

BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

PASSAIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



BOARD OF
ADJUSTMENT

MUNICIPAL BUILDING
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BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2020

The July 8, 2020 meeting of the Borough of Totowa Board of Adjustment was held via Zoom. Chairman Fierro called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.; followed by the Flag Salute. Attorney Robert Corrado Jr. read the Open Public Meetings Act.

Attendance: Chairman Fierro, Commissioners Patten, Bavazanno, Nash, Carr, Mancini Alternate Masi, Henry, Attorney Corrado Jr., Engineer Lemonowicz, Secretary Steinhilber. Absent: Vice Chairman Krautheim.

A motion to accept the minutes of the March 11, 2020 meeting was made by Commissioner Patten and seconded by Commissioner Bavazanno. On a roll call vote all Commissioners present voted in the affirmative.

1ST CASE: THE MANOR
100 SHEPARDS LANE, BLOCK 12, LOT 1.02

Attorney Corrado reviewed the application and found the Board has jurisdiction to handle this application.

Attorney Paul Jemas stated this is the third time this case in front of the Board. The first was on April 10, 2019 and memorialized on May 8, 2019. The second was on November 13, 2019 and memorialized on December 11, 2019.

Patrick McClellan, Engineer was sworn in by Attorney Corrado. Mr. McClellan's office is located at 11 Furler Street, Totowa NJ and considered an expert in his field by the Board. This application is for a change in unit count from 140 to 173 units. There will be no modifications to the footprint adding 44 parking spaces on the southerly side of the property. The Application has changed the reconfiguration of the access to the site to better accommodate incoming traffic and ability to have a gate house. The tennis courts have been relocated and a pedestrian walking path was added around the entire property. A memorandum from Mr. Burghardt's office, dated July 7, 2020 on the matter is marked as exhibit A1. The Applicant also met with the Totowa Fire Chief regarding their access to property. A letter requesting 2 gates along the Cumberland Ave side of the property was submitted on July 7, 2020 and is marked exhibit A2. The new application will be for 100 1-bedroom units and 73 2-bedroom units. Parking will be increased from 326 to 368 parking spaces. There is a variance for impervious cover, where 25.5% was proposed,

this is because of the additional parking spaces and the pedestrian walkway. The F.A.R. will remain the same. The letter from Totowa's Engineer, marked exhibit A3 addresses by McClellan. Items 1 to 6 are commentary, item 7 is the new calculations for drainage, item 8 is a revision sheet (which is marked exhibit A4, dated June 19, 2020), item 9 the Applicant agrees, item 10 the Applicant will comply.

Steven Corso, Architect, was sworn in by Attorney Corrado. Mr. Corso's office is located at 676 Bloomfield Ave, Bloomfield NJ and is considered an expert in his field by the Board. Changes made within the building are larger 2 bedroom and 1-bedroom units. There will be 173 units, 100 will be 1-bedroom and 73 will be 2 bedrooms, the previous application was for 140 units, 22 1-bedroom and 108 2-bedroom (reduction of 22 bedrooms). The Applicant upgraded the common areas adding a fitness room, 2 community rooms, and a terrace. Exhibit A5 is the new plans which consist of A-1 the parking level and lower level floor plans and A-2 the 1st and 2nd floor plans, and A-3 the partial floor plan. There was a gate house added, which is functional, and the tennis courts were moved to the eastern part of the site towards Union Blvd. Commissioner Patten asked if there are any changes to the signage at the entrance, there will be no changes. Chairman Fierro asked if the original gate house was not occupied and if it is going to be now and if it will be occupied day and night. For right now the gate house is just esthetic.

Joseph Staigar, Traffic Expert, was sworn in by Attorney Corrado. Mr. Staigers's office is located at 245 Main Street, Chester, NJ and is considered an expert in his field by the Board. The Applicant took a very conservative approach and di not do the analysis from the reduction in bedrooms but the increase in units. With the additional 33 units, the A.M. would be 4 trips entering and 15 trips exiting, and the P.M. would be 15 trips entering and 4 trips exiting. This calculates to less than 20 trips per hour, delays will be increased by the matter of 3 seconds in the morning peak hour and 4 seconds in the evening peak hour. At the intersection of Union Blvd and Shepards Lane, the traffic counts measuring queuing are E morning peak hour and D evening peak hour. The Applicant reviewed this information with the County, Board of Adjustment Members, and Totowa's Engineering Department. The Applicant also reviewed this with the Totowa Fire Department, and they requested a 10-foot-wide gate to be installed so emergency vehicles can get in and out with out an issue. Commissioner Mancini wanted to know if the traffic analysis was based on all the apartments being occupied. The analysis was figured with all the units being occupied.

Jeffery Stiles, Planner, was sworn in by Attorney Corrado. Mr. Stile's office is located in Morristown NJ and is considered and expert in his field by the Board. Mr. Stiles has reviewed the plans and there are a few variances needed in addition to the previous approved. The maximum impervious coverage is what needs to be revisited at this meeting, the previous approve was for 20.5% and the Applicant is now asking for 25.5%. The Applicant has provided more parking than needed, a walking path and a gate house which the Applicant feels is a better planning alternative. There is still a large amount of pervious surface for such a large lot. Some of the negatives to the Application could be, storm water runoff, which will be accommodated with a storm water management

facility. Another negative would be the increase in students to the school system, but this decreased from the previous approved application from 25 to 17 because of the decrease in bedrooms. Commissioner Patten asked if the walking path was going to be semi-impervious? Impervious? And what the width will be? The surface will be asphalt and 8 feet wide.

At this time the meeting is open to the public.

There is no public to be heard so the public portion of the meeting is being closed.

Attorney Jemas summarizes the application.

A motion was made by Commissioner Nash to approve and seconded by Commissioner Bavazanno. Application passed 7 – 0 @ 7:48 P.M.

2ND CASE: MILUN KONATAR
188 GRANT AVE, BLOCK 12, LOT 1.02

Attorney Corrado reviewed the application and found the Board has jurisdiction to handle this application.

Ray Redding, Attorney for the Applicant, explains the application. The existing unit will be knocked down to the foundation and a single-family home will be built requiring some variances.

Brittnay Klimm, Architect, was sworn in by Attorney Corrado. Ms. Klimm's office is located at 350 Clark Drive, Budd Lake, NJ and is considered an expert in her field by the Board. Ms. Klimm's firm prepared the plans for the application. Architectural plans marked A1.01 and A2.01 show the existing unit knocked down leaving the basement and first floor structure. The new 1 car detached garage will face Stanly Street and a new 2 story framed dwelling will be constructed. The first floor will consist of a living room, dining room, kitchen, and powder room and total 1000 square feet. The basement will also be 100 square feet plus 38 square feet for the covered entrance on the first floor and 265 square feet for the detached garage. The second floor will consist of 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and a laundry room also totaling 1000 square feet. The basement is existing and contains utilities and they will be adding a new furnace and hot water heater. A letter from the towns Engineer dated June 14, 2020 will be reviewed.

Item 1. Bulk analysis will be answered by the planner

Item 2. A sealed and signed copy of the survey will be provided by the owner.

Item 3. Height and topography-the site is essentially flat and will be 29 ½ feet taken from average grade to height of peak, the first floor to grade is 2'11 ¼”.

Item 4. The F.A.R. will be answered by the Planner

Item 5. Setbacks will also be answered by the Planner

Item 6. The large tree on the property will be removed

Item 7. Garage and depressed curbs

Item 8. Driveway apron on Grant will be removed and replaced with lawn and proper curbing

Item 9. Will add note

Item 10. Will add seepage pit

Item 11. Will be addressed by the Planner

Item 12. Will be addressed by the Planner

Commissioner Patten would like to know about the driveway and curbing. Mr. Klimm responds the curbing on Stanly Street is where the new Garage area is delineated where the property and street have that differential. Commissioner Patten states, there is no curbing on Stanly at all. Mr. Lemanowicz suggest the Board can request curbing, but it will be the only one on Stanly with a curb. Chairman Fierro states it would be wise to add a seepage pit. Commissioner Bavazanno asked where the tree was located that is being removed. Ms. Klimm states the tree is located by the garage. Commissioner Patten would like to know why the Applicant is changing the orientation of the garage. Ms. Klimm responds that the house is going to extend into the current driveway.

Kenneth Ochab, Planner, was sworn in by Attorney Corrado. Mr. Ochab's office is located at 12-16 Fairlawn Ave, Fairlawn NJ and is considered an expert in his field by the Board. The property is located in the R-7 zone and is approx. 40 x 97 feet and 4000 square feet. Mr. Ochab explains the other homes in the area are also similar at 40 x 95 + or - in depths. This property is a corner lot with two front yards and only one side yard, the addition is going to be on the south side. The addition of 3' to the rear of the bump out and modification of garage structure. Some of the variances needed are F.A.R., side yard, and front yard setbacks for the proposed garage. The two-story home will be 2030 square feet consisting of a living room, dining room, kitchen on the first floor and 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and laundry room on the second floor. The building height is increased by 4 feet (25' to 29'). Street set back on accessory garage, the existing garage is 4.6' which faces Grant, the new garage is 15'8 feet from the property line facing Stanly Street with another 6' between the actual property line and the street line. Commissioner Patten suggest if the front pushed back 7' but Ms. Klimm said they are using the existing foundation. Mr. Ochab stated the building front porch area is being cut off so it will be 7 1/2' back of the right of way. Ms. Klimm states the foundation under the porch is being removed, the foundation is remaining and is under the main body of the house. Chairman Fierro states if you move the garage back 1 foot it would give you 3 feet. Commissioner Mancini would like to know what 1/2 basement, 1/2 crawl space means. Ms. Klimm points out on A2.01 bottom right # 2 the proposed basement plan, below the lower left of basement is existing basement and adding on right hand side stairway and small corridor and in back there will be the new crawl space. The basement will be unfinished. Commissioner Nash would like to know how high the crawl space is, approx. 3-4 feet tall and will be insulated and lighted.

At this time the meeting is open to the public.

There is no public to be heard so the public portion is closed.

Mr. Redding reads his closing statement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bavazanno to approve with the seepage pit added, change in garage depth and curbing added and was seconded by Commissioner Nash. Application was approved 6 – 1 @ 8:40 P.M.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Alternate Masi and seconded by Commissioner Mancini. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Steinhilber, Secretary