

TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN  
PLANNING BOARD  
COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY

REGULAR MEETING  
November 5, 2014

The regular meeting of the Township of Franklin Planning Board was held at 475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, New Jersey and was called to order by Vice Chair MacIvor at 7:30 p.m. The Sunshine Law was read, the Pledge of Allegiance said and the roll was taken as follows:

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PRESENT: Councilman Chase, Robert LaCorte, Cecile MacIvor, Robert Mettler, James Pettit, Carl Hauck, Robert Thomas, Edward Potosnak and Charles Onyejiaka

ABSENT: Chairman Orsini

ALSO PRESENT: Board Attorney, Mr. Martin Murphy, Mr. Mark Healey, Director of Planning and Vincent Dominach, Senior Zoning Officer

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**DISCUSSION:**

***Vouchers:***

- **Martin Murphy –November Retainer - \$833.00**

Mr. LaCorte made a motion to approve the Vouchers as submitted. Mr. Mettler seconded the motion and all were in favor.

***Conceptual Review:***

- **Maureen Matson – 76 & 80 Twelfth Street, Somerset, NJ**

Ms. Matson introduced herself and discussed the two lots she and her husband, Edward Matson, purchased on Twelfth Street on Block 434 in the R-20 Zone. She indicated that the lots were separate lots with a total combined 60,000 sq. ft., which she stated was approximately half of Block 434. She added that the larger of the parcels consisted of Lots 1, 2 and 28 and was comprised of 42,500 sq. ft. Ms. Matson testified that the second Twelfth Street parcel consisted of Lots 21-27 and was comprised of 17,500 sq. ft.

The proposal before the Board that evening was whether they were in agreement with the idea of splitting the larger, 42,500 sq. ft. lot in half, thereby creating three lots with approximately the same square footage. She testified that there were currently only two houses on the street that included Block 434 and a 15,000 sq. ft. building lot that was currently vacant (Lot 3.01). Ms. Matson went on to explain that at one time, Lot 3.01 and Lot 9.01 were one parcel until they were subdivided into two 15,000 sq. ft. lots ten years ago. Additionally, Ms. Matson submitted a tax map to show the Board the similarly sized lots in the area. She indicated that each block consisted of an average of 6-9 homes, each with a lot size of approximately 12,000 sq. ft. She added that 25 of the 39 homes on these blocks were on lots that consisted of 10,000 sq. ft. or less. She noted the 13 non-conforming lots that had been created in the past 12 year by being subdivided from larger lots, which were much smaller than the lots she was proposing. Ms. Matson testified that they were able to meet all of the building setbacks on the lots, with the exception of the rear yard setback of proposed Lot. She then added that the lots in the area were created in the 1950's and that most of the lots were 100 ft. deep and also do not meet the rear setbacks of the zone. Ms. Matson went on to describe the homes they were proposing to build and noted that they would be approximately 2,400 sq. ft. in size, which would fit in nicely with the homes in the surrounding area and would complement the size of the proposed lots.

Finally, Ms. Matson explained that they were hoping that the Board could give them some direction regarding their proposal; and, if so, they would go forward with putting together a formal application for the project.

Mr. Dominach, the Zoning Officer, explained to the Board that he and Mr. Healey, the Planning Director, felt that the Board should hear an informal presentation of what was proposed for the property so that the owners would have a better idea whether it would be worth their while to submit a full application.

Vice Chair MacIvor questioned whether the lots proposed would meet with side yard and front yard setbacks. Ms. Matson indicated that all lots would comply, with the exception of Lot 1, which would need a rear yard setback related to the shape of the property. She added that the properties would all be served by wells and public sewer.

Mr. Thomas inquired about environmental concerns that might become issues with the properties and Ms. Matson indicated that she had spoken with Karen Buckley from Franklin Township who confirmed that the property was not in a wetland area and there were no streams. Mr. Pettit confirmed that the property didn't seem wet as he walked the property the other day, but did indicate that it was heavily wooded.

Mr. Pettit then opened a discussion regarding the need for variances for the corner lots and Ms. Matson indicated that they would for lot area. She added that Lots 2 and 3 would also need variances for one frontage each that was deficient. They then discussed the need for sidewalks and curbs and/or paying into the Township fund for future construction of the same.

Councilman Chase suggested that they subdivide the larger lot (42,500 sq. ft.) into two lots, both having 21, 250 sq. ft. each. A discussion ensued as to the best way to subdivide the lots. Vice Chair Maclvor mentioned that they would have to abide by the tree replacement requirements and Ms. Matson indicated that they would comply.

Mr. Thomas asked that if they were to submit a formal application, that they include plans for the homes that were planned to be constructed on the site, as described that evening.

Vice Chair Maclvor stated that it sounded like the Board seemed to be agreeable to what was proposed and that the overall sense was that the proposed lot sizes and homes would be in keeping with what was already in the neighborhood.

#### **HEARINGS:**

- **MICHAEL & GALE GIANOTTO / PLN-07-00005**

Relief of Conditions, Extension of Time and Bulk Variances in which the Applicant was seeking relief of condition from the Resolution of Approval to allow a change in the architecture of the house to be built and five (5) variances at 32 Buffa Drive, Somerset; Block 84.03, Lot 25, in an R-40 Zone - **CARRIED TO DECEMBER 3, 2014, WITH NO FURTHER NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.**

#### **WORKSESSION/NEW BUSINESS:**

There was no new business.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. LaCorte made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:46 p.m. Mr. Pettit seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathleen Murphy, Recording Secretary  
November 18, 2014