

**MINUTES  
OF THE  
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING BOARD  
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY**

**MINUTES JUNE 2, 2022  
APPROVED ON JULY 28, 2022**

**TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Cranbury Township Planning Board was held via Zoom <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86494062397> Meeting ID: 864 9406 2397 on June 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Michael Kaiser, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

Adequate notice as well as electronic notice of this meeting were provided in accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and the regulations governing remote public meetings. The notice included the time, date and location of the meeting and clear and concise instructions for accessing the meeting. A copy of the agenda for this meeting was made available to the public for download on the Township's website, and all documents and other materials pertaining to any applications listed on the agenda were posted electronically and made available for download at least forty-eight hours prior to the meeting.

All participants in this meeting are required to keep their microphones muted until recognized or directed otherwise. The Board will engage the Zoom "mute" function until the time for public comment is reached.

Members of the public who wish to make a comment are required to use the "Raise Hand" feature in Zoom, or, if participating by telephone, by pressing \*9. Once recognized by the chair, the participant will be able to unmute his or her microphone and offer a comment. Interested parties wishing to ask a question or make a comment during a public hearing on an application will be sworn in and asked to provide their name and address before proceeding. The Board Chair or his designee will manage the order of the comments.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

- Ferrante, Michael
- Gallagher, James
- Gittings, Bill
- Jones, Dominique
- Kaiser, Michael

- Mavoides, Peter
- Spann, Evelyn
- Stewart, Jason
- Wittman, Wayne

### **PROFESSIONALS IN ATTENDANCE**

- David Shropshire, Traffic Engineer
- David Hoder, Board Engineer
- Elizabeth Leheny, Township Planner
- Robert Davidow, Esquire, Board Attorney
- Robin Tillou, Planning Board Administrative Officer

### **APPLICATION**

**PB337-21      Cranbury Self Storage, LLC  
                  Block 16, Lot 9, Zone GC  
                  116 S. Main Street  
                  Preliminary and Final Site Plan**

REPRESENTATIVES:      Frank Brennan, Esq., Brennan Law  
                                 Ernest Feist P.E., P.P., CME, Center State Engineering  
                                 Sharif Aly, Amer Tech Engineering

### **EXHIBITS**

- A-1 – Color Rendering – Architectural Rendering
- A-2 – 8 Sheets of Site Plan
- A-3 – 6 Pages of Architectural Elevations
- A-4 – Color Aerial View from NJDOT

Mr. Davidow announced he has reviewed notice for the application. The notice was adequate and this Board can take jurisdiction over the application.

Mr. Brennan gave a summary of the application stating until recently the property had a residential home, garage, shed and storage trailers that were not used for years. The bulk of the property to be used is towards S. Main Street and the side of the property will be towards Brick Yard Road. There will be three buildings which will be used for self-storage and part of the one building will be used for offices related to the self-storage facility. There will be a three-story building with 32,000 sq. ft. of self-storage on each floor (96,000 sq. ft. total). A one-story building will be 4,600 sq. ft. and the last building will be 5,200 sq. ft. with a total of 700 storage units for all the buildings. The applicant is proposing 14 parking spaces along S. Main Street and an additional 8 banked parking spaces.

Mr. Davidow swore in the Board Professionals and the Applicant's Professionals.

Ernest Feist, P.E. P.P., Center State Engineering, was introduced and stated he has been a licensed engineer in NJ for over 25 years. A licensed planner for 20 years and the owner of Center State Engineering for close to 30 years. He is the municipal engineer and planner for Perth Amboy and the Borough of Spotswood. He has a degree in Biology and Engineering. He has testified before a dozen or more Boards.

Chair Kaiser accepted Mr. Feist's credentials.

Mr. Feist displayed Exhibit A-1, Architectural rendering.

Mr. Feist stated in the planners report there was discussion of the architectural rendering and choice of colors and materials. The architect hired produced a color and material scheme that would fit into a suburban setting. Neutral colors were used with a mix of finishes and materials. If Board members feel another color scheme is necessary, the applicant is willing to be flexible with the colors. The signage proposed on the architectural rendering as well as the architectural elevations would need a waiver in terms of the height of the building as well as the total area of the sign. The scale of the building sign is appropriate given the scale of the building. If the Board does not approve the design waiver for the sign, they will be compliant with the ordinance for the building mounted sign.

Mr. Davidow and Ms. Leheny confirmed the sign would be a variance, not a waiver.

Mr. Feist stated the employees' main function in the office will be to set up the storage units with new customers and set them up for access to their storage locker. The access to the storage units will be a highly automated system such as a key fob or a swipe card. There will be 24/7 video surveillance of the property. They can maintain logs of who enters the site and who leaves the site and at what time. There will be no caretaker on site. The office is modest and is equipped for an employee to be there during normal business hours.

Ms. Spann stated there was testimony that there will be three buildings, but we are only seeing renderings of the one building.

In response, Mr. Feist displayed Exhibit A-2, Site Plan.

Mr. Feist stated the proposed building number three is the three-story building (which is the primary building). The other two are one story buildings that provide direct access to the units through roll up type doors.

Chair Kaiser asked for clarification if the rendering shown in Exhibit A-1 was looking east

toward the project.

Mr. Feist clarified yes it would be from Main Street looking at the entrance. On the left-hand side of the rendering, you can see one of the one story buildings.

Mr. Gittings stated he did not see the floor plans and elevations in the packet that was given.

In response, Mr. Feist displayed A-3 – Architectural Elevations.

Mr. Feist stated the first sheet is the ground floor of the larger building. The bottom left-hand corner is the retail office space along with the men's' and women's' restroom, an office for the daily operator for the site and a utility room. There are elevators on both sides of the building as well as stair towers on the two rear corners and in the office area. There is a series of corridors that provide access to the storage units. The storage units vary in size based on demands. The west elevation is like the rendering in exhibit A-1. The north elevation would be the right side of the building where the office wraps around. The last two sheets are the other two stand along buildings that are one story. The material for the lower level is a stone veneer and dryvit. There is a drip edge along the top area where the sign is. There is a standing metal roof and 26 gage prefinished metal wall panel systems for the side and rear of the building.

Mr. Wittman stated the two separate buildings look like one big building in an L form.

Mr. Feist stated we are labeling it two separate buildings.

Mr. Gittings asked if the dryvit is being submitted for a waiver due to it not being allowed in the ordinance.

Mr. Feist stated yes.

Mr. Gittings wanted clarification that it is metal panels all around the exterior walls.

Mr. Feist stated yes.

Mr. Gittings would like a rendering from what the development would look like from Route 130 coming from the circle.

Mr. Feist stated they do not have a rendering showing that.

Mr. Gittings asked if there will be rooftop equipment. Is it climate controlled?

Mr. Feist stated yes, the facility will be heated and cooled. The top of the storage unit is open so heating and cooling is circulated throughout the buildings, but each unit will not be climate

controlled. The architect's plan would be to have a roof mounted unit. We do not have architectural renderings showing that and the one-story units would have to have their own stand alone pad mounted units.

Mr. Gittings stated the ordinance states to have large masses to be broken down.

Mr. Feist stated the architect has been asked to create façade elements that break the long façade down. The area where the sign is and the treatment of the canopy around the office and the glass in the office area breaks that mass. The site is not highly visible of Route 130 from the circle. They are two properties off Brick Yard Road. The Valero gas station and Route 130 is between them.

Mr. Gittings asked if it is all sidewalk between the cars and the building.

Mr. Feist stated yes.

Mr. Gittings stated the plans do not equal what the rendering is. It does not show where the sign is and the bump out. The trellises are shown but there is no earth to grow out of. The sliding gate on the right-hand side shows coming into the corner of the office. The gate should be pushed back to the glass.

Mr. Feist stated the gate was reviewed at the DRC meeting as well as realigning the gate to be at the back of the office area and they can revise.

Mr. Gittings stated the view issue coming from Route 130 are seeing plenty of metal panels and the rooftop equipment. This could get unsightly if not done properly.

Chair Kaiser stated the prohibition of dryvit could be because of durability. A more suitable alternative could be stucco or something more substantial for that front building façade.

Mr. Feist stated they are flexible in the colors and materials and would use the materials permitted by the ordinance if that were what the Board would like.

Mr. Feist stated the attempt is to modify the box shown on the site plan to accommodate the bump out in the architectural rendering.

Ms. Spann suggested breaking the mass up with landscaping so there is not a long thrust of metal.

Mr. Gittings stated landscaping along the north property line will be important.

Mr. Feist stated they will provide a rendering from the north end of the building.

Ms. Leheny suggested putting in windows in the staircases to break up the mass. That will bring in lighting.

Mr. Hoder stated it is important to show where the mechanicals will be on the roof, so they are not seen from the street or from Route 130.

Mr. Sharif Aly, Amer Tech Engineering, was introduced and stated he is an NJIT graduate with a bachelor's in science and engineering from 1985. He received his license in 1989 and has been practicing in site planning and subdivision for the state. He has appeared before Cranbury Township Board numerous times.

Chair Kaiser accepted Mr. Aly's credentials.

Mr. Aly stated the proposal meets the requirements in the zone. The property is 9.4 acres and 1.7 acres is buildable. The lot width, the setback and the building heights are compliant. The building heights are 40' in height, so the height requirement is met. The impervious coverage is 18% and the zone is 60% so that is met. The floor area ratio for all buildings on site is .26 which meets the requirement. The parking is a total of 22 spaces and the requirement is 25, but that can be addressed, and we can add another three. The existing condition is the whole entire area along the frontage is the exception with an environmentally sensitive area. There is 480 ft. of frontage along S. Main Street. The entire site is being cleaned up where previously the site was in chaos with different uses. The rest of the site not being used is an environmentally sensitive area containing wetlands. They have a Letter of Interpretation securing the wetlands and the buffer on the wetlands is a 50 ft. buffer. There is a vernal habitat off site near the stream and is being cited in the wetlands and there is a 50 ft. buffer. The flood hazard is delineated on site and is being approved by the state of NJ. The FEMA line is shown on the map. All environmentally sensitive areas are identified on site. The circulation of the site is the frontage along S. Main Street is 24 ft. wide pavement, the county improvement is 26 ft. from the center line meaning they will be adding 10 ft. of pavement all along the front of the site. They will be adding county curb along the site. The existing site has two driveways. One for the existing home and the driveway for the contractor yard. The proposal has an ingress and egress so the opening along the county road will be the same as the existing. It will have a one way into the parking area and there is one ADA space near the office area which meets the requirement for ADA. The site was designed in 2017, but if needed they will designate a space for the EV space. The site plan shows a one-way circulation within the parking lot. They will change the site plan to two ways as recommended. The other driveway will be an exit driveway. The gate will be moved back as discussed. You go around one way counterclockwise. There will be eight green spaces and three will be added as required. The dumpster will be 10 x 10 located near the green spaces and the building color and materials will be matched to the dumpster. The 2' high wall in the southeast corner is a drop curb with a footing to try and stay away from the wetlands buffer. There is a filter for the water quality and the filter will be located near the parking of the office

and is an underground system with 36" pipes that go between the buildings. The site is not a rechargeable site. Due to not being a rechargeable site they will be limited to water quality and reduction storm. The stormwater regulations requirement has been met. There used to be a ditch along the road, but they will be filling in the ditch, cleaning out the area, putting in a curb, road widening and will have two inlets with rim and another inlet to capture runoff. There are four utility poles in the area to pull electric and hot water. The septic will be behind building 3, south of the office. To the north of the facility is Brick Yard Road and a waterline from there is running to the area and we will be extending the water line to the site. We have reached out to American Water Company to do so and are waiting for a reply. The water will be extended to the site, most likely an 8" depending on the pressure. A fire flow will be extended to the building for fire protection and will have a fire hydrant near the office which would be the southwest corner of the site. That will be coordinated with the fire department. The electric will be from PSE&G along Main Street.

Chair Kaiser asked if there will be a backflow preventer for fire sprinklers in the building.

Mr. Aly stated there will be a hookup outside and will be coordinated with the fire department. They must have a maintenance room with a backflow preventer.

Chair Kaiser stated the backflow preventer will have to be shown on the revised plan. We would not want to see a large structure in the front of the building to insulate the backflow preventer. The Board would prefer the inside of the building.

Mr. Aly stated the proposal meets all the requirements for lighting. There are three pole lights to light up the parking lot and six wall lights, two on each building. The lighting are digital lights. The freestanding light poles comply with the height and each one is 20 ft. in height.

Mr. Aly stated the landscaping plan shows the site will be cleaned up and cleared. The area along the northern property line is clear and the proposal will be adding landscaping to the side of building #3. There will be a mix of street trees, evergreen and shrubs along the side of building #3 parking lot. There will be 33 shade trees, 21 evergreens, shrubs and grass area. The applicant will be compliant with all the professionals' reviews.

Mr. Hoder stated if the hot boxes are in the setback you may have to come back to the Board so research should be done on that. The Board should decide if there are sidewalks needed in this area. The ordinance requirement is an easement to be dedicated to the state or to the Delaware Canal Commission. Crosswalks are required, either painted or pavers for pedestrians. If you feel there is somewhere pedestrians will walk you should provide crosswalks. The front parking is within 6 ft. of the building and no less than 10 ft. is required so a waiver must be requested. Will any water be coming off the wetlands front area that you are not developing? There is currently a ditch that will be removed for that. Will the grades work and will you set that up so we know there will not be ponding in the area adjacent to the roadway?

Mr. Aly stated yes. They will coordinate with the county for the sidewalks and the crosswalk. The drainage will have a manhole, and another inlet. The highest elevation is 83.18 and the nearest contour line is 84, so the area is a flat area, but will continue to drain from 84 into the catch basin of 83 in the same direction. The environmentally sensitive area prevents any disturbance.

Mr. Hoder stated he would like an analysis of a cross section of the ditch to get an idea whether there is a problem with the flow of that ditch.

Ms. Leheny stated regarding landscaping, she recommends looking at the recommended plantings that have been provided in the ordinance. The landscaping must comply with the recommended species. The hot boxes should have landscaping around it. How do people use the site? Can someone access the site at all hours? How do they access the gate?

Mr. Feist stated the site is accessible 24/7 by the users, they pull through the gate with a key fob or a scanned card. Users on first floor can pull up directly to their unit. If they must use the elevator or stairs they will pull up along the side of the building, park and move their items for storage onto the elevator and into the unit. The vehicles vary depending on what they are renting. The larger units can be a car, rental trailer or a small box truck.

Mr. Shropshire went through the Shropshire review letter. He wanted to know the details of the trash pickup.

Mr. Feist stated the trellis is small and serves the office space only. The dumpster pickup would be approximately once a week.

Mr. Shropshire stated the delivery, trash activity and the turning movements seem to work fine. Regarding item #9 of the Shropshire review letter, the 10 ft. separation of the parking area in the front, it was suggested for a stripe to be added by Mr. Aly. The end of the line states strip, not stripe. The idea would be to have a grassed area between the parking area and the sidewalk so there was a clear 6 ft. wide sidewalk. It was not putting a stripe in the parking area.

Mr. Aly stated they prefer to ask for a design waiver. Each one of the parking stalls is 18 ft. deep, there is the curb and then the sidewalk. If an oversize vehicle (a large pickup) comes in and overhangs 2 ft, they will still have the 4 ft. for a walkway area. The preference is to stay with this design. Less impervious onsite makes less flooding.

Mr. Shropshire asked if there will be any loading that happens through the office.

Mr. Feist stated there should not be any loading or unloading from that parking area. That parking area is only for new customers to set up a storage unit or if they will need to make a

payment. There is no additional need for the width other than for pedestrians.

Mr. Shropshire asked if they were willing to put in the doors on the three sides of the building? The bollards and striping were suggested to protect the outward swinging doors from vehicles.

Mr. Feist stated yes, they can comply with that.

Mr. Hoder stated to put a grass strip against the building whether 4 ft. or 6 ft. and move the curb down toward S. Main Street. That way you would be exchanging grass for grass and not adding impervious coverage or less than 1% change.

Mr. Aly stated that is fine.

Mr. Feist stated that would be reducing the 40 ft. setback to the parking lot. That may then put us in a bulk variance situation.

Ms. Spann stated eliminating one or two parking spaces to then put in an island will soften the building.

Mr. Hoder stated he prefers the landscape strip against the building due to creating impervious coverage and it allows the applicant to put plants in across the building as opposed to one location.

Ms. Leheny stated the setback must be 10 ft. between the street and the parking bay.

Mr. Feist stated they can put the landscape strip against the building and reduce the size of the landscape island at the road.

Mr. Gittings stated the concern is where the eight banked spaces are, the elevator is and where people are going for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor storage units.

Mr. Feist stated the number of proposed storage units is 700. The similar storage unit in Monroe has 500+. There are 12 parking spaces for the office in Monroe and typically 4 or 5 spaces would be used at a peak. The experience in Monroe is there will typically not be more than two or three users at one time.

Mr. Gittings asked what the DRCC 100 ft. setback is going through the rear of Building #3?

Mr. Feist stated a typical DRCC ft. buffer is 100 ft. for the limit line. That is delineated and shown on the map. The area behind building #3 and the southside of building #1 is disturbed. Mr. Feist continued, there is broken concrete and stone all within the DRCC buffer. That will be cleaned up and restored with grass to restore the buffer. Since the area is already being

disturbed, the DRCC will allow disturbance with their buffer if we compensate that 1 to 1 somewhere else on the site.

Mr. Gittings asked what the gate is made of. There is no fence surrounding the facility.

Mr. Aly stated no fence is proposed. If the applicant would like a fence, they can put in a fence.

Mr. Gittings asked if they have a generator planned.

Mr. Aly stated they have not spoken of a generator, but there is an area between the road and building #2 that has a concrete pad. So, if there will be a generator it would be in that area with landscaping around it.

Chair Kaiser recommended doing that.

Mr. Feist stated their intent is not to get a generator. They do not have one at the Monroe facility. The concrete pad was in anticipation of the utility company needing a location for the transformer.

Mr. Ferrante stated he would like to see the elevation of what it looks like from views where you see the first floor and what the building will look like from other directions. Is the applicant aware of the work being done by the NJDOT regarding Half Acre Road?

Ms. Spann stated Mr. Feranda asked NJDOT that Brick Yard Road align with the exit of the 7-11/Valero. She would also like drawings from the applicant that include Valero.

Mr. Feist displayed Exhibit A-4, the rendering from NJDOT.

Mr. Feist stated it would be better to keep the existing driveway locations due to the proposed development not running into the Valero property with the NJDOT revisions.

Mr. Gittings asked if the exit for the proposed is 40 ft. from the intersection of Brick Yard Road and will they be able to make a left and/or a right exiting the site?

Mr. Feist stated the exit will be 40 ft. from Brick Yard Road and vehicles may make a right or left exiting.

Ms. Spann stated she would caution to look at manholes and poles and to work with utilities.

Chair Kaiser asked if solar is something they would be considering.

Mr. Feist stated the Monroe facility does have solar there. We have not contacted any solar

companies. If it is feasible and there is a connection point nearby there is a flat roof to consider solar.

Chair Kaiser suggested the EV charging stations to move further away from the office due to if someone is using the charging station it may be blocking the spaces that are frequently used. We normally like to see the dumpster location more out of site. Is there an alternate location that can be reviewed?

Mr. Aly stated they can put the dumpster on the south side of building #3 which is the area in the back.

Chair Kaiser asked if the Board would approve the waiver for a sidewalk on S. Main Street. He would like to see a pedestrian crosswalk from Valero to the site.

Mr. Shropshire stated the county would be responsible for a crosswalk or striping due to it being a county road and that can be requested by the applicant.

Mr. Feist stated he does not feel the county, or the DOT will want a crosswalk across S. Main Street.

Mr. Shropshire stated the best way to state it in the resolution is for the applicant to request to the county and the NJDOT when the future intersection is designed to look at pedestrian accessibility along the site frontage and across the intersection. If the NJDOT or county does not find it viable the request is out there.

Chair Kaiser opened the meeting to the public for this application.

With no public comment, Chair Kaiser closed the public forum.

**MOTIONED TO TABLE CRANBURY SELF STORAGE TO A SPECIAL MEETING JULY 28, 2022 WITH NO NEW NOTICE: Mr. Wittman**

**SECONDED: Mr. Mavoides**

**ROLL CALL:**

**AYES: Mr. Ferrante, Mr. Gittings, Mr. Mavoides, Ms. Spann, Mr. Wittman and Mr. Kaiser**

**NAYS: None.**

**ABSTAIN: None.**

**MOTION PASSED**

### **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

There being no further business, Mr. Wittman made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Ferrante offered a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at

10:05 pm.

**CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY**

I, the undersigned, do at this moment certify;

That I am duly elected and secretary of the Cranbury Township Planning Board and that the minutes of the Planning Board, held on June 2, 2022, consisting of twelve (12) pages, constitute a true and correct copy of the minutes of the said meeting.

IN WITNESS of which, I have hereunto subscribed my name to said Planning Board this July 29, 2022.

*Robin Tillou* \_\_\_\_\_  
Robin Tillou, Administrative Officer

/rst