



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

PLANNING & ZONING
Tina M. Lawler, Secretary

PH. (609) 641-0663 ext. 112
FAX (609) 645-5098

**APRIL 12, 2023
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Bob Preston at 6:30 p.m.

Flag Salute

Notification of Meeting

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Aleli, Horton, Kirk, Reilly, Thompson, Strugala, Tiberio, Preston

ABSENT: Gersh, Howell, Clinkscale

ALSO PRESENT: Joe McGroarty, board attorney; Andy Previti, board engineer & Chris Dochney, board planner

OLD BUSINESS:

Vote: Minutes of February 8, 2023 meeting

Motion to approve – Nick Tiberio – second – Lou Strugala

All were in favor.

VOTE: D&R for Appl. #1-2023 – Site Plan Waiver for the American Legion – Block 200 – Lot 1.01

Motion to approve – Deb Reilly – second – Michele Kirk

ROLL CALL: Aleli, yes; Horton, yes; Reilly, yes; Thompson, yes; Strugala, yes; Preston, yes

VOTE: D&R for Appl. #2-2022 (application from 3/23/22) – approval for extension of time to file subdivision for Absecon Urban Renewal LLC – Block 203 – Lot 1.01

Motion to approve – Lou Strugala – second – John Aleli

ROLL CALL: Aleli, yes; Horton, yes; Reilly, yes; Thompson, yes; Strugala, yes; Preston, yes

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Andrew Previti - \$2,771.08 for Absecon Urban Renewal LLC

Motion to approve – Kim Horton – second – Michele Kirk

All were in favor.

Bob - asked for a status report for the corner property that has been left vacant. Jessica said that they have been continually communicating with the developer, through our engineer and there are a lot of things going at a higher corporate level than Absecon. It is not us holding it up, but rather on their end. We do know development will be going there and we hope soon and something this year. Currently, it stands that there is lease with Royal Farms, but that is all we know. Eventually, this project is going to be all built out. More things have happened over the last year than in the last twenty. It is frustrating for all of us, but we are in the right path. It is just a matter of letting things take place when they are ready. We have the annual service charge coming in on a quarterly basis, which was how the redevelopment was set up and that's going smoothly. Firestone is open; the liquor store is being built and this business will be the third.

Steve Nehmad, attorney for redeveloper – I have been involved since around 2018 and the property has been conveyed to Absecon Urban Renewal entity that is going to develop that site. We are waiting for them to begin. All the same covenants are in place; the same redevelopment agreement is in place for them to move forward and they must pay the same annual service charge. The city keeps 95 cents on every dollar, unlike the normal tax dollar that gets split between the local tax, the County and the school district. He is confident construction will begin soon. No one wants it left vacant.

Bill Rountree – principal owner of Absecon Urban Renewal LLC along with Carl Wright. Last we spoke to the developer, it was a convenient store with gas, just not sure who. We have no control over that anymore, but our understanding is that it is happening. Whatever that means in the corporate world. We have been in talks with trying to get the last pad site occupied.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appl. #2-2023 for Absecon Urban Renewal LLC – Phase III – Block 203 – Lot 1.01 for amended Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval for construction of a Chipotle restaurant

Steven Nehmad – attorney for applicant – explained the background of this project and this would be phase III of it. This would be for a Chipotle Mexican Grill, which is a smaller site, and this type of use was on the original concept site when Phase I was presented.

Brian Atkins – design engineer for Chipotle and Nathan Mosley, traffic engineer and William Rountree, principal in Absecon Urban Renewal LLC were all sworn in.

Brian – he has been the design engineer since the inception of the development on this property. He then explained the location and current conditions of the site, while using Exhibit A1, a site aerial photo from two years ago. The Firestone has been constructed and operating; the site work and access roads for the gas and convenience store is installed and the lot lines for the liquor store are shown. Referring to exhibit A-2, an aerial zoomed in more to show the entire development, he explained this specific area where the Chipotle would go. The original plan was for a quick service restaurant at 2,600 sq. ft., but this will end up being 2,325 sq. ft. A smaller with less impact building than what it was designed for. It includes a pick-up lane with a window, but it is not a drive through service. You would call the order in and a time would be given to come pick up your order. He continued through the site circulation; parking and walkways. Ten parking spaces will be added in front of the Chipotle, added to the 21 previously approved with the prior approval, giving it a total of 31 spaces. The trash receptacle is in the rear. The overall site has less impervious coverage than

what was projected. With each phase, it gets less. This will be 72.7% and it was 74.5%. There is no need for another basin with this application. This site plan complies with all the provisions of the Redevelopment Plan that governs this site. There are no waivers or variances needed and no stormwater management has been constructed with Phase II.

Exhibit A3 – colored elevations of the building were explained. It matches the other Chipotles in its design and the primary exterior is synthetic stucco in two tone grey and it there are some accent areas around the windows and doors. Exhibit A4, a photo of a Chipotle in Bel Mar, NJ was shown. There will be a small outdoor area for seating with a railing around it and some small pedestrian level lights. He went over the board planner's comments and agreed to all of them. Some were to have an electric charging spot; some additional internal crosswalks and pedestrian paths; increase the tree height; additional landscaping and they agree to all the comments. They were agreeable to all the board engineer's comments and conditions as well.

Board questions

John asked if there was going to be some type of external kiosk where the cars stop and order?

Brian – the purpose of the pickup window is for mobile ordering only. There are no payments accepted at the window. They are paid online at the time of ordering and receive a pickup time and then they are handed their food out the window. If the order is not ready, there are 3 mobile order pickup spots across from that lane.

John – what will the landscaping be?

Brian – mainly some trees primarily for the parking requirement and some low-level shrubs and some evergreen screening around the trash enclosure.

Michele – confirmed where the seating was going to be placed and is there an overall landscaping plan for the whole site?

Steve – we are coordinating it with the planner

Lou – wanted the parking clarified

Bob – asked for a railing description

Brian – it is made of steel and 36 inches high in a dark color.

Bob – was concerned that it should be more separated from the driving lane and maybe a different type of railing, with rungs that can hinder children from going underneath of it and not be able to climb it too. He suggested a landscape shrub could be placed as well.

Chris – feels there is something out there to meet the company's needs

Bob – asked for the circulation of the trash bin and trucks and delivery

Brian – they plan on being open from 10:45 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Deliveries will happen a couple times a week after closing. A small box truck delivers fresh food, since they do not store for long periods of time and trucks are usually there 15 minutes at the most. Trash pickup is private and is in the rear

Michele – with the patio seating, can it go on the other side of the building?

Bill – they wanted it off the entrance to the restaurant

Steve – will be come up with a type of railing and will work with the board professionals

Bob – so we will be getting a revised landscaping plan, as well as architectural plans?

Steve – one was in the original set to the board professionals.

Lou – asked for a clarification of the entrance to the restaurant

Nathan Mosley – licensed professional engineer with Shropshire engineers who have been with this project since the beginning and they specialize in traffic engineering. A separate traffic study was not supplied for this site since this use was already consumed in the overall approval that was previously granted. He has done work on about 8-10 Chipotle's in NJ and believes the traffic plan is sufficient.

It is a smaller footprint now that what was approved on the original concept plan, so he feels traffic will not be an issue. The internal driving patterns will provide safe and efficient access, as well as all the other traffic engineering standards and requirements and agrees that the truck driving analysis provided.

Chris (board attorney) – referred to his report and he agrees that no variances or waivers are required and it is consistent with the redevelopment plan and the previously approved plan. They have said they agree to all my comments regarding landscaping. The screening around the dumpster were labeled as swamp white oak trees and hopes it is some type of evergreen. Additional crosswalks should be installed to be able to connect to the liquor store to the extent we can. Striping should be done between the area of the dumpster and the service area. He questioned the compost bins and the access to them. All the lights should be downward and shielded to reduce any spill over.

Andy (board engineer) – referred to his report of 4/3/23 – you heard that they will be able to address my comments in my report. Most of the utilities connections on NJ Avenue have been completed, but the sewer line for the proposed office building has not been done yet. They will work with the city to see when they plan on finishing the streetscape on NJ Ave. He suggested trying to use the existing water service that services the fire hydrant near the Firestone, but the applicant said that NJ American Water probably will not allow it. The patio is a site improvement and he discussed that he should have the opportunity to look at it during the building permit phase, since the developer does not have a lot of control over it. The railing can be looked at then too. He suggested some type of vegetation be put between the curb and railing to deter kids from climbing into that area. On the east wall there is a ladder to the roof and a locked gate that would go across the rungs of the ladder to prevent people from getting in there, but he asked them to see if they can get an internal access to the roof instead, but they said they did not think it could happen.

Bill Rountree – he knows it is not feasible to do it internally, since they have reduced the square footage of that building to its minimum and it would take up floor space. Other fast-food places have the same setup.

Andy – said he was okay with it then. He would like to meet with the applicant to form a construction plan, since there is other construction going on and we want to make it safe to access the site and Firestone.

John – asked about a removal of a light that he had in his report

Andy – thanked him for reminding him. He asked that the light near the drive aisle for the pickup window be relocated and the applicant was aware of it.

Steve – summarized the application, which is consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and they will meet all the comments and conditions in the professional's reports and the railing issue.

Deb – said that the application submitted was a perfect package

Bob opened the meeting to the public. No public comment.

Lou – asked as a safety issue, if the lights could be some type of concrete to block any vehicle from getting onto the patio if they cannot make the turn.

Bill – they will review it and if that cannot be done, maybe a bollard could be put there

Joe – crafted the motion as: to approve preliminary and final site plan for Phase III – Block 203 – Lot 1.01, which includes all the conditions in which they agreed to comply, as well as the planner's and engineer's reports; in addition to providing a revised landscaping plan and patio, which will be reviewed by our professionals.

Motion to approve: John Aleli – second – Nick Tiberio

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn – John Aleli – second – Deb Reilly
All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tina Lawler", written in a cursive style.

Tina Lawler, Secretary

Approved: 5/24/2023