Minutes of the meeting of the Linden Planning Board, January 14, 2020, 7 P.M.
The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Joseph LaPlaca.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

JOSEPH LAPLACA, CHAIRMAN
GEORGE DONEY, SECRETARY
BARRY JAVICK, COUNCILMAN
NOYO EDEM
MICHAEL ANDERSON
FELIPE CABEZAS
NICHOLAS PANTINA
FRANK DELLA FEMINA
CURTIS HUMPHREY
DEREK ARMSTEAD, MAYOR

ANTHONY D. RINALDO, JR., BOARD ATTORNEY
PAUL RICCI, BOARD PLANNER
MARILYN COPLAN, RECORDING SECRETARY

(Roll call.) By motion made by Mr. Pantina to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by Mr. Cabezas, all voted in the affirmative, Mr. Della Femina, Mr. Javick, Mr. Anderson and the Mayor abstained, motion passes. The Chairman stated the requirement of the Open Public Meetings Act has been satisfied.

With regard to Resolution SD744, Grunwald properties, by motion by Mr. Pantina, seconded by Mr. Cabezas, by majority vote, resolution is adopted.

Re: Resolution SP-1110 Penn Jersey Concrete, upon motion by Mr. Pantina, seconded by Mr. Cabezas, by majority vote, the resolution is adopted.

APPLICANT: 1700 South Stiles Urban Renewal SP-1088-18
PREMISES: 1700 South Stiles Street
TO PERMIT: Apartment building

Gregory Juba, Esquire, appeared for the applicant and stated the application was granted a year ago, and since there's a design waiver, the applicant is before the Board again.

Nicholas C. Sottos, 28 Lefferts Road, Clark, New Jersey, is sworn and testified there is a movement of the building in a southeasterly
direction 10 feet. Drawings are marked A-1 and A-2. (Refer to transcript.) Mr. Pantina questioned with regard to parking. It was testified there are "No Parking" and "No Idling" signs presently and Ms. Edem questioned with regard to traffic flow. Mr. Sottos testified traffic flow would not be affected.

Mr. Ricci requested Mr. Juba to submit a letter to the Board regarding any need for additional signage. No one appeared from the public.

Upon motion by Mr. Doney to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Cabezas, by unanimous vote, the application is approved.

APPLICANT: DDO Enterprises SP1112
PREMISES: 1728 St. Georges Avenue
TO PERMIT: Commercial/Retail use

David D. Nasta, Esquire, appeared for the applicant. Mr. Nasta opened to the Board stating the applicant is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval for an application consisting of four retail stores of five thousand square feet and to expand medical space that will account for 88 hundred square feet of total space.

Affidavit of Service and Proof of Publication is found to be adequate. Rajeswara Donepudi is sworn and testified as the owner of 1728 East St. Georges Avenue that two of the stores are unoccupied, one store is a pharmacy and he is the proprietor, that the hours of operation are eight to eight, Monday through Friday, Saturdays nine to four, and there are three employees and a pizzeria occupies the other store with four employees, that there have never been any complaints with regard to parking. Mr. Anderson was concerned the property has been owned for two years and there are several violations.

(Refer to transcript.)

Ronald Sadowski, Edison, New Jersey is sworn as engineer and is qualified. Plans are marked A-1. He described the general layout. He referred to Engineer Pantina's letter and stated the questions or concerns raised in the January 11, 2019 letter will be complied with, that three parking spaces are proposed. He testified with regard to the parking spaces for the medical, it will be behind the building, including two ADA and
nine feet wide compliant spaces and the retail
spaces would be eight foot four. He foresees no
problem with parking.

Lee Klein, a parking consultant, stated he
would prefer a parking utilization report done. A
discussion with regard to parking continued. Mr.
Sadowski testified under current conditions 23
parking spaces will not be required and 34 are
provided. Under proposed, 38 is required and 27
are provided. Mr. Klein questioned whether there
would be alternative parking onstreet and Mr.
Sadowski answered he is not aware of any.

Mr. Pantina suggested the Board's traffic
consultant did not look at the parking and there
is no traffic expert to testify to same and
perhaps a traffic report could be provided. Mr.
Cabezas suggested that a vote not be taken tonight
but to come back with more information about
parking. The Chairman stated he thought that was
a good recommendation.

Attorney Rinaldo stated the case will be
continuously listed, with no additional notice, to
provide more information with regard to the
doctor's office, and if there is a traffic report,
the Board's expert, Mr. Lee Klein, could review
it. The Chairman stated the parking lot floods.
Mr. Pantina made a motion to continue the
application to bring in more information with
regard to traffic, seconded by Mr. Anderson.
Motion passed by unanimous vote.

APPLICANT: SP-1114 Meridia 1001 Urban Renewal
PREMISES: 1001 West Elizabth Avenue
TO PERMIT: Mixed use with residential units.

Allyson M. Kasetta, Esquire, of Prime &
Tuvel appeared for the applicant. Ms. Kasetta
stated this is a preliminary and final site plan
approval hearing asking for relief for one
development from the requirement of the
Redevelopment Plan. She reviewed the history of
the property, that the application is for a mixed
use development containing 402 residential units,
amenities, commercial space and 530 off-street
parking spaces, and they are requesting relief for
one deviation for lack of landscaping on the east
and west sides of the building.

She stated the previously proposed wireless
telecommunication antennas on the roof were
intended to be removed from the plan.
Christiano Pereira, 6401 Park Avenue, West New York, New Jersey, was sworn and qualified as an architect. A-1 Plan is marked. A-2, A-3 renderings are marked. He described the property and testified as to two levels of parking, that two hundred units will be on the first phase. Exhibit is marked A-4. Exhibit A-5 is marked Sheet A001. Exhibit A-6 is Sheet A002. Exhibit A-7 Sheet A100. Sheet A101 is A-8. He testified to the dropoff zone and Uber pickups and fast deliveries. He discussed the access to the building. (Refer to transcript.)

He described parking spaces on the first floor and described the circulation. He referred to the bicycle storage and a large utility room. A-9 is Sheet A 102. He testified to 294 one bedrooms, 108 two bedroom units. Sheet A 103 is marked A-10. The roof plan sheet A 104 is marked A-11. Sheet A 200 is marked A-12. Material board is marked A-13. Sheet A 201 is marked A-14. Sheet A 210 is marked A-15. He described the facade. (Refer to transcript.)

He referred to two banners as the property is built to advertise the units available. He referred to blade signs on the building and a canopy that spans across the entire retail space. An exhibit is marked A-16, A-17 Sheet A200.2 and A-18. An exhibit is marked A-19. Email from the fire official dated 1/13/2020 is marked A-20. Exhibit A-17, Sheet A 200.2 shows the position of the CMU colors. He testified the second floor is all parking with the exception of two residential units, a management's residence as well as a live-in super. Mr. Cabezas questioned the quality of the material to be substituted. Mr. Pereira stated that pallets change every year. Mr. Humphrey questioned with regard to the depth of the pool and it is three feet. Mr. Cabezas questioned with regard to charge stations for electric vehicles and they are provided. The windows are triple pane.

In answer to Mr. Klein's question, Mr. Pereira testified with regard to the circulation to provide access from the garage to the retail spaces and that a system will be installed to increase oxygen in the garbage room.

Arthur Kuyan, Stonefield Engineering, is sworn and qualified and testified he prepared the site plan and testified as to existing conditions.
He described the proposal in detail including an eight hundred square foot dog run with 12 foot wide permeable pavers to increase the stormwater quality. He testified to Sheet C5, Grading and Drainage and referred to C6, Utility Plan, and Sheet C7, Lighting Plan, Sheet C8 Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Plan, Sheet C9, Landscaping Plan.

Mr. Kuyan testified the fire official required a 20 foot wide access lane around the building clear of any obstructions and requested two fire hydrants within the rear of the property as well as a fire department connection in front of the building, and those requests will be complied with.

Charles D. Olivo, Stonefield Engineering and Design, Rutherford, New Jersey is sworn and qualified and testified the garbage trucks and loading vehicles, UPS, Fed Ex are contained on the site. He testified as to 10 parking stalls with seven to nine foot long drop-off pick-up area, and each of the four hundred two units is allocated one stall as part of the lease. A second stall is optional.

Kathryn M. Gregory, Planner, 96 Linwood Plaza, Fort Lee, New Jersey, is sworn and qualified as a planner to discuss one deviation from the Redevelopment Plan, where the goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Plan would be advanced for the benefit of the public and the deviation would outweigh the detriment, and regarding the landscaping variance, it is basically for fire safety and the benefits outweigh the detriment of not having a landscaping in particular locations.

Mr. Ricci stated he agrees with the planner's testimony, that the need for fire equipment paramounts landscaping but suggests there may be pockets where the applicant can infill additional landscaping.

Councilman Roman, 15 Munsell Avenue, wanted to know if the project has union labor, the costs of the project, what is the plan to combat excess overflow parking into the residential areas. The first two questions couldn't be answered and there is no plan for overflow parking since it is not anticipated. Mr. Roman referred to the large size of the restaurant and referred to the first building built in Linden, that there are numerous complaints and referred to traffic putting more
cars on West Elizabeth Avenue and questioned if there are any other off-site improvements being mandated to West Elizabeth Avenue and/or Stiles Street.

Mr. Olivo testified there is no mitigation proposed. Mr. Roman questioned if there are sewer upgrades. Mr. Kuyan stated a new sewer lateral will be provided. Mr. Roman questioned with regard to the parking spots bundled into the rent and could the parking be free as part of the lease. Mr. Olivo stated it's up to the applicant how the lease agreements are structured.

John Kaczor, 23 West Munsell Avenue, is sworn and stated Meridia I and II are failing and stated this is Meridia's plan not Linden's plan. A discussion ensued between Mr. Kaczor and the Board. Mr. Kaczor concluded by saying Meridia is destroying Linden.

Ed Kaminski, 201 Maple Avenue, is sworn and is concerned the construction will take many years, that the timing is open-ended. Ms. Kasetta read from the Redevelopment Agreement setting forth project schedules.

John Barsnica, 115 East Thirteenth Street, is sworn and is concerned about the size of the parking spots, that he has a pickup truck and may not be able to park in certain spots. He's concerned about keeping the signs on the side of the building until full occupancy which could be years and requested a finite period of time.

Upon motion by Mr. Pantina to approve the application, Mayor Armstead reminded the public the property was vacant for 40 years and no taxes paid and this project will bring millions of dollars to the city in taxes, that the Meridia people learn from past projects.

Motion is seconded by Mr. Cabezas and upon unanimous decision by the members, the motion passes with all the stipulations and conditions.

At this time, the Brunswick Avenue Redevelopment is presented by Mr. Ricci. Mr. Ricci presented the Preliminary Investigation Report regarding Block 513, Lots 4.01 and 4.02.

He reported the buildings are in a state of disrepair and untenantable for their intended purpose, that vacancy exists for more than two years and there’s a shortage of parking as well as sharing of tractor-trailer and vehicular
circulation routes which results in an unsafe circulation condition. He reported the site meets the B, D and H criteria. He stated there needs to be a motion to recommend to Council to approve the redevelopment for the Brunswick Avenue site, that you agree with his recommendation and conclusion that the area is an area with regard to local Redevelopment Housing Law.

Mr. Pantina made the motion and agrees with the recommendation of Mr. Ricci, seconded by George Doney, all members voted in the affirmative.

Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 10:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Secretary