



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF THE JERSEY CITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
HELD ON THE 15th DAY OF JUNE 2021



The Board of Commissioners of the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency conducted today's meeting as a virtual audio conference on the Zoom platform on Tuesday, June 15th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Chairman Rivera called the Meeting to order at 6:06 p.m., and upon roll call the following answered **present: Donald Brown, Evelyn Jones, Darwin Ona, Denise Ridley and Daniel Rivera.**

And the following were **absent: Douglas Carlucci and Erma Greene.** Chairman Rivera thereupon declared a quorum present. Also present at the Meeting were Diana H. Jeffrey, Esq., Executive Director; Jesamil Lozano, Secretary to the Board and secretary for the Meeting; Jennifer Credidio, General Counsel; Agency's staff; and Members of the public.

Immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance, The Executive Director announced that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and Guidance for Remote Public Meetings issued on March 23, 2020 by the Department of Consumer Affairs, public notice of today's meeting was posted on the Agency's website and was sent to the City Clerk for the public's review.

In accordance with tonight's agenda, Chairman Rivera acknowledged the first presenters. Eugene Paolino Esq., of the law firm Genova Burns represented the applicant, Monticello Equity Properties, LLC. Mr. Paolino informed the Board that the applicant is seeking Board approval for Block 15005, Lots 1-16, commonly known as 230-238 Monticello Avenue located within the Jackson Hill Redevelopment Area. Mr. Paolino explained that the applicant has met with the Jackson Hill Community Organization and has met with the Planning Board to discuss the proposed project. Bruce Stieve, of Marchetto Higgins Stieve, proposed a ten (10) story structure consisting of 304 units, eight (8) which will be affordable. Mr. Stieve further proposed a 125 parking space garage located on the basement level. The garage is designed to contain a semi-automated parking systems holding 106 stacker spaces, 14 standard spaces and 5 handicap spaces.

At this time, General Counsel Credidio asked if the stacker spaces permitted by the plan?

According, Mr. Stieve informed the Board that the stacker spaces are permitted by the plan and the system operates independently. Mr. Stieve specified there's a very minor deviation since the stacker system doesn't prescribe to standard parking dimensions, so they will request a deviation from the Planning Board for relief of parking stall dimensions. After Mr. Stieve thoroughly described the parking system, he went on to add that the Project also includes two open spaces for the community enjoyment as well as 10,000 square feet of commercial space fronting Monticello Avenue. He went in detail to describe the amenities of the Project and to detail the type and amount of units, which includes 99 studio units, 135 one-bedroom units and 63 two-bedroom units.

Special Counsel Credidio asked Mr. Stieve to confirm the amount and type of units being presented, which he went on to repeat. Special Counsel Credidio asked if any of the one-bedroom units included a den, to which Mr. Stieve replied "he believes like three of the one-bedroom units might be dened --- no, it looks like they're studios and one-bedroom".

Developer's Counsel, Gene Paolino, Esq., advised the Board that there would be about three (3) deviations that would be requested of the Planning Division and that "those deviations are relatively minor and for the most part, this Project completely complies with the Redevelopment Plan" and he thinks that's important for the Board to know.

Chairman Rivera asked Mr. Paolino if they had met with the Ward Councilman, Jermaine Robinson, to discuss the Project, to which he replied that he believes they did early on but does not recall what the result was. However, he stated Councilman Robinson is fully aware of what was being proposed. He also stated this Project has gone through several iterations and that they will meet again with Councilman Robinson before Site Plan Approval application. Chairman Rivera brought to Mr. Paolino's attention that Councilman Robinson is concerned about the changes made to the plan after their initial meeting early one and that these changes should be discussed with Councilman Robinson since this is something that affects the community and the community needs to approve this change.

Commissioner Ridley stated she received a lot of phone calls regarding this Project and the changes within it; and she agrees with Chairman Rivera that this Project needs to go back to Councilman Robinson to address those changes, specifically the changes made within the units.

Special Counsel Credidio asked about the deviations. She stated "I have the parking stall deviation and the first floor ceiling deviation. Is there another deviation?" Mr. Paolino responded "there was another deviation which was more of a waiver with respect to the affordable housing obligations", but Mr. Paolino stated this was probably dropped since they are executing an affordable housing agreement consistent with the ordinance that exists.

Commissioner Ridley asked the size of the studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, to which Mr. Stieve replied that the studio units will range from 470-815 square feet; the one-bedroom units will range from 600-885 square feet; and the two-bedroom units will range from 925-1,055 square feet.

There being no further questions for the presenters, Special Counsel Credidio acknowledged the next presenters, Cottage 29 Owner, LLC.

Gene Paolino, Esq., explained the Project will be located at 11, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25 & 29 Cottage Street, on Block 7903, Lots 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25, within Zone 3 of the Journal Square 2060 Redevelopment Plan. Mr. Paolino stated this Project has a number of bonus provisions which his client has utilized, as well as other developers have, which resulted in a 28-story high building, 669 units and two (2) floors of office space. Mr. Paolino stated the Project will not include parking since it is not required due to the proximity to the PATH station; there is retail in the premises; and there's a contribution by virtue of grant of an easement to the Homestead Place Extension of 12 feet pedestrian plaza.

Mr. Paolino stated they met with the Journal Square community groups; touched base with Hilltop; and also met with Councilman Boggiano. He also stated Site Plan has been filed as well.

Mr. Paolino introduced his client's architect, Rick Kearns, of Handel Architects, who proposed the development of a mixed use, a twenty-eight (28) story building, which will include two (2) floors of office space and 669 residential units and went on to present renderings of the building and describe all of its elements and their locations.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Kearns to repeat the locations of the elements for clarification. He also stated it is clear the Developer proposes a neat walkway to the Homestead Place, which will be a great contribution to the City.

Chairman Rivera stated he really likes this Project. He also said the Project had a lot of community input; that Councilman Boggiano was very much engaged with it; and that they are looking forward for it. Therefore, Chairman Rivera was very pleased.

There being no further questions for the presenters, Special Counsel Credidio acknowledged the next presenters. Donald M. Pepe, Esq., of Scarinci & Hollenbeck, LLC, introduced the Board of Commissioners to his client, Route 440 Developers, LLC, who is seeking designation for Block 21701, Lot 1, commonly known as 80 Water Street within the Route 440-Culver Redevelopment Area. Mr. Pepe stated this is Phase 1 of a three-phase project. They already submitted for Site Plan approval for the Project; Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval for Phase 1 and just Preliminary for Phases 2 and 3, which will be developed within Block 21701, Lots 13, 14, 17, 24 & 25. The overall Project is for 3,079 units, approximately 200,000 square feet of retail, which makes up to a substantial project. Once completed, approximately 50% of the land, which is owned by Developer, dedicated to various City purposes, rights of way, and most critically the Light Rail right of way that's needed to allow the Light Rail to extend through Route 440.

Mr. Pepe introduced his client's architect, Dean Marchetto, of Marchetto Higgins Stieve Architects, who presented the Project in detail, which is a residential mixed-use development which encourages the easement over these private property for the future extension of the Light Rail and further, to create open space for the neighborhood.

Mr. Marchetto explained the Project is divided into three (3) Phases. Phase 1 is a singular tower of 30 stories, with 473 units, 344 parking spaces and 256 bike spaces; it also has 11,600 square feet of retail frontage on the ground floor along Route 440. The parking garage is an automated garage which will serve for parking for the commercial use, the retail use as well as the residential use.

Phase II is a singular building that has a podium, which will have 109,310 retail square feet. It's a two-story type of retail mall above the podium, which will contain 1,118 parking spaces also in an automated garage and above the podium the Project breaks down into two (2) towers; the first tower is 39 stories and the second tower is 55 stories. He reiterated that Phase I is Preliminary and Final; Phases II and III are Preliminary Site Plan; and that these Projects (all three Phases) are being proposed with

absolutely no deviations, no variances and no waivers; the Project is 100% compliant with the regulations described in the Redevelopment Plan.

Phase III is a singular tower with retail on the ground floor; a residential lobby; and an automated garage. The tower will be 56 stories and will contain 1,039 units; 529 parking spaces; 529 bike spaces and 7,000 square feet of retail. The total open space contributed by the entire Project will be 119,796 square feet of open space.

Mr. Marchetto reiterated that Phase I will have 473 residential units and 344 parking spaces; Phase II will have 1,567 residential units and 1,118 parking spaces; and Phase III has 1,039 residential units and 529 parking spaces. In total, all three Phases combined are 3,079 residential units and 1,991 parking spaces. Total of bike parking spaces is 1,695. He stated the Project occupies 8.2 acres.

After Mr. Marchetto completed his presentation, Mr. Pepe made a final point on his comments regarding deviations. He stated they have submitted a fully complying 'as of right' plan that requires some deviations and they are currently having discussions with Planning staff that they have asked for, and are finding signage that may trigger technically a deviation due to the number of signs. Mr. Pepe said they haven't worked out the details on that but he didn't want to misrepresent and they may in fact be asking for that deviation at the request of Planning staff.

Chairman Rivera inquired about them meeting with Ward Councilwoman, Mira Prinz-Arey, and what were her comments and feelings about the Project, as well as their feedback and feel from the community about the Project.

Mr. Pepe replied they did meet with Councilwoman Prinz-Arey and stated she has concerns about the density, but that it is "as of right" and that she really didn't show any significant concerns about height, units mixes, parking or anything else, but she did have concerns about density.

Commissioner Ridley thanked Mr. Pepe for being candid about his meeting with Councilwoman Prinz-Arey and stated she was aware Councilwoman Prinz-Arey had concerns about density. Commissioner Ridley also stated she had received numerous phone calls from the community due to articles that had gone out regarding the Project. She stated the density is in fact a problem for residents and therefore Councilwoman Prinz-Arey was correct in expressing her concern. Commissioner Ridley

suggested it would be a good idea to have a community meeting to address the residents' concerns about this Project added to all the other projects going around in the area.

Mr. Pepe agreed and stated his client intends to do so.

Mr. Marchetto noted that although the Project has the density, it enables the Light Rail to go to Bayfront and that the Project provides an easement that goes across the property for use of mass transit and the extension of the Light Rail; and the development enables the Light Rail to continue to Bayfront and serve at the Bayfront and the 440 area as it expands. He feels that when the plan was conceived in this Redevelopment Zone, that was the goal and attention, to allow the Light Rail to move through and ultimately provide some relief for the use of automobile in this neighborhood as it develops.

Mr. Pepe reiterated they are also providing a significant amount of open space with the Light Rail right of way and the actual open space.

Chairman Rivera stated they had nailed it with respect to the open space, but said that what we need to focus on is the community input since they are the residents and the constituents and are going to be in the middle of all of this. "It is a huge Project and you have definitely done your homework about it, but with respect to the community you need to bring that home and make sure that they are comfortable with the Project." Chairman Rivera stated that given the amount of emails he and Commissioner Ridley had received, both being Council Members as well, these are concerns that are flashing and they just want to make sure that Developer just brings in the highlight of what the Project is bringing to the community and that the community is aware of what they want to do just as in detail as they presented it to the Board.

Mr. Pepe agreed and replied that at the time there was not a community group organized in this area, unlike Journal Square, the Heights, Downtown, Hamilton Park, which all have longstanding very well organized through organizations. He said they didn't have the same situation here, but they will happily search out how we can best accommodate that request.

Commissioner Ridley suggested they could meet with the Bayfront Advisory Board and the Chairwoman of that Board, just because they have a good grasp on the community. She also said she's sure that Councilwoman Prinz-Arey has more insight on some groups that might be in the area or that might be good to tap it to.

Mr. Pepe agreed and thank Commissioner Ridley for her suggestion.

Vice Chairwoman Jones inquired if there has been a traffic impact done in the area.

Mr. Pepe stated there has been one and that it is part of their Site Plan Application. He said he didn't think about inviting their Traffic Engineer for this meeting, but the report did demonstrate, with respect to parking and circulation, that the Project does not create any attainable traffic conditions.

Special Counsel Credidio noted there were no further questions from the Board.

Chairman Rivera asked if the Board would be voting on any designations this evening. Special Counsel Credidio replied it is listed on the Agenda but noted the Agenda is subject to affirmation or withdrawal once we come back from Executive Session.

At this time Chairman Rivera asked if anyone from the public would like to address the Board of Commissioners. General Counsel advised that members of the public who wished to speak during today's meeting were encouraged to pre-register with the Agency's administrator or to submit comments by email in advance. If they did not pre-register, they would still be permitted to speak and may indicate their wish to speak now by utilizing the "raise your hand" icon to indicate their desire to speak. If they were participating in today's meeting through a web browser, they could raise their hands by opening the chat feature in the Zoom conference window by first selecting the "raise my hand" icon, and then commenting in the chat box with a typewritten message that includes their last name and home address. Speakers who were participating by telephone and would like to speak during public comment could "raise your hand" by pressing *9.

Mr. Troy Schumman, of 407 Grant Avenue, in Jersey City, stated he lives right next to the proposed Project on the Culver-440 Redevelopment. He stated that as to potential organizations that could be reached out to, and that he just wanted to note that all of the buildings adjacent to the Project have condo associations and that they will be happy to discuss the Project collectively or individually.

Mr. Pepe thanked Mr. Schumman and gave him his email to establish further communication.

There being no more Public Speakers, the public speaking portion of the meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm. Accordingly, the Board went into closed session. The following Resolution was introduced and duly seconded: the following voted "AYE": Commissioners Brown, Carlucci, Jones, Ona, Ridley and Rivera and the following voted "NAY": None.

Emerging from Executive Session at 7:35 pm, General Counsel Credidio made it known that discussions involving litigation, contract negotiations and personnel took place; no formal action was taken.

General Counsel Credidio asked if there were any questions from any members of the Board regarding Items #1 through #16. There being no questions, General Counsel Credidio asked if the Board members wanted to move to establish a Consent Agenda.

There being no further requests, comments, and/or questions, Chairman Rivera called for a Consent Agenda for Items #1 through #16, with the exception to table Items #7 and 14, which were moved, seconded and voted unanimously. Accordingly, the following Resolutions were introduced and duly seconded: (attached)

Accordingly, the following voted "AYE": Commissioners Brown, Jones, Ona, Ridley and Rivera; and the following voted "NAY": None. Chairman Rivera thereupon declared the Motion carried and the Resolutions adopted as introduced.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Secretary