



City of Westfield

William Carellas, Chair
Cheryl Crowe, Vice Chair
John Bowen
Robert Goyette, Jr.
Jane Magarian
Philip McEwan
Raymond St. Hilaire
Bernard Puza, Associate
Richard Salois, Associate

March 21, 2023
City Council Chambers

PB MEMBER PARTICIPANTS
 MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF

William Carellas, Chair
 Cheryl Crowe, Vice-Chair
 Robert Goyette, Jr.
 Jane Magarian
 Philip McEwan
 Raymond St. Hilaire
 John Bowen
 Bernard Puza (Associate)
 Richard Salois (Associate)

Jay Vinskey, Principal Planner
 Christine Fedora, Secretary

Vice Chair Crowe, serving as acting Chair, and opened the meeting at 7:00.

- Public Participation (on any matter not subject to a public hearing)
Vice Chair Crowe asked if anyone would like to address the Board. None.
- Review and approval of previous meeting minutes. (02-21-23)
Member Magarian MOTOINED, seconded by Member Goyette to approve the March 7, 2023 minutes. All in favor.
- Review of plans not requiring approval under Subdivision Control Law
 - 312 East Mountain Rd./Roy

Planner Vinskey informed the Board this originally came in as a frontage waiver which is how the Board historically did these, but this plan does not show a division into 2 lots, so plan can be approved as an ANR (revised plan on share drive); variance has been granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Member Magarian MOTIONED, seconded by member Puza to approve. All in favor.

- Public Hearings (and possible deliberation and decision)

- Continuation - Definitive Subdivision Plan (3 lots at Parcel 73R-7)-Dox Road improvements.

Vice-Chair Crowe stated the applicant has requested a continuance until April 4, 2023. Member Magarian MOTIONED, seconded by Member St. Hilaire to continue to April 4. All in favor.

- Continuation - Site Plan Approval/Stormwater Permit - Self-storage facility - 0 Cycle Street (Parcel 21-32-1A)

Planner Vinskey stated Member Salois invoked the Mullin Rule; Member Puza remains not eligible.

Filipe Cravo of R. Levesque Associates, representing the petitioner, stated the applicant is before the Board for a Site Plan, Stormwater Permit for a proposed self-storage facility to be located on 0 Cycle Street. Mr. Cravo responded to the concerns following the previous meeting.

The storage facility will be located at the Columbia Mfg. Company at the end of Cleveland, Toledo and Lozier Street a portion of that property will be ANR'd off which will provide a driveway to self-storage facility which will be off of Cleveland Street; this will allow access to the office building, as well as the 12 units in the back there will also be a gate at the entrance. Additional information requested was the number of units; based on the spec design of 5 x 10 and 10 x 20, there will be 430 units on the property. Mr. Cravo then addressed the traffic information in regards to the anticipated traffic, there will be 7 vehicles per day per 100 units, on 430 unit project, looking at 30-31 trips per day, 15 hour open window, so 2 trips per hr avg. Mr. Cravo then addressed the concerns regarding the emergency vehicle access, stated they ran a swept path analysis which simulated emergency vehicles entering the site which demonstrated the vehicles can make the loop (on plan sheet).

Mr. Cravo presented a photometric plan showing the main storage unit facility. He further noted it shows the facility wall packs, overhead lighting is located on the buildings, downcast LED lighting, and one light pole at the gate of the facility, all show zero foot-candles at the property line.

Mr. Cravo also noted at the last meeting they had not received the Engineer's comments but they have since received and reviewed them. They made those changes and they did not require any changes to the Stormwater system or utilities, technical details and signatures within the Stormwater report itself. They have penned a response letter.

Mr. Cravo then addressed the additional items that were added: A guard rail has been added around the edge of pavement/steep areas, ground mounted pylon sign is near the entrance of driveway. The driveway entrance has been shifted to be more in line with Cleveland Avenue pavement line, trees added along the line to the north and northeast along the residential properties/apartments. Also included were architectural plans showing what the units would look like, they would be typical storage units, one story, overhead doors, they will not be climate controlled, outdoor temperature storage units.

Member Magarian stated with the explanation of the traffic trips per day it would be 60 vehicles per day (each trip coming and going.) Member Salois also noted that 7 vehicle trips per day per 100, would be 14 trips, so 30 trips per day would be 60 total runs per day.

Vice-Chair Crowe asked if they are proposing a sign? Mr. Cravo stated on the frontage of where the driveway connects to Cycle Street there is a ground mounted sign, that sign would have to conform with the sign regulations.

Member St. Hilaire asked if there would be no heat and no air within the facilities? Member Goyette also asked if they would be no client control? Mr. Cravo stated they were correct, there would not be any climate control, they will all be ambient. Mr. Cravo replied correct, since the last meeting it has been changed to all ambient at this point.

Vice-Chair Crowe asked where the entrance and exit would be for the storage units? Mr. Cravo stated the driveway entrance would be off of Cleveland Avenue, he further added there is only one driveway for in and out. It encompasses what is already paved and extends to surrounding areas. Vice-Chair Crowe asked if it would be possible to have a different exit and entrance, she suggested possibly entering at Lozier Avenue and exiting Toledo Avenue.

Mr. Cravo showed where the frontage for new parcel comes down and ends, in order to get out of those streets, in order to do that they would have to go onto the parcel next door. He also noted that Mr. Levesque had met with Councilor Figy and discussed some possible means of egress onto South Meadow Street; he believes the conclusion was there was no means to do that across the site, this is preferred way.

Vice-Chair Crowe noted this was one of the main concerns the residents stressed. She added she has driven down there several times, asked if the construction vehicles would be going down the same street or can they have different access? Mr. Cravo suggested routing them in a preferred route and maybe portions of the construction could access via South Meadow.

Member Magarian asked if construction vehicles can use South Meadow, how come the project can't use South Meadow? Mr. Cravo replied the construction is temporary. Mr. Cravo replied their frontage is only on Cycle Street. Vice Chair Crowe asked if he was saying he wouldn't shift things to make traffic flow better? Mr. Cravo replied he was not saying that. Councilor Figy also stated he went to the Traffic Commission and suggested reducing speed and a 4-way stop. He was told they could not do the 4-way stop. He further noted he spoke to the Engineering Department in regards to the condition of the sidewalks on Cleveland Avenue, Toledo and Lozier. He further added if contractors use the facility chances are they will be using the facility 2 or 3 times a day. He also suggested to gain access to the rear of the property to go down South Broad Street and Ponders Hollow Road to South Meadow, avoid neighborhood.

The Board briefly discussed changing the access to South Meadow Road. Planner Vinsky added they have to access the lot across their own frontage, the Board does not have the authority to approve an alternate access of their property without a ZBA variance. Member Salois added the Board cannot require them to cross someone else's property even if they control the abutting entity, the only place they have access is on Cycle Street and Gold Street.

Councilor Figy also asked for clarification on the number of units. The application says there will be 10 building units and Mr. Cravo stated there would be 12 building units, he asked for clarification on the number. Mr. Cravo stated there would be 10, and not 12 storage buildings. Councilor Figy also stated he was happy to hear they are taking the climate controlled units out. He then asked about the light poles: Would there be any light poles at the gate? Would it be dimmable? Mr. Cravo stated the light pole would be cast downward, and it would be turned off by 10:00.

Don Jaszek - 40 Lozier Avenue - inquired how tall the buildings would be as well as the square footage. He then showed a photo of his home stating this facility he could fit 41 of his homes into these units.

Jessica Brennan - 36 Casimir Street - What type of storage units? Would there be commercial use? Mr. Cravo stated the breakdown would be approximately 80% residential and 20% commercial. There will be no businesses run out of the storage units. The hours would be 7am - 10pm. Ms. Brennan voiced concerns regarding the Kennedy Senior Center, their back yard is right next to this property. Will there be extra police and security? This can impede on the seniors' quality of life.

Kimberly Hatch - Cleveland Avenue - Voiced concerns regarding the safety of the neighborhood. How will the neighborhood be protected? Big trucks, contractors, sidewalks disarray, not an industrial roadway; safety of people - how will they be protected? Vice-Chair Crowe informed her the traffic concerns would need to be addressed by the traffic Commission, it is not under the purview of the Planning Board. She further stated the light on the entry way would fall under the light ordinance. How will the neighborhood be protected against air pollution, increase traffic? Vice-Chair Crowe informed her earlier in the meeting there was discussion about another exit or entrance, at this time there is no definite answer. How would the storage units be regulated and overseen for inspection? Mr. Cravo responded there is a lease agreement stating what can and cannot be stored, they are not there watching them putting in and taking out items, but if it is found someone is not following the lease agreement their lease will be revoked.

Ms. Hatch further asked about hazardous materials, what if there are hazardous wastes stored there and there are no inspections, what fire prevention measures are in place? Mr. Cravo replied there are standard Universal Fire Services in place for any facility, there are certain regulations and thresholds that are over a certain amount and a sprinkler system would be required.

Ms. Hatch continued the proposal is to build on a floodplain, they are adjacent to wetlands and an area that is contaminated, if flooding were to occur what would happen to prevent hazardous materials from getting into the water supply? Vice-Chair Crowe stated they are being reviewed by the Conservation Commission. Ms. Hatch further asked about pest control measures? Mr. Cravo replied he would have to check into that. Ms. Hatch asked what steps would be taken to deter the homeless? Security? Mr. Cravo replied these are storage units, there is no water, no sanitary facility, one light on the interior of the unit, there will be someone on site during business hours with a camera on the system, and it is locked from the outside of the building, the facility will not be manned 24/7, but will during regular business hours.

Al Liptak - 20 Cleveland Avenue - When Columbia was there both parcels were owned by Columbia? When Mr. Bacon purchased the property he purchased both parcels. Planner Vinsky clarified they are currently separate entities that own each parcel, but he was not aware of the ownership history.

Joe Gulsvig- 25 Cleveland Avenue - manned guard? Keycard access? Vice Chair Crowe, yes keycard.

Kristen Mello - 27 Moseley Avenue & City Councilor- asked a series of questions:

- 1) How much water is anticipated on average in the Stormwater retention pond on a daily basis?
- 2) The FEMA maps show a 2% chance of flooding in this area, is that based on the assumption that the Little River Levee is not suffering from years of neglect?
- 3) What is the base flood elevation of the levy if the Little River levee were to fail?
- 4) How would removal of the Little River levee or total failure affect the residents?
- 5) The property owner is subject to EPA Notice of Activity and use limitation dated 2-24-20 for adjacent property.
- 6) What chemicals were found on the property and the adjacent property?
- 7) If these chemicals are mobile what will it do to the Stormwater management system? If this happens how will the Stormwater Management system be addressed?
- 8) The Little River takes a bend that scoops and circles back on itself, that is why they built the levee, but it has not been maintained, it's easy to flood there. The City does not have a Stormwater Coordinator or a Flood Commission. She further mentioned the additional 27,000 gallons of water per inch of rain that would be added to this neighborhood if this is approved.
- 9) She then informed the Board of what they have to find in order to approve this, that being it has to be in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. She strongly suggested it's not and she is not the only person in the City telling the Board.

Members expressed concern that Ms. Mello was not being respectful to the Board. She stated the Board is the one holding the authority, it should not be the chair of the Natural Resources Committee waiting for problems to happen; she's asking the Board for their help.

Mr. Cravo responded to the floodplain that is a very specific area and is regulated by the Conservation Commission there are certain parameters they have to meet for Conservation. As far as the Stormwater Review it had a peer review and received their comments which contained a few clarification items and minor revisions. They issued a letter stating the design was adequate and met regulations in the Wetland Protection Act and Stormwater Management Ordinance. 6' fence.

Karen Orell -8 Cycle Street - Voiced concerns regarding the storm retention ponds and where they are located. The overflow goes down Cycle Street and goes into the basement apartments, she felt that should be rethought. Mr. Cravo stated a peer review was completed and the Stormwater design calculations can't let any additional water than previously leaching on the site, it has to match or reduce the amount of water leaching. He further noted when it rains there is a certain volume of water that comes off, it is designed to collect and convey to the recharge area so no additional runoff will be leaving the site than is currently leaving the site.

Further concerns brought forward was the height of the fence, at the previous meeting the applicant said the fence could be 8 feet tall instead of 6, the tallest building is 9 feet tall what will make it so there will be no light trespass into their homes. Mr. Cravo reiterated the lights will be downcast.

Vice-Chair Crowe also suggested adding a berm, coupled with the fence. Member Bowen also noted the lights will be pointing down and it is not legal for them to shine the lights into your home. She further asked if the lights around the units can be off at night? Mr. Cravo noted he would have to ask the applicant.

Mr. Cravo stated he has a photometric plan which analyzes the light. It was suggested lights be motioned activated? Mr. Cravo stated there will be lights around buildings, not sure on motion. Repairing of sidewalks? Not in project's purview.

Vice Chair Crowe asked if it would be manned 24/7? Not manned, but it would have a security system 24/7. The security tapes would be held for 1 month.

Councilor Figy presented the Board with a list of conditions the residents came up with at a meeting with them.

1. Entrance and exit to be located at the rear.
2. They would like the fence to be larger than the tallest unit, and be a brown vinyl.
3. They are glad there will be no climate controlled units which will help with homeless people living there.
4. No idling or queuing on Public Street.
5. Hours of operation 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Sundays off.
6. 24-7 operation not to be allowed for safety
7. The build out to be staggered, build first half, then second half.
8. LED lights with yellow bulbs.
9. Motion detectors on units for after hours.
10. They do not like the light pole.
11. The signs that lead to the project not be lit.
12. Relocation of the entrance to be halfway between Lozier and Cleveland Avenue -Come in on Lozier and leave on Cleveland which will cut the traffic in half.
13. No electric outlets inside units.
14. Units to be single story.
15. Cameras back up to the cloud held for 3 months.
16. Someone on site 24/7.
17. No alcohol.
18. Like to limit the contractor's area to 10% of the square footage, if contractors are allowed.

Councilor Figy stated he will be putting pressure on the Engineering Department as well as the Department of Public Works to move up the Old Town Reconstruction Project for the Lozier Street area. He feels consideration needs to be given to the growth, neighborhood and sidewalks.

Member Bowen suggested the hours of operation to be earlier, 7am – 8pm. Member St. Hilaire felt that Member Bowen's suggestion of early opening is a good idea, 6am?. Planner Vinskey

reminded the Board the use is by right, and limiting hours is regulating the use which is not typically done with your site plan approvals, just with special permit uses.

Vice-Chair Crowe suggested Mr. Cravo give additional thoughts to the entrance and exit locations. Member Salois also suggested moving the entrance over.

Planner Vinskey reminded the Board they still have not gotten the final sign off for the Stormwater, just the review comments/response.

Planner Vinskey noted, and the Board reviewed, email comments that were received.

The Board reviewed the outstanding items for the next meeting: Stormwater review, possible change for entrance and exit

Vinskey suggested opportunity for evergreen planting mass near entry that can provide separation to shield the neighbors.

Member St. Hilaire MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to continue to April 4. All in favor.

- Special Permit - Flag lot - 994 Western Avenue; includes request for frontage waiver for existing solar power generator

Prior to opening the public hearing Acting Chair Crowe stated a previous application or this project was withdrawn, this is a new application she further stated that anything from the previous application should not be considered unless reintroduced.

Filipe Cravo was representing the petitioner, Stephen and Susan Oleksak. Mr. Cravo stated this application is for a division of one parcel of land into 4 different parcels.

- Parcel A: Frontage lot, access off of Western Avenue
- Parcel B: Is the flag lot with the frontage along Western Avenue and down and opens to a larger parcel where there is the existing residential house.
- Parcel C: Would be a landlocked piece of property with the solar arrays, part of the special permit is a request for a waiver for frontage for the solar array parcel, by section 4-20.3
- Parcel D: The remaining land which runs parallel to the easterly property line combined with lumber co., what is different on the previous filing is there will be 3 access points off Western Avenue one, using the existing driveway will have to be modified because a driveway portion is on the abutters property, a portion of the driveway will be reconstructed within a new strip of land to maintain the excess, then another 40 foot wide flag lot for access to the existing home and new driveway for frontage parcel off of Western Avenue.

Mr. Cravo reviewed the frontage numbers 125.08, 40.02, 23.08. Member Salois stated he has a problem with the 23.08 feet, he further noted he went up there and the frontage at the radius is 55 feet, trucks need every inch of that, he further noted when you go in the frontage is 23, but the access flares at 50-55 feet, it has to be on the property and it's not. Not enough road frontage, there are trailer tire marks there. Planner Vinskey felt the radius may be in street

layout. Mr. Cravo stated the flares are within the right of way within Western Avenue and not within this parcel.

Planner Vinskey noted the Western Avenue right of way here measures about 80 feet on GIS. Member Salois repeated the numbers don't work the large trucks need more room, they need to be able to swing. There are tire tracks and deal wheels on the dirt not enough room.

Vice Chair Crowe asked if this shows the same opening as the previous application with 23.08 ? Member Salois felt this waiver allows for a frontage reduction not a frontage elimination. There has to be frontage in order to have a reduction not elimination. Planner Vinskey disagreed with his interpretation, the Board has waived/eliminated other things in the ordinance.

Member Salois disagreed and felt there are too many landlocked parcels, he does not want any more, he further noted he didn't see anything on the plans regarding new driveways. Planner Vinskey stated the ordinance stated the access has to be through the frontage. Vice Chair Crowe asked where the entrance on the map is that shows they have access getting in and out to the solar Mr. Cravo replied it is referenced on the deed. If there are easements who maintains it and whose deed is it? If there were a fire would there be enough room for fire equipment to access the solar field? Mr. Cravo stated the access will be maintained through an easement and other legal means of access.

Planner Vinskey noted physically nothing changes from what exists, but there may be changes to the language on the easement or a new easement. St Hilaire stated the easement to allows access to solar farm. Planner Vinskey suggested the applicant provide that clear language to the Board so they are comfortable with waiving any frontage.

James Mr. Gogal - 1067 Western Avenue - Voiced concerns regarding the easement. He felt the easement should be in place, the road should be fixed prior to having the flag lot put in. He further added there are 23 other people who have a right to use the easement. Mr. Oleksak is on the easement as well.

Member Bowen- regardless of where road is, 125, 40 and 23.08, is part of property in easement? Road doesn't matter where it is because your deeded correctly. If Mr. Farnham decides they want to put up a fence, you still have your 23 feet from the property. Mr. Gogol stated he would like the road fixed. Mr. Goyette felt that is something that could be conditioned and asked if the road was surveyed. Agreed.

Steve Farnham- 98 Western Avenue - voiced concerns regarding the width of the road, it's not shown on the map. One of the questions he asked at the previous meeting was is the entrance suppose to line up with the property? It's 55 feet wide and in front of their property? The road was moved off the property, pins are gone, like pins to be replaced like road ripped up, there was some communication through Mr. Levesque with Steve Oleksak that he might start paving the road in a couple years. Mr. Farnham would like it done now. Is he 55 feet flare supposed to be in front of your property? Planner Vinskey felt that was customary bur did not see where it was required to be.

Francis Roberts- 1014 Western avenue - informed the Board when he purchased his home he was told there was not enough frontage on the property next to him so that is why he purchased his home. He further voiced concerns regarding the proposed flag lot, he felt there is

not sufficient amount of frontage. This will be creating another landlocked parcel. Additional demands are being placed on the services out there, this is not appealing.

With no other comments, Member St. Hilaire MOTIONED, duly seconded to continue to April 4. All in favor.

E. Other Business

- Request for extension of Special Permit for two-family dwelling by neighborhood density averaging – 67 Mechanic Street

David Briggs – Birch Circle, Chester - informed the Board he and his partner purchased the property in 2018 which already had received a special permit. Their intentions were to knock the damaged building down and rebuild but were delayed and with COVID they did not move forward. They are seeking an extension of the lapsed Special Permit. Members inquired as to the time frame? Mr. Briggs stated they are looking to get a building permit in the summer; same plans as before. Planner Vinskey stated this approved as density averaging for a 2 family.

Member Magarian MOTIONED, seconded by Member St. Hilaire to extend the special permit on 67 Mechanic Street for one year. All in favor.

- Review of proposed signage – 575 North Road self-storage

The applicant/new owner is here for review of his sign as conditioned in the special permit which sated the applicant revisit the Planning Board with sign details. The consensus of the Board was the sign as presented (100 SF) was too large for the area. The applicant stated the sign was based on the ordinance's allowed size requirements. The Board noted if the sign had come in during the public hearing process they would have conditioned the sign to be smaller.

Following further discussion regarding the sign the Board agreed that the sign could be half the size: 50 s.f. (7 x7ish or smaller), no higher than 12 feet, and not internally lit (and no animation) and be consistent with the original approval. Anything exceeding that would require a special permit amendment or further review. Planner Vinskey to inform the Building Inspector.

- Review of change of specific use to plumbing company– 845 Airport Industrial Park Rd.

Dave Tourville addressed the Board. He is in the process of purchasing the property at 845 Airport Industrial Park Road. It is currently an insulation company. Mr. Tourville currently has a plumbing company, has been renting and wants to purchase this building. He has 11 employees, 7 trucks that are taken home at night. Before he purchases the property he wants to make sure his business can be operated out of this facility.

Planner Vinskey stated the Board probably remembers this is located in the aquifer zone. The decision stated if there is a change of use the applicant could come back for administrative review.

Mr. Tourville stated the business would consist of plumbing tools, copper pipes and fittings in the building. Member Magarian asked if there would be any liquids? Mr. Woodrow replied

there would be mostly plumbing tools, pipes and fittings. There is hardly any soldering done nowadays.

Member Salois read the special permit conditions and didn't see why it can't be approved. Planner Vinskey also added it does not negate the previous permit as the permit is with the deed and applies to all successors and assigns.

Member Bowen MOTIONED, seconded by Member Magarian to approve the change of use at 845 Airport Industrial Park Rd. All in favor.

- F. Announcements
 - Master Plan update
Not discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07.

APPROVED