

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
WORKSESSION/REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
AUGUST 14, 2014**

**APPROVED 12/18/14**

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Open Public Meetings Law Statement:

This meeting, which conforms with the Open Public Meetings Law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a **Worksession/Regular Public Meeting** of the Planning Board.

Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Birkner (departed 10:00 pm)  
Daniel Olivier  
Philip Cerruti, Vice-Chairman  
Jaymee Hodges, Chairman  
Councilmember Robert Bicocchi  
Thomas Constantine  
Ann Costello  
Yash Risbud (Alt. #2)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Thomas Randall, Esq., Board Attorney  
By Steven Paul, Esq.  
Ed Snieckus, Burgis Associates, Board Planner  
Louis Raimondi, Board Engineer

**ABSENT:** William Martin (excused absence)  
Keith Doell (Alt. #1) (excused absence)  
Richard Bonsignore (excused absence)

**4. MINUTES:** The Minutes of the **7/10/14 meeting were tabled until the public meeting** on motion made by Ann Costello, seconded by Dan Olivier, and carried unanimously.

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Jaymee Hodges stated he listened to the C/D of the 7/10/14 meeting and was eligible to vote.

**A motion to go into Public Session** was made by Phillip Cerruti, seconded by Ann Costello and carried.

**5. CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. Procedural Rules & By-laws - Carried to the next meeting (awaiting hard copies);

2. Report dated 8/24/14 from Louis Raimondi RE: Maxim Self Storage - 25 Sullivan Street;

3. Memo of Ed Snieckus, Burgis Associates, dated 8/12/14, RE: Maxim Self Storage - 25 Sullivan Street;

**6. RESOLUTIONS:** None

**7. PENDING NEW BUSINESS:**

**OPEN PUBLIC SESSION** - A motion to go into Open Session was made by Phillip Cerruti, seconded by Ann Costello, and carried.

1. **Millennium/Care One at Valley, 300 Old Hook Road - Amended Site Plan and Variance** - Bruce Rosenberg, Esq. appeared on behalf of the applicant and discussed the prior approval of the wound center at HUMC/OV Hospital and that it is now necessary to amend the approval for handicapped accessibility. He requested that the Board review this as a de minimus change, rather than a full site plan approval. Mr. Marini suggested they appear before the Board. The Board agreed to hear their matter.

Michael Palmorico, Licensed NJ Architect, was sworn in and accepted. He handled the restoration of the hospital, the renovation work for the hospital and this wound care center. The work they are doing is very minimal. There is an existing stucco canopy. They were originally going to attach a fabric awning with the handicapped ramp near there. At present the dimensions of the columns would force the wheelchairs to go around and into the elements outside the canopy. They now wish to extend it a few feet to the edge of curb so that the patients are protected from getting rain on their heads. Mr. Raimondi asked for a sketch. The sketch was marked Exhibit A1, with a

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date of 8/14/14. Mr. Snieckus reviewed the variance previously granted by the Board and saw no changes. He had no further questions.

A motion for approval was made by Ann Costello and seconded by Dan Olivier. There were no further questions, comments or discussions. On roll call vote, Mayor Birkner, Thomas Constantine, Phillip Cerruti, Dan Olivier, Ann Costello, Yash Risbud, Robert Bicocchi, and Jaymee Hodges voted yes.

**8. VOUCHERS:** None

**9. VARIANCES, SUBDIVISIONS AND/OR SITE PLANS**

SWEARING IN OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS  
The Board Professionals were sworn in.

**1. Maxim Self Storage, 25 Sullivan Street, Block 2110, Lot 1 - Major Site Plan** - Holly Schepisi, Esq. represented the applicant in a continued hearing, with a brief review since last heard on 7/10/14. Exhibits were reviewed as marked. The prior plans were marked A4 and A5. Stormwater Management Calculations by Costa Engineering was marked A3. The revised plan by Costa Engineering was marked A6. Site photographs were marked A7. The Traffic Engineering Evaluation by Klein Traffic Consulting, LLC, submitted at this hearing, dated 8/14/14, was marked A8.

Letters from the Board Professionals were received. Mr. Raimondi's report was dated 8/4/14, and Mr. Snieckus' memo was dated 8/12/14.

Robert Costa, applicant's engineer, continued under oath, testifying as to the revised plans revised to 7/18/14. They added additional traffic arrows for circulation around the building, per Mr. Raimondi's comments. Further, there was screening around the building from the residential area. The applicant is willing to install trees to the Board's satisfaction. Mr. Raimondi also suggested moving the building to the North and removing the emergency access road, further away from the residential side with further screening. The buffer is significant at approximately 107'. The fence height proposed was 6'. The drainage will be in the grassy area.

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Questions by the Board and Professionals of Mr. Costa followed. Mr. Raimondi expressed concern with what happens to drainage system #2 with moving the building to the North. Mr. Costa responded instead of two rows, it would be a longer single row, or they would relocate it. Ms. Schepisi advised the applicant would stipulate to any suggestions made by Mr. Raimondi. The system would be placed as per Mr. Raimondi. Mr. Raimondi was satisfied, as long as the recommendations would be followed.

Mr. Snieckus asked if all the clients would have access to the interior aisle. Mr. Costa responded yes, they would get a key code. Circulation would be facilitated by making the two key codes identical. Regarding lighting, Mr. Snieckus asked for shields and baffles. Mr. Costa would work with Mr. Snieckus in this regard.

Traffic circulation and maneuvers were discussed with comments by Mr. Snieckus and Mr. Raimondi as to the turning radius. An 18' width was recommended. The radius was moved so as to preserve the 24' ash tree. Ms. Costello requested a review of the landscaping plan. Mr. Costa stated there would be far more trees installed than shown.

The matter was opened to the public for questions of the engineer. Frank Barone, Westwood, came forward and reviewed the plan, inquiring about tractor trailers exiting onto Sullivan and their turning radius near the Van Buren side, which Mr. Costa addressed. There would be buffering and fencing.

Joseph Fucharino, Sanford Avenue, Emerson, came forward and commented all trees they put in would be dead unless they solve the water problem. Mr. Costa advised Mr. Raimondi is requiring soil logs and explained how the drainage plan would address this, and if necessary, they would put in additional drainage. Ms. Schepisi added the soil quality was also tested. Mr. Snieckus asked the resident about the standing water. Recently it has gotten worse, Mr. Fucharino responded. Mr. Raimondi noted the property was vacant with no maintenance for some time, and there may be a broken pipe. Chairman Hodges inquired if Mr. Raimondi has viewed this. There used to be a ditch along the southerly property line that received that water, Mr. Raimondi commented, and the property has not been maintained for at least ten years. Mr. Costa stated the amount of detention they are

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putting in if approved will capture water that is currently not being captured. There would be perforated pipe that would cut it off before reaching the residential properties. They will see a reduction with what they are proposing. The neighbor should also contact his own town regarding the issue. Chairman Hodges stated the Board would take this seriously under advisement. Mr. Snieckus suggested raising the vegetation and would review it. This would be followed up on.

Mike Pontillo, Westwood, also inquired about the turning radius. Mr. Costa showed the change in the radius on the Van Buren side. Ms. Schepisi advised the traffic expert would be testifying and would be open for questions. The idea is to have the tractor trailer directed out to Sullivan, not Van Buren. Mr. Pontillo asked about noise and if there would be less noise if the garages were on the industrial side. Mr. Costa said this is not like industrial or light manufacturing; he did not know. There would be a 6' fence with shielding, and the building is being moved farther away. Ms. Schepisi advised the Borough has a noise ordinance to be complied with. Mr. Costa added the State does as well. In your professional opinion, she asked Mr. Costa, what would be the impact of having a truck idle for five minutes, 107' off the property with a 6' fence. Mr. Costa responded it would be de minimus. The use is very low impact.

There were no further questions of Mr. Costa.

Lee D. Klein, Licensed NJ Professional Engineer, Klein Engineering, was sworn in, qualified and accepted as applicant's traffic expert. The Traffic Report dated 8/14/14 was previously marked Exhibit A8. Mr. Klein testified he conducted traffic counts at the intersections of Woodland and Carver and Woodland and Sullivan. He looked in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. The total trip generation is expected to be 23 trips entering or exiting during the AM peak hour and 43 trips entering or exiting during the PM peak hour. Further the trips would be reduced by this use as opposed to light manufacturing or industrial uses. The level of service (LOS) would be A, indicating operations with delay less than 10 seconds per vehicle in a signalized intersection, where LOS F would be 80 seconds. In unsignalized intersections A would be the same, and F would be 50 seconds per vehicle. He also reviewed circulation. Upon contacting the Westwood Police Department, it was determined there were no reported crashes in

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the subject area in the past 12 months. There are about 43 spaces for people to park in when accessing the storage facilities, exceeding the ITE's 32 recommended for this site. Overall it is not a great generator of traffic, and the LOS and traffic will not be impeded, nor would it be a detriment for anyone. This is much lower than would be expected in other uses.

Mr. Raimondi commented Mr. Klein pretty well covered the traffic issues. Mr. Snieckus asked if the weekend peak hours would be different Mr. Klein did not remember it being greater. Mr. Snieckus asked how he felt about tractor trailers on the premises. Mr. Klein spoke with the applicant, and since there is not much traffic on Carver or Van Buren, it would not be an impact. He would work with Mr. Costa to finalize the swing into Sullivan. There were no further questions of Mr. Klein from the Board.

The matter was opened to the public for questions of Mr. Klein. Joseph Fucarino came forward and asked if there were the same amount of outdoor spaces in comparable sites he used. Mr. Klein responded in one of the facilities he used, it would be similar. The resident felt there will be much more traffic if all 43 spaces are rented. The amount of spaces for trucks should be limited. Mr. Barone from the public came forward and had questions regarding traffic and safety concerns, with the sizes of the vehicles. Mr. Pontillo from the public also came forward with questions about a traffic study. They do not have to do a traffic study unless over 100 trips, Mr. Klein explained. Mr. Pontillo continued with extensive questioning. Ms. Schepisi commented the line of questioning was speculative. Mr. Pontillo asked if a 43' radius could fit in a 15' x 15' box. Attorney Paul advised the resident could ask questions of the engineer and then lay out his concerns without questioning the witness. Mayor Birkner asked if any other tractor trailers were noticed in the area. Extensive questioning with opinions by Mr. Pontillo continued.

There were no further questions from the public.

Mr. Costa continued under oath. There was substantial testimony, and the individuals were not sworn in. The property owner would have to receive a letter to correct the site distance if it impedes this. If the site needs to be widened by the curb line, the applicant is willing to do so.

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Next Mr. Costa discussed signage. The pylon sign is completely off the table. They do not need it. The revised signage plans were described. Three signs, consisting of two monuments on either side of the building, and one wall-mounted sign, were proposed. Variances were requested for height and size of lettering on the wall-mounted sign, and for the monument signs, variances were requested for number of signs, maximum area, maximum height, and setback.

With respect to lighting, Mr. Costa stated they were internally illuminated. Based on the planner's comments, Ms. Schepisi confirmed they withdrew the pylon sign. Mr. Costa stated they want to comply with the Board's and Professional's recommendations and be good neighbors and requested that the Board approve their application. Mr. Snieckus commented on the signage and lighting. He asked if they could make the setback of the monument signs 10' instead of 9/5'. Mr. Costa agreed and would work with Mr. Snieckus regarding same.

Mayor Birkner commented Ms. Schepisi mentioned rain gardens and plantings to alleviate any water and requested that be a condition if approved. He would defer to the planner for the size and recommendation. Mr. Costa and Ms. Schepisi agreed.

Chairman Hodges expressed concerns about the parking along the stretch between Carver and the property line of the applicant. He knows it is a municipal issue, but he believes there should be no parking along that strip. Ms. Schepisi responded her client would be more than amenable to restricting parking along that strip. They will look into it. Mr. Costa mentioned they would be willing to do an off-tract improvement and widen the curb lines if need be. If it is a question of landscaping and shrubs in the right of way, that homeowner should be notified. They would be willing to put in sidewalks on Van Buren, handicapped ramps on the corner and widening. Mayor Birkner commented that traffic officers have gone out and put in stop signs throughout the Borough at residents' requests. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the Borough would do something like that.

The Chairman commented he would have liked to see a traffic count study done on a Saturday. Mr. Klein felt that based on the levels of service during the week, Saturday would be

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lighter, and you can't get any better than A, so he feels it is not necessary.

Councilman Bicocchi asked if the applicant could put in signage directing the tractor trailers out to Sullivan, and they agreed. Everything will go out Sullivan, and they will make it a requirement in the lease, Mr. Costa stated. Mr. Snieckus asked regarding the exterior garages, could they stripe them perpendicularly. Mr. Raimondi and Mr. Costa pointed out it may not be wide enough. Mr. Raimondi commented it might interfere with the drive aisle. Ms. Schepisi felt confident her client would work with the project engineer and the Board's engineer to do what is necessary and right with striping.

Questions of Mr. Costa by the public followed. Mr. Pontillo asked if they could restrict the Sullivan entrance to tractor trailers entrance and exit only and not be recommended to go out Van Buren at all. That would alleviate any widening on Van Buren so it would not fit the tractor trailer. There would be no issues in the residential zone. Mr. Costa and Mr. Klein showed him how they are guided in, around and out Sullivan. The property is zoned industrial and has frontage on two streets, Mr. Costa explained. They revised it and feel they came up with a very good plan to alleviate his concerns. Why take access from a public street that they have now. This is an industrial zone, and we cannot change that.

Mr. Pontillo then asked Mr. Costa, are you willing to accept, or have you accepted at the last two meetings any recommendation, regardless of what it is, and pledged to give any amount of money to get this through from any person on the Board, while all the while ignoring....., which was followed by everyone talking at once. Ms. Schepisi objected.

The Chairman advised Mr. Pontillo he was out of order and that it was an allegation. Mr. Pontillo said it was not an allegation. Mr. Hodges said I am going to have to cut you off. You will have your opportunity to give comment after we hear the closing testimony. His questioning was terminated.

There were no further witnesses or questions. The applicant was available for questions.

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Mr. Snieckus had question of the applicant. Jerry Puccio, applicant, was sworn in. Mr. Snieckus asked about waste on the property. Mr. Puccio stated they made it clear they cannot conduct business on the site. It is strictly for parking. They cannot store grass clippings, and it will be in the lease. Mr. Snieckus asked for it to be stated in signage, along with construction debris. Nor would sand or dirt or other waste be permitted to be stored, Mr. Puccio stated. The Chairman read from the lease those sections pertaining to same.

Questions of Mr. Puccio by the public followed. Mr. Barone asked if approved, when would construction start. Mr. Puccio responded within the next two months, with completion in about eight months. It would be self-contained. Was the building examined for asbestos, he asked. They will have to get a certification from the State, Ms. Schepisi and Mr. Puccio advised. Joseph Fucarino asked for hours of operation. It is in the lease, 7am-7pm. Could all 43 spaces not be used on a daily basis he asked, so as not to hear or see 43 trucks starting up every morning. They prefer people with boats, recreation vehicles and those that come by once a month or once a week, Mr. Puccio responded. If they limit the hours to 7am that eliminates contractors even more. Chairman Hodges stated the Board and the applicant are working the best they can and will continue to do so moving forward. Mr. Pontillo asked how many employees would be on site, and the response was two. If there are any violations, they would be out. He asked if there was a study done on the demand for parking of commercial vehicles in the area. The response was no.

Ms. Schepisi gave her closing statement and summary, stating it is a good, permitted use. The project was designed to have the least amount of impact to the community, reviewing the highlights of the application and variances. Any burdens of proof with respect to signage were easily met. This is the best use of this building, and she feels their request should be granted.

Following were comments from the Board and comments from the public.

Mr. Snieckus and Mr. Raimondi commented the applicant has addressed all of the issues, and they were satisfied the

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applicant will address and comply with issues of landscaping, lighting, drainage and soil testing, respectively.

Mr. Barone was sworn in and commented notwithstanding that the applicant wants to run a business, and he is not opposed to the use, he was concerned with safety issues and traffic and speeding. He suggested making Van Buren a non-commercial vehicle street or a dead-end with a break away entrance in the event of a fire. Chairman Hodges commented the Mayor did mention this. Councilman Biccocchi would follow up. He also brought up trimming the overgrown landscaping and shrubbery on the corner. That would be brought to the attention of the Zoning Official. He thanked the applicant for his willingness to work with them.

Mike Pontillo, 20 Carver Avenue, was sworn in and commented, let me start off by saying if my comment earlier was misinterpreted, at no point did I mean to call the integrity of anybody in this room, whether anyone seated on the dais or in the Board or any of the attorneys into question. My point was getting back to a quote that I wrote down that Mr. Costa made earlier, and he was talking to the Board, and it was, "whatever you want, we'll do it", and that was with respect to changes to the plan and design. I wasn't inferring he was offering to do anything or anybody was accepting anything illegal. If it came across that way, I would like to apologize publicly to everybody. Chairman Hodges stated, thank you Mr. Pontillo, duly noted.

Mr. Pontillo commented he feels there is an issue with the traffic patterns and ingress and egress. He is a police officer in the Borough and has experience with this. By and large it is a good use, and by collectively working together, they can make something good even better, and he hopes the Board can take his recommendations.

There were no further questions, comments or discussions. The Chairman called for a motion. A motion for approval was made by Thomas Constantine and seconded by Ann Costello. There were no further questions, comments or discussions. On roll call vote, Thomas Constantine, Phillip Cerruti, Dan Olivier, Ann Costello, Yash Risbud, Robert Biccocchi, and Jaymee Hodges voted yes. In voting, Councilman Biccocchi thanked the applicant for doing what he can to direct tractor trailers going out the other way on Sullivan Street and implement the recommendations made. Chairman Hodges commented it is a good use and will be an asset

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to the industrial area. He is hoping the neighbors will be very satisfied as the site is cleaned up, and that they will be good neighbors.

**10. DISCUSSION:** None

**11. ADJOURNMENT** - On motions, made seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned at approx. 11:00 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**MARY R. VERDUCCI, Paralegal**  
**Planning Board Secretary**