



CITY OF PLAINFIELD
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
515 WATCHUNG AVENUE, ROOM 202
PLAINFIELD, NJ 07060



ADRIAN O. MAPP
MAYOR

D. Scott Belin, Chairman
Alejandro Ruiz, Vice Chairman

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 4, 2017
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
LOCATION: PLAINFIELD CITY HALL LIBRARY
515 WATCHUNG AVENUE, PLAINFIELD N.J. 07060

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Scott Belin called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. at which time he then read the following statement:

- II. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT**
 “The annual schedule of this meeting has been duly noted in the Courier News and the Star Ledger. In addition, a copy of the notice is posted in the City Clerk’s office, the Planning Division office and the City’s website in accordance to the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.
 This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

III. ROLL CALL

Membership	Jan 18	Feb 1	Mar 1	Apr 5	May 3	Jun 7	Jul 12	Aug 2	Sep 6	Oct 4	Nov 1	Dec 6	Term of Office
D. Scott Belin, Chairman	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	P			12/31/2018 (4 year term)
Alejandro "Alex" Ruiz, Vice Chairman	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	-	P	P			12/31/2020 (4 year term)
Mary Burgwinkle	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	-	E	P			12/31/2020 (4 year term)
Robert Graham	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	P			12/31/2019 (4 year term)
Nancy Jordan	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	P			12/31/2017 (4 year term)
Jim Spear	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	P	-			12/31/2020 (4 year term)
Rich Sudol	P	P	E	E	E	P	E	-	P	P			12/31/2018 (4 year term)
Nancy Gerald, Alternate No.1	V	V	V	V	P	P	P	-	P	P			12/31/2018 (2 year term)
Ian Marshall, Alternate No.2	V	V	V	V	P	E	E	-	P	-			12/31/2017 (2 year term)
Attendance Total	6	6	6	6	8	7	7	-	8	7			

Ledger: Present (P); Absent (A); No Meeting (-); Vacancy (V);

IV. OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Name	Affiliation
Peter Vignuolo, Esq.	Board Attorney
Bill Nierstedt	Planning Director
Rosalind Miller	Board Secretary

V. PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – Limited to 2 minutes maximum per comment. (Subject to change by the Board Chairman) The meeting was opened for public comment(s) on non-agenda items. Mr. Timothy Priano, of Martine Avenue, Plainfield New Jersey made an announcement of music fest of events in the month of October 2017 involve the symphony, Latino fair of Latin America, Jazz at Shiloh Baptist Church, Hip Hop/Soulful music and Rock & Roll music and that information is at www.plainfieldlivecounsel.org for more information. Ms. Nancy Piwowar, of 1129 Myrtle Avenue, Plainfield New Jersey made an announcement regarding an order to show clause repurpose 1.7 million worth of endowment that was left to Muhlenberg Hospital and they are not required to make public notice. Hearing no further public comment, the public portion of the hearing was closed.

VI. MINUTES – none

VII. RESOLUTION (MEMORIALIZATION(S))

1)

Application No.	Applicant	Property Address	Block	Lot(s)	Zone
ZBA-2014-19	Jose Mora	1116 West Front Street	221	18	R-4 Moderate Density Residential Zone
12/7/16 carried; 1/18/2017 carried; 2/1/2017 carried; 3/1/2017 carried; 4/5/17 carried; 5/3/2017 carried; 6/7/17 carried; 7/12/17 carried; 8/2/17 carried; 9/6/17					

- Chairman Belin asked if there were any questions and/or comments regarding the resolution of memorialization. Hearing none, he entertained a motion. On a motion by Vice Chairman Ruiz and seconded by Board Member Sudol, the board voted as follows to dismiss this application without prejudice.

Belin	Ruiz	Graham	Jordan	Spear	Sudol	Gerald
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Seven in Favor. None Opposed. None Abstained

2)

Application No.	Applicant	Property Address	Block	Lot(s)	Zone
ZBA-2015-33	DMR Inc.	1647-1657 West Front Street / 109-115 Rock Avenue (corner lot)	210	4.01	LI Light Industrial zone

- Chairman Belin asked if there were any questions and/or comments regarding the resolution of memorialization. Hearing none, he entertained a motion. On a motion by Vice Chairman Ruiz and seconded by Board Member Spear, the board voted as follows

granting preliminary and final site plan approval to convert a vacant industrial/warehouse building with front yard parking for an automobile dealership service area, accessory office space, storage areas and vehicle retail/display area with eleven parking spaces with conditions.



Belin	Ruiz	Graham	Jordan	Spear	Sudol	Gerald
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Seven in Favor. None Opposed. None Abstained

3)

Application No.	Applicant	Property Address	Block	Lot(s)	Zone
ZBA-2017-01	New Jersey Cash for Cars, LLC	1659-1665 West Front Street/101-107 Rock Avenue (corner lot)	210	3	LI Light Industrial zone

- Chairman Belin asked if there were any questions and/or comments regarding the resolution of memorialization. Hearing none, he entertained a motion. On a motion by Vice Chairman Ruiz and seconded by Board Member Sudol, the board voted as follows granting preliminary and final site plan approval to renovate a one-story building with front yard parking for an automobile dealership with twenty-two on-site parking spaces with conditions.



Belin	Ruiz	Graham	Jordan	Spear	Sudol	Gerald
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Seven in Favor. None Opposed. None Abstained

VIII. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION(s)

1)

Application No.	Applicant	Property Address	Block	Lot(s)	Zone
ZBA-2017-22	New Jersey American Water Company	1341 North Avenue	459	28	R-2 Low Density Residential Zone

- Chairman Belin read for the record that the applicant is proposing to demolish three (3) existing truck ports and construct three (3) new truck ports in the same location. A d (1) use variance is required as truck ports are not permitted in the R-2 Low Density Residential Zone.
- Board Attorney Vignuolo advised the board that he has reviewed affidavit and notice of publication, but the applicant inadvertently missed notice to one (1) property owner, therefore the board does not have jurisdiction to hear this application. The board carried this application to November 1, 2017 upon receipt of the one property owner's notice. Board Attorney Vignuolo announced that no further notice is required.

2)

Application No.	Applicant	Property Address	Block	Lot(s)	Zone
ZBA-2017-06	Yates Real Estate, Inc.	808-814 Central Avenue	760	10	R-VWB-2 Residential Van Wyck

- Chairman Belin read for the record that the applicant is seeking to build a three-story addition to the rear of a vacant three (3) story building and convert the building to 25 apartments proposing eleven (11) on-site parking spaces. The application requires waivers from completeness checklist requirements, a d (1) use variance, a d(5) use variance on density, relief from bulk requirements, relief from supplementary zoning regulations, waivers from site plan design/performance standards, and preliminary and final site plan approval.
- William Michelson, of 556 Belvidere Avenue and Chairman of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reported on two types of action required of the HPC 1) Certificate of Appropriateness in regards to the architectural design and recommendations of substantial use. Mr. Michelson is requesting limited testimony until HPC has the chance to act and deliver a report/recommendations. Chairman Belin replied that testimony is limited to the purpose of use, but will wait to receive recommendations of the HPC.
- Board Attorney Vignuolo advised that the board has jurisdiction to hear this application.
- Steven C. Rother, Esq., of Post, Polak, Goodsell & Strauchler, 425 Eagle Rock Avenue, Roseland New Jersey represented on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Rother talked about a prior application that sought expansion of a nursing home at which time was a more dramatic use. He explained that some of the issue are similar.
- Andre Yates, Principal entity of 810 Central Avenue, 26 Sunrise Drive, Edison New Jersey was sworn in to provide testimony in regards to the permanent housing for military veterans. Mr. Yates submitted Exhibit A1 a portrait of a military veteran. He responded to questions regarding the purpose for this site is to create permanent housing for military veterans in the County of Union. He explained that the number of units requested is 25 for 25 veterans, consist of studio apartments including a kitchenette, a bathroom, common area to accommodate independent living, a multipurpose space, dining area and there is a commercial kitchen. He talked about support services involve case manage stabilizing the veteran by providing shelter, meals, transportation, spiritually enrichment to permanent housing.
- David Cathcart, of 130 Park Street, Ridgefield Park New Jersey was sworn in to provide testimony as a licensed clinician on behalf of the application. Mr. Cathcart explained that he is an expert in combat trauma specializing in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and has been treating military veterans and their families for over 25 years. He talked about the type of war trauma some veterans may experience and he provided individuals or group therapy for both male and female. He talked about the treatment involved in getting the individual an opportunity to readjust, regain normal lives with treatment, good housing, in-house counseling, food, clothing and education. He said that veterans can relate to each other with like experiences. He also, reported on similar housing uses in Boston Massachusetts, Newark New Jersey, and Delaware. Mr. Cathcart reported on an event that the veterans are planning a "Stand Down" in Newark New Jersey this month for over 400 veterans including families.
- The Board asked about the nature of "Stand Down", source of funding for services provided, type of business and asked if similar programs in the previous cities mentioned are of this type of facility requested. Mr. Cathcart explained "Stand Down" is gathering over 400 homeless veterans to service.

- Board Members expressed concern about the amount of variances requested for this application and the amount of waivers that should be considered. Mr. Cathcart replied that he does not have any data comparing similarities.
- Ms. Carolyn Ruffin, of 919 Central Avenue asked about the number of studio units and if these units will hold a family or be just for individual per unit. Chairman Belin replied to Ms. Ruffin's question is to be answered by the applicant's architect, but there will be no architect's testimony at this meeting.
- Richard Lear, of 25 Madison Avenue expressed concern about the safety of the community from veterans that are not doing so well and capable of harm.
- Americo Neno, of 555 East Hazelwood Avenue, Rahway New Jersey comment also should be answered by the applicant's architect, but was advised that there will be no architect's testimony at this meeting.
- Jeanette Criscione, 1410 Evergreen Avenue asked if the free services to the veterans from tax payers and asked about examples of other community that have embraced the veterans by coming together. Mr. Rother responded that he has a witness to testify at the next meeting. Mr. Cathcart responded Jersey, Bayonne, Newark and others those communities has embraced it by providing housing for the veterans.
- Jacob Hansen, of 822 Arlington Avenue expressed concern about safety or suicidal from each other and/or themselves in the same house.
- Board Attorney Vignuolo advised the public on asking the appropriate questions addressed to the witness testimony that was provided.
- Frank Schupp, of 309 Amsterdam Avenue, Roselle New Jersey asked about the benefits of his services to veterans and successes if a veteran is violent or angry. Mr. Cathcart replied there are many successful with treatment. The services provided are for anger management and relaxation techniques are services to help improve their quality of life.
- Barbara Drake, of 420 Stelle Avenue asked about rehabilitation, job readiness and job opportunities specifically for the fragile ones. Mr. Cathcart replied that he cannot answer that question.
- Ron Scott Bey, of 1070 Rose Street asked about clinical services performed in a group home setting or independent studio living. Mr. Cathcart responded that the services are provided where necessary.
- Ms. Jo-Ann Bandomer, of 1108 Hillside Avenue asked about clinical support, caregivers or social worker a need for clinical setting. Mr. Cathcart that is not a question for me. Ms. Bandomer asked if there is a 24-hour care. Mr. Cathcart replied that there are emergency numbers they can call.
- Arne Aakre, of 915 Madison Avenue asked about the anticipated process of his services for a veteran. Mr. Cathcart replied he don't know.
- Emerson Crooks talked about his personal experience as a veteran, currently a member of the Essex/Morris Mental Health Association and that here is about 230 employees. Mr. Crooks testified as a veteran that been around the mental health field. Mr. Crooks responded to comments and questions about the type of people in the facility and the type of services many of the veterans need. Mr. Crooks explained the need for a veteran's type of resident facility provide for comfort and that veterans interact best with their peers. He said personally he wished this service was around in the 1960's and 1970's. Mr. Crooks explained the type of care that's provided at VA hospitals are like barrack type situations and housing is temporary. He personally said all he needed was the opportunity to sort out the challenges that come from serving in combat specifically his personality. He addressed non-veterans have support groups vs. veterans support groups are no different and so having permanent housing is needed.
- Chairman Belin asked if board members have questions and/or comments from this witness. Board Member Burgwinkle asked if there are other veteran homes proposed. Mr. Crooks referred to Mr. Cathcart's spoke of the Boston model and that here are townhomes being proposed for permanent housing for veterans near VA Hospital.
- Chairman Belin opened the meeting for public questions and/or statements.

- Tess Hansen, of 822 Arlington Avenue questioned young men vs. older adults that are discharged today are any different. Mr. Crooks explained that it is a process and both have challenges and the difference is today is that people are more welcoming than they were back in his time.
- Richard Lear, of 925 Madison Avenue asked about after coming home and if he was employed. Mr. Crooks replied there are challenges to finding a rooming home and looking for employee and you do the best you can.
- Amy Pujara, of 350 Manson Place asked if lived in a group home and what was the experience. Mr. Crooks no, but he know of group homes in the Morris County Mental Health Association, but not specifically for veterans. He reported both homes are managed and controlled, property well-kept and there is no people hanging out.
- Geraldine Heydt, of 915 Madison Avenue asked if these are apartments or group home. Mr. Crook replied he consider it independent living, but Mr. Yates will answer that question.
- Tim O'Connor, of 1405 Martine Avenue asked about the names of people claiming they love the veterans' home in Highland Park and Morris County. After there being no further questions from the public, the public portion of the hearing was closed.
- David Pearson, an Assistant Director of Catholic Charities, 24 DeGrasse Street, Paterson New Jersey was sworn in to provide testimony as to "Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)" and financial housing assistance for the veterans. Mr. Pearson explained that his charities involve support services for veteran families, ran in seven counties including Cranford, Union County. He explained veterans are considered homeless by VA standards when released from temporary housing. He replied to a previous question about other facilities. He said there is Paterson Park Apartment, Paterson New Jersey; Emerson, New Jersey and Bergen County to be opened by October 10, 2017 for veterans. He talked about two types of homelessness because of economics where they do not make enough money and can't afford an apartment or they are undereducated. He explained that he has seven counties for SSVF program and the process of obtaining agencies like Mr. Yates to help with shelter care plus vouchers to help the veterans. Board Member Spear made comment to consider the density and what are the rentals. Vice Chairman Ruiz asked if the apartment building in Emerson, Paramus in a single family residential zone of higher density or lower density. Mr. Pearson replied in Paterson area that neighborhood is mixed and in Emerson there are a lot of single-family homes. Mr. Rother reported that Highland Park in a single-family residential zone and he think it's about 14 units. Board Member Sudol asked if any locations are all studios, no families and single-person occupancy. Mr. Pearson replied no because of limited income. Board Member Burgwinkle asked about funding. Mr. Pearson responded federal grant from VA and they handle seven counties to run the program. Board Member Graham made comment if funding is for disabled veterans then they can live anywhere as long as rent is affordable. Mr. Pearson replied yes.
- Public Comment: Kelli Rosenthal, of 520 Stelle Avenue quote some statistics from the Veterans Administration on homeless Veteran issues regarding serious mental illness and substance abuse issues. Mr. Pearson replied that there are many people on antidepressants, but he is not a clinician.
- Derrick Lewis, of 219 East Fifth Street expressed his concern about as a veteran, he personally is homeless having someplace to come back to.
- Tonie Forbes, of 683 West Seventh Street asked about the former nursing home use and its current use and made comment that the property is more valuable than to house veterans.
- Frank Arminio, of P.O. Box 283, Lake Hopatcong New Jersey reported that he is Vice president of the Vietnam Veterans of America made comment that currently HUD with the HUD requirement guidelines has already placed veterans in this community. He reported on two facilities in the South and North Jersey and they call themselves Vet

Havens and they provide for temporary housing through HUD. He made comment that the state will not place individuals that are harmful to the community.

- William Michelson, of 556 Belvidere Avenue questioned the regulations of the place, controlling the residents with emotional problems and who does the public or the municipality go to if this place is not regulated?
- Timothy Priano, of Martine Avenue Plainfield New Jersey made comment that he commutes to the city and see lots of homeless veterans there. He said he asks them about being homeless and they replied that they can't get housing because of drinking and disabilities in wheelchair because some housing have no elevators. Mr. Pearson said that the SSVF as an agency and if you want to help you can reach out to an 800 number for a case manager to meet the person.
- Nancy Piwowar, of 1129 Myrtle Avenue asked about Catholic Charities involvement in this project. She wants to make sure where her donations are going. Mr. Pearson responded that their role as SSVF is to try to help a homeless veteran be placed. After there being no further questions and/or comments for Mr. Pearson, the public portion was closed.
- Mr. Rother calls for Pastor Seth Kaper-Dale, of Highland Park. Mr. Kaper-Dale was sworn in to provide testimony on behalf of the application. He explained that he and his wife are co-pastors of a church in Highland Park New Jersey for sixteen years. He explained that they first built housing on their church for women aging out of foster care, project started in 2005 and opened in 2008 with six apartments and successful. He said that there was an abandoned church in the community that was scheduled to be torn down, they purchased it and turned it into housing for homeless veterans with eleven units in 2011. He said that it was hard for the community and they had a lot of questions and it was important how we addressed them. He reported that they have a relationship with the VA and Lyons and referrals are from ones that hit rock bottom and has been determined to do well in supportive housing back to the community. Chairman Belin if these apartments are in a residential single-family zone and if permanent or transitional housing. Mr. Kaper-Dale replied that area is zoned for garden apartments and it permanent supportive housing and not transitional. Vice Chairman Ruiz questioned the prior use as a church and the number of parking spaces, Board Member Spear also questioned the number of parking spaces and laundry facilities, Board Member Sudol asked about individual kitchen in each apartment or is there one commercial kitchen if they are really independent. Mr. Kaper-Dale responded to the prior use of the church needed more parking spaces. He addressed the different housing situations, but said he prefer if everybody has their own with a kitchenette. He said one Washer and dryer for everyone to use and is coin operated.
- Public Comment: Osca Riba, of 1338 Martine Avenue, questioned the need for house of worship and if he serves as a landlord to run these places. Tonie Forbes, of 683 West Seventh Street questioned if he notice a difference between veteran and non-veteran and in regards to variances if they were insurmountable. Neno Americo, of 555 East Hazelwood Avenue, Rahway made comment to convert buildings to the best possible use and a safe environment for veterans to be put in. Tess Hansen, of 822 Arlington asked about supportive housing. Steve Baffoni, of 947 Madison Avenue asked if supportive or supervised are different and he expressed concern that there are public schools in the area. Nancy Piwowar, of 1129 Myrtle Avenue and if the church was historic and on the national registry of historic places and she asked about veterans getting to mental health services.
- Mr. Kaper-Dale said that he has no financial connection. He answered to the question that there is no difference between veteran and non-veteran and he do not recall if variances were insurmountable, supportive or supervised are different. He answered to the church not being historic or in an historic district. He replied to health services come to the person and each person has a caseworker assigned to them and some have cars

ones that are independent and there is van service that come from Lyons VA to pick them up.

- After there being no further questions and/or comments from the public, the public portion of the meeting was closed. Mr. Rother asked that he reach out to Planning Director Nierstedt to determine other witnesses to testify at the next board meeting. The board carried this application to November 1, 2018.

IX. OLD BUSINESS - none

X. NEW BUSINESS – none

XI. ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business, the meeting adjourned on a motion by Vice Chairman Ruiz and seconded by Board Member Graham at 9:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalind Miller
Board Secretary

NOTE: The Board will not hear any cases after 10:30 p.m. All documents are available for inspection at the City Hall, Division of Planning, Second Floor-Room 202, 515 Watchung Avenue between 9:00 a.m. To 4:30 p.m. For further assistance please call (908) 753-3486.

Phone: (908) 753-3486 * Fax: (908) 226-2587 * Website: www.plainfieldnj.gov