

Florence, New Jersey 08518-2323
August 1, 2022

The Regular meeting of the Florence Township Zoning Board of Adjustment was held in-person and virtually via Zoom on the above date at the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, NJ. Chairman Lutz called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by a salute to the flag.

Secretary Puccio read the following statement: "I would like to announce that this meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been provided to the official newspapers and posted in the main hall of the Municipal Complex."

Upon roll call the following members were found to be present:

Brett Buddenbaum	Larry Lutz
Anant Patel	Dennis Puccio
Daniel Studzinski	Gina Sullivan
Kevin Minton	

Absent: Joseph Cartier, Lou Sovak

Also Present: Solicitor David Frank
Engineer Hugh Dougherty
Planner Barbara Fegley

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution ZB-2022-10: Approval granted to ASA Investment & Management LLC for Amended Use Variance to reconfigure prior approved 4 units at property located at 18/20 W. Front Street, Florence; Block 48, Lot 7.

It was the Motion of Mr. Studzinski, seconded by Mr. Patel to approve Resolution ZB-2022-10.

Upon roll call, the Board voted as follows:

YEAS:	Studzinski, Patel, Buddenbaum, Minton, Lutz	
NOES:	None	
ABSTAIN:	None	
ABSENT:	Cartier, Sovak	Motion Carried

B. Resolution ZB-2022-12: Approval granted to 2039 Route 130 Florence LLC for Use and Bulk Variance and Minor Site Plan to operate a truck repair facility on property located at 2039 Route 130, Florence Township; Block 159, Lot 4.01.

It was the Motion of Mr. Puccio, seconded by Vice Chair Buddenbaum to approve Resolution ZB-2022-12.

Upon roll call, the Board voted as follows:

YEAS:	Puccio, Buddenbaum, Patel, Sullivan, Lutz	
NOES:	None	
ABSTAIN:	None	
ABSENT:	Cartier, Sovak	Motion Carried

84.

MINUTES

It was the Motion of Mr. Studzinski, seconded by Ms. Sullivan to adopt the minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 11, 2022. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

CORRESPONDENCE

A. 7/13/22: Letter from Burl. Co. Planning Board regarding 2039 Route 130 Florence LLC

It was the Motion of Mr. Puccio, seconded by Mr. Studzinski to receive and file Item A. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

APPLICATIONS

A. Application ZB#2022-06: Application by Barbara Mulé for Bulk Variance for Impervious Coverage to install a 12' x 25' inground pool with 3' concrete walk around on property located at 888 E. Third Street, Florence Township; Block 95, Lot 5.

Barbara and Raymond Mulé were sworn in by Solicitor Frank.

Ms. Mulé stated they are seeking a bulk variance for impervious coverage to install an inground pool. They received a variance in 2002 to install a larger inground pool, which they removed in 2014. They did receive Engineer Dougherty's review letter.

Engineer Dougherty stated his review letter is dated 7/14/22 and states the application is complete. The applicant is seeking a 12' x 25' inground pool with a 3' concrete deck. The property is located in the RA – Low Residential District and it is a conforming lot. Pools are permitted in this zone and the wall of the pool has to be 6' from the property line. There were no dimensions on the first sketch submitted, but the second one submitted show there is ample room, so there is no variance required for setback.

Engineer Dougherty stated the only variance the applicant needs is for impervious coverage; they are permitted 25% and are seeking 33.75%.

In answer to Engineer Dougherty's and Board members' questions, Ms. Mulé stated the following:

- There are other homes in their neighborhood with pools, so it is consistent with the neighborhood.
- The pool will be used for family recreation only
- The material of the pool is fiberglass
- There is a fence surrounding their yard, so you will not be able to see it from the street
- They removed their previous pool because it was old and unused. She now has a grandchild and would like to have a pool again.
- There were no drainage issues when they had their previous pool, and the pool they are now proposing is smaller.

Engineer Dougherty stated that it appears their yard flows to the rear and the applicant has testified that there were no drainage issues with the previous pool, so he doesn't perceive any issues with the proposed pool as it will be located in the same area as the last one.

The meeting was opened for public comment.

The Zoom moderator confirmed that no one was being muted by us.

Seeing and hearing no one wishing to speak, it was the Motion of Mr. Patel, seconded by Mr. Puccio to close public comment. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

85.

Solicitor Frank stated this is a very typical situation for a C2 variance, with benefits versus detriments analysis. It is an enhancement of the housing stock and to the community and there appears to be no detriments.

It was the Motion of Mr. Puccio, seconded by Mr. Patel to approve Application ZB#2022-06 as a C2 Variance.

Upon roll call, the Board voted as follows:

YEAS:	Puccio, Patel, Buddenbaum, Studzinski, Sullivan, Minton, Lutz	
NOES:	None	
ABSTAIN:	None	
ABSENT:	Cartier, Sovak	Motion Carried

B. Application ZB#2022-07: Application by Kiran Rayapudi for Amended Final to install a freestanding sign on property located at 1301 Hornberger Avenue, Florence Township; Block 126.02, Lot 1.02.

Solicitor Frank stated this application came to us because our ordinance with regard to review of development does not exclude signs from site plan approval. The site was originally approved and the resolution did not expressly say that a freestanding sign could be approved by the Zoning Officer. We all erred on that we did not realize this proposed sign needs a variance or two, so the applicant did not notice for his hearing. He will now publish and mail out his notice and we anticipate to hear this at next month's meeting. We have no jurisdiction of this application at this time, so there is no need for an adjournment.

C. Application ZB#2021-13: Application by NFI Real Estate, LLC for Preliminary Major Site Plan with Height Variance to construct two warehouses, a portion of one will be located in Mansfield Township, on property located at 2115 Burlington Columbus Road, Florence Township. (Lounsberry Tract); Block 168, Lots 5.01, 5.02, 6, 8 & 11.

Kevin Sheehan of Parker McCay appeared on behalf of the applicant. He stated they did start their public hearing for this application at the May 2, 2022 meeting with Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Landsburg in attendance at that meeting.

Solicitor Frank confirmed that the applicant has mailed and published their notice, and that this application was deemed complete at the December 6, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Sheehan stated Mr. Gillespie could not be here tonight and apologizes; however, he is filling in for him. Tonight they'd like to provide traffic testimony and continue with their remaining testimony at the September 1, 2022 meeting.

Rob Hoffman of Traffic Plan & Design was sworn in by Solicitor Frank. Solicitor Frank stated Mr. Hoffman has appeared before this Board and was previously qualified as an expert witness. Chairman Lutz accepted Mr. Hoffman as an expert witness.

Mr. Hoffman stated he prepared a report dated 10/31/21 by using the ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) trip generation numbers. This use has consistent samples for facilities of this size.

Mr. Hoffman explained the following:

- There would be 185 trips in the morning peak hours (14 of these would be truck trips)

- There would be 242 trips in the evening peak hours (38 of these would be truck trips)
- Over the course of a day: 1,997 trips (314 of these would be truck trips, or 157 trucks per day; 1 each way)
- 80% of the truck traffic will utilize I-295 with the remaining 20% making its way to Route 130 to travel north, south, or to the Turnpike.
- The overall levels of the intersections at Florence Columbus Road & Old York Road and Burlington Columbus Road & Florence Columbus Road are found to be a “C” or better
- Recommendations have been made to Burlington County for improvements to the infrastructure on Florence Columbus Road on either side of the entrance to their facility by adding additional through lanes in either direction. They are also proposing dedicated left-hand and right-hand turn lanes and are contemplating signalization. These improvements ultimately have to be approved by the County since they have jurisdiction.
- The number of trips for the warehouses built on the Margolis property, being built on the Vanco property, and proposed on the Wainwright property have all been factored into the trip generations numbers for this application.

Engineer Dougherty stated his review letter is dated 12/17/21. He confirmed that Code 154 with ITE was used. Mr. Hoffman stated that is correct. Engineer Dougherty requested the synchronization of the files showing the numbers presented tonight are consistent with ITE’s with this type of operation. Mr. Hoffman stated he can provide that. Engineer Dougherty stated that because the applicant is still waiting for the County approval on the improvements for Florence-Columbus Road, that would have to be a condition of our approval to show those improvements on the plan.

Engineer Dougherty asked if the level of service at other locations are a “C” or better, what is the level at the Route 130 & Florence Columbus Road intersection? Mr. Hoffman stated, for this facility, there would be 21 trips (3 of which would be trucks) during the morning peak hours and 27 trips (7 of which would be trucks) during the evening peak hours, which would be de minimis for what that intersection sees now.

Engineer Dougherty stated that with using Code 154, the 589 parking spaces they are proposing is not consistent with the number of trips. Mr. Hoffman stated the parking spaces proposed correlate to township ordinance, not to the trips. It is not uncommon that the ordinance requirement for parking is not consistent with the traffic counts. The building they are proposing is a spec building and the parking spaces are based on what a typical use of the building would be.

Planner Fegley stated her review letter is dated 12/20/21. She asked what the potential number of tenants is? Mr. Hoffman stated at this time, no end user has been specified so he cannot speak to that. Planner Fegley asked if this would be a last-mile facility? Mr. Hoffman stated that it will not, and that type of facility would generally be a higher traffic generating facility.

Chairman Lutz asked what type of facility will this be? Michael Landsburg, Chief Development Officer for NFI, still considering himself sworn, stated it will be general warehousing, a bulk storage and distributing warehouse, and not a last-mile warehouse. It may have some fulfillment, but not an Amazon high-velocity type of fulfillment.

Mr. Puccio stated there was commentary with the Wainwright Tract application that the traffic study done in October did not reflect true numbers because of people still working from home at the time because of the pandemic. Mr. Hoffman stated these numbers represent an accurate count.

87.

They did a follow up count in April 2022 at Old York Road and Florence Columbus Road and found those numbers consistent with the October numbers.

Mr. Sheehan stated that is all the testimony they have for tonight. Solicitor Frank stated Mr. Madden, the township's attorney, is attending on Zoom as well as other members of the public and suggest they be allowed to cross examine tonight's witness.

The meeting was opened for public comment.

The Zoom moderator confirmed that no one was being muted by us.

Matthew Madden of Madden & Madden asked if the witnesses will be available at the future meetings as he would prefer to hear the entirety of the application and cross examine at that time. Mr. Sheehan stated Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Landsburg will be available for the entire public hearing of their application.

John Fratinardo of 4 Yockus Lane was sworn in by Solicitor Frank. He stated that the present traffic on Florence Columbus Road is abominable. On July 28th, the traffic was backed up from I-295 all the way to the Old York Road intersection and asked what's going to happen if a new warehouse is put in? He does not think there should be an entrance to the warehouse on Florence Columbus Road; it should be on Burlington Columbus Road with a light. He also mentioned that after a big rain storm, Florence Columbus Road floods and becomes impassible. Adding all this additional impervious coverage will cause a worse problem. He thinks this project is wrong for the area and feels it shouldn't be there.

James Fevola of 39 Ridgway Drive asked if the traffic study touched on the traffic on Old York Road. He stated that during a course of any given week day, there are 10 tractor trailers an hour traveling on Old York Road because this is a short cut for them to take when Florence Columbus Road is backed up. He asked if this is something we have to look to the County for improvements? Mr. Hoffman stated that intersection was studied for the traffic study. Mr. Fevola asked if the road was deemed adequate to handle the additional truck traffic? Mr. Hoffman stated the study was on the intersection and any turning movements were factored into the study.

Cynthia Costantini of 24 Challander Way asked how much the numbers increased from the traffic study done in April compared to last October now that people are back working in their offices? She feels that 157 trucks seems like a low number for warehouses. Mr. Hoffman stated he does not have the exact numbers with him tonight and will bring that with him to the next meeting to be able to answer questions regarding this. He does know that comparing the counts from both studies, there was not a significant increase to the numbers. Ms. Costantini asked if they had taken into consideration the increased traffic in the summer months with people travelling to the shore, Liberty Lake, Great Adventure, etc.? Mr. Hoffman stated they have not done a summer traffic count and that is typically not a preferred time to do a count per the NJDOT. Counts are typically done when school is in session. Ms. Costantini asked if he thought it was important enough to look at those numbers during the summer? Mr. Hoffman stated at this point, he would say they would not look at that. He added Burlington County has not requested that and they comply with what the County requests.

Heather Lerch of 100 Andrews Drive was sworn in by Solicitor Frank. She stated the side of her house sits on Old York Road and there has been an increase in tractor trailer traffic that occurs daily. It's very disruptive to their quality of life. She expressed her concern for any additional warehouses because they will bring more truck traffic. There are also significant increases to travel time because of all the traffic backups.

Kristan Marter of 220 E. Front Street was sworn in by Solicitor Frank. He confirmed Ms. Marter is appearing as a resident and not in any other capacity. Ms. Marter stated that is correct. She stated the traffic counts given tonight are for the Lounsberry Tract, add into that the 1,500+ trip totals presented for the Wainwright Tract plus the traffic from the warehouses being built on the Vanco & Jones Farm properties and the proposed 560 apartments and townhomes on the corner of Kinkora Road and Route 130 for Mansfield Township to meet their affordable housing obligations. The traffic for the housing development will travel Old York Road. She also has a concern when looking at both facilities for NFI and the proposed traffic light's location on Florence Columbus Road and that it's not even ½ mile from the Old York Road intersection. With the current backups, there will be a gridlock and possible backups onto I-295. She asked if they have taken into account the traffic for the Jones Farm warehouse, the River Road warehouses, the affordable housing development for Mansfield Township, and the approved warehouse on Richards Run because their traffic will be traveling past the NFI's proposed warehouses. Mr. Hoffman stated the only ones that were included into his traffic numbers were the ones he had mentioned. The ones just mentioned were not.

Michelle Rosenblum of 19 Buttonwood Drive was sworn in by Solicitor Frank. She asked what the traffic count numbers were for the study done in April. Mr. Hoffman stated he did not have that information with him and will bring that information to the next meeting. Ms. Rosenblum requested if that information could be posted online in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Madden of Madden & Madden stated he was going to request that same information and that it be distributed.

Mr. Sheehan stated that information will be provided.

Seeing and hearing no one else wishing to speak, it was the Motion of Mr. Patel, seconded by Mr. Studzinski to close public comment. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

Mr. Sheehan confirmed with Mr. Hoffman that Burlington County has jurisdiction over Florence Columbus Road and for any improvements being done to that road. Mr. Hoffman stated that his correct.

Mr. Sheehan asked for an adjournment to the next meeting with no further notice being required. He agreed to the extension of time for the Board to make a decision on this application.

It was the Motion of Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Puccio to adjourn Application ZB#2021-13 to the September 1, 2022, 7:30 p.m. meeting with no further notice being required. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

Solicitor Frank stated we will resume this public hearing on September 1, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. with no further notice being sent or published.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was opened for public comment.

The Zoom moderator confirmed that no one was being muted by us.

89.

Seeing and hearing no one wishing to speak, it was the Motion of Mr. Patel, seconded by Mr. Buddenbaum to close public comment. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

ADJOURNMENT

It was the Motion of Mr. Patel, seconded by Mr. Puccio to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m. Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

Dennis Puccio, Secretary

/kf