jay – there will be 21 evergreen trees added. At planting, they will be 6 to 8 ft. tall.

Bob – very concerned about the residential properties in the rear of this property. Suggested possibly if we could get three more feet and make it 8 ft. and then stagger the trees. He was going to mention a new fence, but the 3 additional feet might help.

Brian – the concern would be the boat storage then. That could hinder the circulation of the cars.

Jay – he understands, but right now there is nothing there now.

Betty – wants to make sure the fire trucks can circulate around the property

Andy – staggering the trees could work. If you do 7 ft. it would affect 45 ft. of the property, which has 125 ft.

John – there is some type of vegetation in the rear of the neighboring properties now.

Ken – they have been coexisting with this marina since 1974 and it was a very intense use. We are adding trees now and probably only using 20% of the use in the back and they were 100% boatyard.

Brian – this could severely impact the number and size of the boats that can go there. We could address it by making it thicker if that's possible.

Andy – went over his report dated January 18, 2021. He questioned Jay and if the applicant has no problem with the plan revisions he suggested, then they won't go over them. He agreed that the waivers could be approved. The owners within 200 ft. should be shown on the plan. The details of the trash enclosure should be shown on the plan, which will be put on a concrete pad. The waiver for architectural plans can be waived since it's an existing building. A storm water management plan is not necessary with this application. Parking ingress and egress was already discussed and those variances could be granted. Wheel stops should be installed. The lighting is sufficient, but they need a variance for landscaping around the light; the size of the foot candle and how the lights will work. The applicant said the 4 lights would be time controlled and can go off at 10:00 p.m. Existing water and sewer are being used and he then asked about the wells on the site.

Ken - the three wells on the site and remediation are ongoing and it's being monitored and natural remediation approved by the DEP. Environmental Resolutions Inc. is handling it and they are sampling from the wells tomorrow and if the numbers continue to go in the right direction, he will only need one more good reading. Exxon is paying for the services as well. Once the final letter is received, they will send it into the Planning Board office. They will need a cost estimate submitted to the City Engineer for the site improvements.

PUBLIC PORTION

Bob opened the meeting to the public.

Jerry Falivene – 202 Park Ave. – he has done a fantastic job and the neighbors are happy. The variances are circumstantial and needed because of what he is trying to do there. They have zero impact on the neighborhood. The only reason he is here is because he is two doors away and the adjoining property owners contacted him. The concern is that this is the only opportunity they have had to voice their concerns regarding the buffer between the properties. It has been discussed that there is an 8 ft. buffer requirement, but in the ordinance 224-129 is really a 20 ft. buffer between mixed uses. The intent of the ordinance change was for something like this. If you have a commercial property abutting a residential property, you want to create a bigger buffer in that area. He has been there for 30 years and there has never been an impact in the neighborhood and he understands that he needs that property to utilize. Economic reasons are not legal reasons to approve. He asked that they look at the current granite shop that put up an 8 ft vinyl fence and put the buffering on the outside of the fence and it has worked out great. The neighbors there are happy with it. The trees are going to be in the way and the boats are going to back into them and they'll get destroyed and die. He suggested moving the fence and planting the trees on the outside and the board can decide what the buffer should be. If you could get more than the five feet that would be good.

Bob closed the public portion.

Betty – asked if it would be a problem with the suggestion made

Brian – it's a chain link fence and it's 6 ft. high and we weren't replacing it.

Bob – that would require a new higher fence. You would have to go onto the neighbor's property to maintain it. He likes the idea of having an opaquer buffer within the allotted space.

Jerry – there is no need to maintain the trees. If they grow, that is the intent of having a buffer.

Jay – okay so it will be opaque between the trees and fence and put slats in the fence where they are broken.

John – feels this project is beneficial to the city. He appreciates Mr. Falivene's comments, but he doesn't think it's reasonable for the request to give up more property. They should put in more trees and replace the slats.

Deb – agrees that this is much better than what is there now and putting more hardship on the applicant doesn't

Lou – questioned the remediation and the handicapped ramp.

Ken - explained both the board

Joe – the motion would be to approve minor site plan with the conditions in both professional's reports and the variances and waivers requested

Motion to approve was made by John Aleli – second - Lou Strugala

ROLL CALL: Aleli, yes; Gersh, yes; Horton, yes; Howell, yes; Kirk, yes; Reilly, yes; Thompson, yes; Tiberio, yes; Preston, yes

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Rob Reid – 408 Absecon Blvd. LLC - \$1,402.50

Andy Previti – 408 Absecon Blvd. LLC - \$252.68

Motion to approve – Betty Howell – second – Michele Kirk

All were in favor

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn – Nick Tiberio – second – Deb Reilly

All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Lawler, Secretary

Approved: 2-24-2021