

Planning Board
Virtual Meeting
August 25, 2021

Meeting started at 7:00pm.

Roll Call

Present:

Mayor Lawrence La Ronde
David Hollod
Aimee Corzo
Chairman Tom Fagan
David Branan
Frank Kreder
Michael Giordano

Absent:

Liz Appezzato
Andre Mitchell
Mark Kruszczyński

Also present, Board Attorney, Brian Schwartz and Borough Engineer David Testa.

Statement of compliance read by Chairman Fagan.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Planning Board member Michael Giordano sworn in by Mayor La Ronde.

Approval of Minutes:

David Branan made a motion to approve June 23, 2021. Seconded by Frank Kreder.

All in favor.

None opposed.

David Hollod and Michael Giordano abstained because they were not present for the meeting.

Minutes approved.

New Business:

SPR-21-001 Luckie II, LLC – Asian Food Market – 1011-1019 Route 22 West – The applicant is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval.

Mr. Testa reviewed his letter dated August 13, 2021. Items 19, 20, 27, 28, and 31 are not applicable. For item 6, there was an incorrect name on the title block. It was missing Mr. Testa's name. It had Dave Hollod's name as the engineer so that had to be changed and the street address was missing from the cover sheet. Item 26, the applicant did not show proposed signage on the building. They were not asking for variances for signage. There is existing signage on the building.

There were issues on the site plan for items 2, 3, 4, & 5. Mr. Testa stated they were just comments on the site plan that will be addressed by the applicant during testimony.

John Sullivan, attorney with the offices of Vastola and Sullivan represents the applicant, Luckie II, LLC, 1011-1019 Route 22 West. The property is designated as lot 6.01, block 159 and is located in the B3 zoning district. It is a fully improved site with a building that has multiple uses in it as well as site improvements, including the parking lot, drive aisles, and several others. The current uses are a laundromat and the Asian Food Market. They are not proposing to change uses. The application is for constructing a two story 400 foot entry foyer to the Asian Food Market. The foyer would be on the first floor and the mezzanine would have an office and storage. Site improvements proposed are adding canopies, a covered cart corral, and to render the site ADA compliant. The site plan originally dated January 19, 2021 without revisions and prepared by Stires Associates and a survey with details were submitted. A set of architectural plans dated May 5, 2021 prepared by Christopher Hao were also submitted.

The witnesses are Architect Christopher Hao and Engineer Robert Kiser.

Brian Schwartz requested a voice vote on the waivers so the application can be deemed complete.

All in favor of accepting the waivers as they stand.

None opposed.

Christopher Hao
9 Harris Avenue
Edison, NJ

He is an Architect practicing in New Jersey. He graduated from Georgia Tech with a Master's Degree.

Mr. Hao sworn in by Attorney Brian Schwartz.

He is a NJ registered Architect licensed since 1990. His license is in good standing. Mr. Hao has been previously accepted as an expert witness in architecture in other towns.

Mr. Hao's credentials were accepted by the Board.

Mr. Hao is familiar with the site and the application. He prepared the architectural plans that were submitted to the Board. The existing building has been there for 50-60 years that occupies about 28,000 square feet. 3,000 square feet is shared by the laundromat. Asian Food Market is approximately 25,000 square feet. It is a one story building, about 20 feet high. The Asian Food Market wants to make a better aesthetically pleasing façade and a 400 square foot entry lobby. The height will be 26 feet high including the roof. The first floor will be 600-700 square feet. The second floor mezzanine will have storage and an office space. The foyer will have 2 doors to the entrance. The entrance will be covered by a canopy type of roof. There will be additional canopies added to the front façade of the building. There will also be a 40 foot long cart corral with 4 posts towards the eastern side of the front of the building. The overhang is projected to be 5 feet. The proposed sign will be about 18 feet off the ground. It says Asian Food Market and is approximately 58-60 square feet. There is a circle logo with a Chinese character. The total square feet for the sign is approximately 55 square feet. The sign is shown on the elevation. There is no detail provided. It is unclear if the sign is compliant without detail. The

current sign appears to be in excess of what the ordinance allows but Mr. Testa stated he was unable to ascertain whether variances were obtained for that sign. Mr. Hao stated the height of the letters is two feet but the dimensions were not marked. The logo is 5 feet in diameter, which would need a variance. The length of the sign is 40 feet long. The logo is approximately 28 square feet.

Mr. Schwartz is concerned with approving a sign variance when it wasn't part of the review or what was noticed. Mr. Sullivan stated Mr. Hao can provide that for the next meeting and once the details are provided, he can amend the application to include a variance for the sign if necessary. He can re-notice and they can proceed at the next meeting.

Mr. Schwartz asked what the materials of the new façade were going to be. Mr. Hao stated the bottom 4-5 feet are going to be cultured stone or stone and above it will be stucco. The awnings will be metal.

Mr. Schwartz asked where exterior lighting will be. Mr. Hao answered there is existing wall pack lighting. The front façade is 235 feet and there are 7 wall pack lightings. The lighting details were not provided on the drawings. There is no lighting plan provided. Mr. Testa stated the applicant should either provide a lighting plan or provide a certification that the existing lighting meets Borough standards. Mr. Hao stated they will have gooseneck lighting underneath the eave of the high part of the main entrance and underneath the roof overhang eave. There are 8 or 9 of these. Mr. Testa asked Mr. Hao if the current lighting is going to remain or if this is new lighting. Mr. Hao stated it is new lighting. Mr. Testa stated if they are adding new lighting, they will need to see the lighting levels. If no new lighting is added to the parking lot, they will need certification that the existing lighting meets all standards. Mr. Hao stated the 7 wall packs proposed will be above the awnings. There is a 3 foot space above the awning that they can use for the wall packs to shine in the parking lot. Underneath the awning they will put down lights to shine on the sidewalk. Mr. Schwartz asked Mr. Hao to show the lighting to the Board before the next meeting.

Mr. Giordano asked Mr. Hao if the lights will be on 24 hours. Mr. Hao stated the lights in the parking lot will be left on overnight but only a few wall packs will be left on 24 hours.

The façade changes will only be to the front, not the sides and rear of the building.

There were no comments from the public.

Robert Kiser sworn in by Attorney Schwartz.

Robert V. Kiser
Stire Associates
43 West High Street
Somerville, NJ

He has been a licensed Professional Engineer in NJ since 1980. He was the town Engineer for Princeton and the Director of Engineering for the consolidated municipality of Princeton. For the last 4 ½ years he has been with Stires Associates as a Project Engineer. He has previously been accepted as an Engineer for numerous other Boards.

Mr. Kiser's credentials were accepted.

Mr. Kiser is familiar with the site and the proposal before the Board. His firm prepared the site plan and drawings. The site is just over a 2.6 acre site. It includes an approximate 28,000 square foot building that is surrounded by pavement that provides for circulation or parking. There are currently 133 parking spaces on site. There is excess parking on the site because only 117 spaces are required. The circulation is provided completely around the building. The dumpsters are located in the rear of the building as well as a refrigeration/freezer unit and a trash compactor unit. There is lighting in the parking lot. There are 3 stand-alone lamps with dual lamps that illuminate the parking area. There are wall lamps entirely around the building. The proposed improvements provide improved ADA access. Currently there are 4 ADA spaces. They are increasing that by 1 to meet current standards. A portion of the concrete area in front of the building and a portion of the parking lot will need to be milled and resurface to meet ADA slope requirements for the parking spaces. There is a proposed cart corral on the right hand side as you are facing the building. Access will be provided to the new lobby area from doors on either side of the lobby. There are no other proposed improvements but they will address others after reviewing Mr. Testa's recommendations.

Regarding Mr. Testa's report, items 6 and 8 will be complied with and corrections will be made. Signage was already addressed. Items 1-7 will be complied with. Regarding item 5, the fire department sent a memo regarding the fire lane indicating they have no objections.

Regarding the site plan section on page 5, item 1, the detectable warning surfaces will be complied with.

Item 2, with regard to dumpsters and enclosures, at the rear of the building there are dumpsters, a compactor, freezer, refrigerator, and a fenced in area that is currently not utilized for dumpsters. At the laundry area there are currently 2 dumpsters, one for trash and one for recycling. They are proposing to relocate those dumpsters into the fenced in area currently in place. There is a concrete slab there and there is adequate room for those dumpsters to address Mr. Testa's concern. They would recommend that the trash compactor located between the freezer and refrigeration unit stay in its current location.

Items 3-6 will be complied with.

There are no comments under item utilities.

Chairman Fagan asked if the size of the dumpsters will fit in the enclosed area. Mr. Kiser stated the enclosure is in place and the dumpsters are adequate. There is no proposed change in the size of the dumpsters. The Asian Market uses the compactor unit and the laundromat uses the dumpsters.

Regarding site grading and storm water management, item 1 will be complied with. They viewed the areas that appeared to be clogged and they agree the storm water collection system needs to be investigated and they will provide information to Mr. Testa that they are working properly.

Regarding item 2, the gutters and leaders and drainage, the project architect is providing for the leaders to come down on either side of the lobby and will be connected to the storm drainage system. There is currently an e inlet just in front of the lobby area so those leaders will be connected to that inlet.

Regarding landscaping and lighting, item 1 and 2 deal with landscaping. One area along Little Place needs to be cleaned up and the applicant has agreed to do this. Mr. Testa recommended there be low landscape plantings in the parking lot planter areas as well as ornamental trees and the applicant has agreed to this.

Regarding item 3, adequacy of site lighting, plans will be provided for the building lighting as previously discussed. Regarding lighting in the parking lot, they feel it is adequate but will get more information to Mr. Testa to prove it is adequate.

Regarding the traffic, parking, and circulation section, item 1, with the ADA parking there are 6 areas striped laundromat only parking in front of the building. They will lose one of those spaces so there will be 5 of those spaces. In the central part of the parking lot there are currently 18 spaces signed and striped for laundromat parking only. There will be 23 spaces all together for the laundromat. They feel that is sufficient for the laundromat. Signs will be placed at each of those spaces that will be resurfaced to meet ADA requirements.

Regarding item 2, openings in the parking lot to allow pedestrian access without walking between parked cars, they suggest the 3 striped access areas in between the ADA parking spaces on the left side would be adequate to provide access in and out of the building. With regard to the right side, Mr. Testa suggested there should be access to the parking lot on the right side and also suggested it would be easier to get carts from the building to the parking lot if there were a curb cut for shopping carts. They would suggest eliminating a parking space and providing cross hatching in the area to provide access to the lobby from the right side of the lot.

Item 3 speaks about a ramp for shoppers to get their carts into the parking lot and that was just discussed by Mr. Kiser. There will be ramps installed to get the carts into the parking lot.

Item 4 will be complied with by adding an additional Do Not Enter sign.

The police and fire departments indicated they have no comments or concerns with regard to the application.

Somerset Union Soil Conservation District approval or input is not required for this application. The Somerset County Planning Board has approved the application. Mr. Kiser does not believe there are any other outside agency approvals necessary for this application.

Mr. Schwartz asked Mr. Kiser if some planters could be put in front of the building along with landscaping in the parking lot. Mr. Kiser stated he will discuss it with the applicant.

Chairman Fagan asked Mr. Testa about the sewer drain picture and where that is located. Mr. Testa stated it is located just east of the entrance off Route 22. Stires plan sheet 3 shows a square inlet in the third parking stall to the east of the entrance off 22. It says invert inaccessible which means they were unable to survey the bottom of the inlet because it's full of debris. It will have to be cleaned out. They can then modify the plan with the current layout of the storm piping. There were a few inlets that were labeled inaccessible. There is a problem that's causing a clog. It may be lack of maintenance or there could be a clog where it's connecting to the DOT system. If it's a DOT issue, they will have to talk to the DOT. Mr. Kiser will discuss this with the applicant. They will try to have all the information for the next meeting but it depends on when they can get a contractor in there to check it.

Brian Schwartz made a public announcement that the meeting will be continued to September 22, 2021. If a variance is needed for the sign, the applicant's attorney will have to re-notice. If there are no new variances or changes there will be no further public notice. The applicant's attorney agreed to an extension of time if necessary, until the first meeting in October.

Motion to adjourn made by David Branan. Seconded by Aimee Corzo.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.