

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETING
January 9, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order by Attorney Drill at 7:00 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

SWEARING IN OF NEW MEMBERS

Attorney Drill swore in new members as follows:

Adam Mueller-Class I
Vincent Panico-Class III
Neil Hendrickson-Class IV
Christopher John-Class IV
Robert Becker-Class IV
Scott Barton-Alt. #2

ROLL CALL

Board Members in Attendance:

Allen, J.
Becker, R.
Cook, J.
Filler, C.
Hendrickson, N.
Hindle, J. (present virtually)
Mueller, A.
Panico, V. (present virtually until 7:20 p.m.)
John, C.
Villa, C.
Barton, S.

Others Present

Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Board Planner Michael Sullivan, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman, and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION

Nomination of Board Chair

Mr. Mueller nominated Robert Becker as the Board Chair for 2023
Ms. Filler nominated Jacqueline Hindle as the Board Chair for 2023. The roll call vote follows.

Allen: Hindle
Becker: Becker
Cook: Becker
Filler: Hindle
Hendrickson: Hindle
Hindle: Hindle
John: Hindle
Mueller: Becker
Panico: Becker

Ms. Hindle was appointed as Chair for 2023 and took over the meeting.

Nomination of Board Vice Chair

Mr. Mueller nominated Robert Becker as the Board Vice Chair for 2023

Ms. Filler nominated Chris John as the Board Vice Chair for 2023. The roll call vote follows.

Allen: John
Becker: Becker
Cook: John
Filler: John
Hendrickson: John
Hindle: John
John: John
Mueller: Becker
Panico: Becker

Chris John was appointed as Vice Chair for 2023

Nomination of Board Vice Chair Pro-Tem

Mr. Mueller nominated Robert Becker as the Board Vice Chair Pro-Tem for 2023

Ms. Filler nominated Neil Hendrickson as the Board Vice Chair Pro-Tem for 2023. The roll call vote follows.

Allen: Hendrickson
Becker: Becker
Cook: Hendrickson
Filler: Hendrickson
Hendrickson: Hendrickson
Hindle: Hendrickson
John: Hendrickson
Mueller: Becker
Panico: Becker

Neil Hendrickson was appointed as Vice Chair Pro-Tem for 2023

Nomination of Board Secretary

Ms. Filler nominated Ann Marie Lehberger as the Board Secretary for 2023. The roll call vote follows:

Allen: Yes
Becker: Yes
Cook: Yes
Filler: Yes
Hendrickson: Yes
Hindle: Yes
John: Yes
Mueller: Yes
Panico: Yes

SELECTION OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS

Board Attorney – Jonathan E. Drill, Esq. Stickel Koenig Sullivan & Drill, LLC

Board Planner – Michael Sullivan, Clarke Caton Hintz

Board Engineer - Robert S. O’Brien, Van Cleef Engineering Associates

Traffic Engineer – Jay Troutman, McDonough & Rea Associates

Environmental Consultants – Princeton Hydro

Mr. Mueller moved, and Mr. Hendrickson seconded a motion to approve the Board Professionals for 2023. The roll call vote follows.

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Allen			X					
Becker			X					
Cook			X					
Filler			X					
Hendrickson		X	X					
Hindle			X					
John			X					
Mueller	X		X					
Panico			X					
Villa							X	
Barton							X	

APPROVAL OF CALENDAR FOR 2023

Ms. Filler moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to approve the 2023 calendar. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Allen			X					
Becker			X					
Cook		X	X					
Filler	X		X					
Hendrickson			X					
Hindle			X					
John			X					
Mueller			X					
Panico			X					
Villa							X	
Barton							X	

It was noted that Mr. Panico left the meeting at 7:20 p.m. and Alternate #1 Mr. Villa will now be voting.

SELECTION OF TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Board agreed that Chair Hindle would be on the Technical Review Committee for 2023. Ms. Filler, Mr. Becker, Mr. Villa, and Mr. Hendrickson also volunteered for the 2023 Technical Review Committee. Since there were more than 3 volunteers, a roll call vote was taken. The roll call vote follows:

Allen: Villa, Becker, Filler
Becker: Villa, Hendrickson, Becker
Cook: Villa, Hendrickson, Becker
Filler: Villa, Hendrickson, Filler
Hendrickson: Hendrickson, Villa, Filler
Hindle: Hendrickson, Filler, Becker
John: Villa, Filler, Becker
Mueller: Villa, Becker, Hendrickson
Villa: Villa, Hendrickson, Filler

Mr. Villa and Mr. Hendrickson were appointed to the TRC for 2023. There was a tie between Mr. Becker and Ms. Filler. The roll call vote follows:

Allen: Becker
Becker: Becker
Cook: Filler
Filler: Filler
Hendrickson: Becker
Hindle: Filler
John: Filler
Mueller: Becker
Villa: Becker

Mr. Becker was appointed to the TRC for 2023.

Mr. Mueller moved, and Mr. Hendrickson seconded a motion to appoint Ms. Filler as alternate TRC member for 2023. The roll call vote follows:

Allen: Yes
Becker: Yes
Cook: Yes
Filler: Yes
Hendrickson: Yes
Hindle: Yes
John: Yes
Mueller: Yes
Villa: Yes

SELECTION OF NEWSPAPERS FOR PUBLICATION

Hunterdon County Democrat
Courier News
Star Ledger

Mr. Mueller moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to approve the newspapers for 2023. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Allen			X					
Becker			X					
Cook		X	X					
Filler			X					
Hendrickson			X					
Hindle			X					
John			X					
Mueller	X		X					
Panico						X		
Villa			X					
Barton							X	

APPROVAL OF RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR 2022

Ms. Filler moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to table the approval of the 2023 rules and regulations till the next meeting. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Allen			X					
Becker			X					
Cook			X					
Filler	X		X					
Hendrickson			X					
Hindle			X					
John			X					
Mueller		X	X					
Panico						X		
Villa			X					
Barton							X	

Chair Hindle turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Chris John, Chair Hindle remained in attendance virtually.

PUBLIC HEARING

Redcom Design & Construction LLC

Block 39 Lot 53-20 Tannery Road

Appl# PB 21-009-Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan with Variances-Light Manufacturing Building

Attorney Bryan Plocker was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Plocker stated that this was a continuation of a hearing for Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan approval with

variances for the construction of a building to be used for light manufacturing product assembly. Mr. Plocker explained that based on the comments and feedback from the Board, they have recently submitted several alternate concept plans for the development of the building and site.

Board Attorney Drill confirmed that there were 9 Board members eligible to vote as follows: Cook, Filler, John, Mueller, Allen, Hindle, Hendrickson, Becker, and Villa.

Gregory Redington, president of Redcom Design and Construction LLC was sworn. Mr. Redington explained that the property has been owned by his family for the past 35 years and they would like to develop the property so that it will be an asset to the Township. He stated that they plan to construct the building, retain ownership, and rent it. He stated that he is willing to work with the Township to come to a resolution. Mr. Redington explained that the proposed building will be hidden from street view and noted that there are a number of variances that are unavoidable due to the wetlands on the site.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Redington stated that they did not have any prospective buyers or tenants for the property noting that they do not plan to sell it.

The Board expressed concern about the uncertainty of the tenant who will occupy the building. Mr. Redington confirmed that any tenant would abide by all Township ordinances.

Mr. Redington stated that he would be willing to work with the Board regarding specific conditions.

The Board presented an exhibit that was marked into evidence as follows:

B-1 CBRE advertisement for 20 Tannery Road for sale or lease

Mr. Redington confirmed that they plan to retain ownership of the building.

The Board asked if the applicant could provide examples of tenants they currently have in similar buildings in other nearby locations. Mr. Redington provided some specific examples as follows:

- Pool liner and cover manufacturing and distribution company
- Vitamin supplement assembly manufacturing and bottling company
- Spice importing repackaging and distribution company
- Food processing, packaging, and distribution company
- HVAC wholesale product distribution
- Manufacturing and distribution for aerosol sprays
- Construction company office headquarters
- Commercial printer and fulfillment company for pharmaceutical samples and commercial products
- Wholesale importing and distribution of furniture and other household goods
- Moving and storage
- Manufacturing for polymer products used in the pharmaceutical industry
- Indoor sports and recreation

The Board asked if they design an interior layout specific to the tenant. Mr. Redington stated that they encourage a utilitarian layout that would be useful for future tenants that may occupy the space.

The Board questioned if there was a standard size building. Mr. Redington stated that there is not but noted that national tenants usually want at least 50,000 square feet.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan clarified that some of the uses mentioned were not permitted in the zone that the property is located in.

Vice Chair John opening the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Redington.

Susan Masinda, Meadow Road inquired about the applicant's proposal in Hillsborough. She also asked about an advertisement on the website indicating that the property is a warehouse.

Exhibits were marked into evidence as follows:

- I-1 Colored brochure from CBRE advertising the property for sale or lease
- I-2 August 30, 2022 Hillsborough Township Environmental Commission report
- I-3 November 3, 2022 Hillsborough Township Environmental Commission report

Mr. Redington stated that he believes that was an old advertisement and will have it removed.

Ms. Masinda inquired as to a report from the Hillsborough Township Environmental Commission letter regarding the data provided from their geotechnical consultants. Mr. Redington stated that he has not seen the reports.

The Board noted that the geotechnical report that was submitted for the Readington site references Hillsborough Township throughout it.

Ms. Masinda inquired if the applicant complied with the BMP manual when testing soil in Readington. Mr. Plocker stated that the applicant's professionals can address that in their testimony.

Eric Ballou, the applicant's engineer was present. It was noted that he was previously sworn and remained under oath. To respond the Board's request to provide a sensitivity analysis of different building sizes and how they relate to the relief being requested, Mr. Ballou explained that the applicant reviewed different scenarios as follows:

- 90% footprint- 61,047 square feet footprint size with no additional relief eliminated.
- 83% footprint- 56,000 square feet footprint size with variances no longer required for topographic modification setback, maximum slope transition and minimum retaining wall setback.

Mr. Ballou stated that in all scenarios below 83%, the relief remains the same.

The Board inquired about parking in the back.

Mr. Ballou briefly reviewed the other scenarios that were considered by the applicant such as 80%, 70%, 60% and 50% and how they affected the relief requested.

The Board expressed concern about the additional water that would remain on site with the smaller building concept.

Mr. Redington stated that he would be willing to build a full-size stormwater basin with a smaller building.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan suggested that the applicant consider a green roof for the building. Mr. Redington stated that he would prefer to put solar panels on the roof.

The Board questioned if there was a better way to optimize the parking area to be practical but also less intrusive on the stream. Mr. Redington stated that they would be willing to bank parking spaces if needed.

The Board questioned if there was any cut and fill analysis done.

The Board questioned why the number of loading docks was not reduced for the smaller building concepts. Mr. Redington stated that the number of loading docks remained the same in all concepts to keep the building more utilitarian and standard in the industry to attract more users.

The Board asked if the applicant would consider solar panels over the parking lot. Mr. Redington stated that he was not considering that at this time.

The Board took a 5-minute break at 9:00 p.m.

In response to a question from Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, Mr. Ballou described the reduction in the percentage of steep slope disturbance that they are getting from the reduction in the building size.

The Board discussed and questioned if the applicant could combine the shape of the stormwater basin and parking layout in the 70% footprint concept with the building size in the 83% percent footprint concept. Mr. Ballou stated that he believes he can decrease the basins in the 83% concept and green bank fourteen parking spaces to provide an additional green buffer.

Mr. Redington requested that the Board consider granting variance relief for the number of parking spaces instead of the applicant banking them.

Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman was present. It was noted that he was previously sworn and remained under oath. Mr. Troutman stated that he believes that the reduction in parking spaces would be satisfactory based on the industry standards.

Mr. Mueller proposed that the applicant proceed with the 83% design while minimizing the parking by 14 parking stalls along the retention basin in order to achieve the 70% disturbance.

The Board took a straw poll of the members to determine if they agree with the proposal. Board Attorney Drill confirmed that this was informal to give the applicant direction and does not count against the Board. The results are as follows:

Allen: Yes
Becker: Yes
Cook: Yes
Filler: Yes
Hendrickson: Yes
Hindle: Yes
John: Yes
Mueller: Yes
Villa: Yes

It was noted that the Board received a memo dated December 13, 2022 from the Township Environmental Commission requesting the following:

- Conduct a more thorough investigation into the methods and findings used for stormwater testing, specifically relating to the reclassification of the soils that could eliminate the need for groundwater recharge (i.e. from Class C to Class D).
- Ensure that NRCS data is used to determine soil classification.
- Call in Princeton Hydro, the Township's designated environmental consultant, to do the review of the stormwater testing data.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien stated that he has requested additional information from the applicant.

The Board took a vote to determine whether to have Princeton Hydro, the Board's Environmental Consultant review the application as follows:

Allen: Yes
Becker: Yes
Cook: Yes
Filler: Yes
Hendrickson: Yes
Hindle: Yes
John: Yes
Mueller: Yes
Villa: Yes

Vice Chair John opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Ballou.

Susan Masinda, Meadow Road inquired as to the results of the testing provided to the Board of Health. It was noted that the applicant's geotechnical expert could address the question when present.

Board Attorney Drill announced that the application will be carried to the meeting on Monday, March 13, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. with no further notice. It was noted that the applicant granted an extension of time for the Board to act through April 30, 2023.

OTHER BUSINESS

Board of Adjustment Annual Report

It was agreed that this be tabled and discussed at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Filler moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Lehberger
Planning Board Secretary