HUDSON COUNTY
PLANNING BOARD

RE:

REGULAR MEETING OF THE HUDSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD	:	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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O P E N S E S S I O N

Bergen Square Center
Floor 9A
830 Bergen Avenue
Jersey City, New Jersey
Tuesday, October 20, 2020
6:30 p.m.

V I A Z O O M:

SAMANTHA LUGO, Chairwoman
JOHN ALLEN, Commissioner
RENEE BETTINGER, Commissioner
DANIEL CHOFFO, Commissioner
FLOYD JETER, Commissioner
THOMAS MALAVASI, PE, Commissioner

A L S O P R E S E N T:

JENNIFER BOGDANSKI, ESQ., Board Counsel
STEPHANIE LEE, Assistant Planner
FRANCESCA GIARRATANA, PP, AICP, Secretary
MARIO TRIDENTE, Inspector
ANTONIOS PANAGOPOULOS, PE

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: I would like to call our planning meeting to order. Has the meeting properly been advertised?

MS. BOGDANSKI: Yes, Madam Chairwoman. The meeting was properly noticed to the Jersey Journal and the Star Ledger. And it was also noticed by posting on the Hudson County Bulletin Board, and the Bulletin Board for the Freeholders, and the notices that were given specified that the virtual meeting is in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Great. Can I get a roll call?

MS. GIARRATANA: Yes. Commissioner Allen.

COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Present.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Bettinger. Commissioner Choffo.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Present.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Glembocki. Absent. Commissioner Hernandez. Absent. Commissioner Jeter.

COMMISSIONER JETER: Present.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Malavasi.

COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Here.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Mehta. Absent. Commissioner NG. Absent. Commissioner Torres. Absent. Commissioner Walker. Absent. Chairwoman Lugo. Chairwoman Lugo.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Yes, I am here.

MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman, we have a quorum.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Can we stand for the flag salute?

(Flag salute.)

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Commissioners, has everyone had the opportunity to read the minutes from our last meeting? If so, I need a motion for approval.

COMMISSIONER JETER: Motion.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I second.

MS. GIARRATANA: On a motion made by Commissioner Jeter and seconded by Commissioner Choffo. Commissioner Allen.

COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Yes.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Choffo.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Aye.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Jeter.

COMMISSIONER JETER: Aye.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Malavasi.

COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Aye.

MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman Lugo.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Aye.

MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman, the motion has passed.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Thank you.

MS. GIARRATANA: We are going to skip ahead a little bit on the agenda, Chairwoman, to Site Plans, Subdivisions, and Other Matters Scheduled for Public Hearing. The application is 2020-016-SP. East Newark Town Center, LLC. At 900 Passaic Avenue, Block 12, Lot 1 in East Newark. It's an application to adaptively reuse the Clark Mill Complex into a mixed use project with dwelling units, commercial space, retail space, and parking spaces.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay.

MR. JEMAS: Madam Chairwoman, I'm Paul Jemas. I'm the attorney for the applicant. I want to thank the Board and your staff for accommodating us, because both Mr. Banker and I have meetings. I'm a town attorney for the town, and he's an administrator for two communities that start

at 7:15. So we really appreciate your courtesy in this matter. We're joined today by Mr. Viokis, who is the principal of the applicant. Mr. Bleeker is the architect. Mr. Petry, who is the engineer. And Mr. Staigar is the traffic engineer. Mr. Banker, who is the consultant. And Delmas who is the managing member with the applicant. With that -- by the way, your staff has been outstanding. We appreciate it. They crossed every T and dotted every I.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: They are fantastic, right?

MR. JEMAS: They are very good. They are thorough. If I had them when I was playing mayor, I'd still have brown hair. But we've reviewed the letter that Ms. Lee forwarded to us that's dated October 16th, 2020, and we agree with the items in it. I think Mr. Staigar might, as the traffic engineer, might need to comment on something. Stephanie -- Ms. Lee just called me right before the meeting and talked to me about Item 5, which is the Passaic Avenue Traffic Mitigation and Contribution Fine. The applicant doesn't have a problem with that being a condition of approval. We just can't agree right now to the number that we

1 just got. We need to take a look at it and sort of
2 digest it and figure out where we are with that.
3 Other than that, we're willing to comply with all
4 the -- all the requirements that are set forth in
5 that letter.
6 As we discussed over these months, and if
7 you want to hear from anyone of the applicant
8 professionals, or the applicant himself, we'll be
9 pleased to participate at this time.
10 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay.
11 MR. JEMAS: I think one of the items
12 that wanted to be addressed was that the franchise
13 agreement with Hudson County with the County
14 right-of-way. I don't know if we have a problem
15 with that. I don't know who wants to address it, if
16 anybody.
17 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Tom, is that
18 something you want to address?
19 MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman, before
20 Tom chimes in, I just wanted to just state for the
21 record that Renee is listening into the meeting.
22 She just doesn't have a microphone at the moment, so
23 we're working on it.
24 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Great. Thank you.
25 MR. JEMAS: Again, I'll welcome any

1 questions with regards to any of the applicants or
2 consultants or the applicant itself. Mr.
3 Panagopoulos was so thorough on this. I don't know
4 that we have anything else to say. I want to be
5 able to say that I can pronounce your name.
6 MR. PANAGOPOULOS: You do it really
7 well. You're going to present the application for
8 the Board Members?
9 MR. JEMAS: Yes. I mean, the
10 application is as submitted. I mean, do you want us
11 to go through like testimony on each one of the
12 items? Is that what you need?
13 MR. PANAGOPOULOS: I think you need
14 to make a case to the Board so they understand what
15 they are voting on.
16 MR. JEMAS: Okay. With that, Mr.
17 Banker, I'm going to ask that you give a summary so
18 that we can proceed with it.
19 MR. BANKER: Thank you, Paul.
20 MS. BOGDANSKI: We'll need to swear
21 you in. You are a witness, correct?
22 MR. BANKER: I am a witness,
23 according to Mr. Jemas, yes.
24 MR. JEMAS: You might get paid.
25 You're the witness.

1 (The witness is sworn.)
2 MS. BOGDANSKI: Okay. And if you
3 could state your name for the record, spelling your
4 first and last name, and your affiliation, your
5 firm, whatever?
6 MR. BANKER: My name is Thomas
7 Banker. T-H-O-M-A-S; B-A-N-K-E-R. I am affiliated
8 with the Banker Group, LLC. We served as financial
9 consultants to Alma Realty and its subsidiaries that
10 are the applicants for this project. Okay.
11 MR. JEMAS: Tom, would you just
12 briefly explain your credentials to the Board so
13 they know you.
14 MR. BANKER: Okay. I have been
15 involved in local government administration and
16 development and redevelopment for 46 years.
17 Starting with the City of Newark in 1974, where I
18 served as budget director and assistant city
19 administrator in charge of all public development
20 and functions as part of that tenure. I was the
21 executive director of the Essex County Facility for
22 11 years, which is a regional redevelopment
23 authority for the entirety of Essex County.
24 I've been the deputy county administrator
25 of Essex County as the town manager of Belleville.

1 I am the Borough Administrator for Caldwell. I have
2 been in private practice for 20 years providing
3 consulting services to both public entities and to
4 private entities. The public entities included
5 counties such as Middlesex County, Somerset County,
6 Essex County. Many municipalities, including
7 currently redevelopment director in Harrison and
8 Hudson County, in Belleville; adviser to Nutley and
9 I also serve as a consultant in a large number of
10 private entities involved in real estate development
11 and redevelopment.
12 I'm sorry I didn't realize that I was
13 going to do this. I would have forwarded my
14 credentials in terms of resume. But I've been doing
15 this a long time, and I have worked with Alma on
16 this project since 2004, believe it or not. So I
17 have been involved in this site and this project for
18 16 years.
19 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. We accept
20 you as a witness.
21 MR. BANKER: Okay. So the project
22 that is proposed is the adaptive reuse of a very
23 large building that was a centerpiece of the Borough
24 of East Newark for the last 150 plus years. The
25 site was originally the home of the Park Thread

1 Company, which those of you who are involved in
2 sewing, Park Thread and Hudson Park Thread, the
3 largest provider of thread to sellers for over a
4 century. The facility stopped being Park Thread,
5 and then 40 years ago it became a vertical
6 industrial park. It gradually lost tenants. About
7 20 years ago, it was largely vacant.
8 It was purchased by Alma Realty I think 17
9 years ago. Pursuant to the East Newark
10 Redevelopment Plan that was adopted for this area,
11 the Alma Realty applied to be designated as
12 redeveloper and over the last 17 years -- or 16
13 years, they have had ongoing negotiations with the
14 Borough of East Newark for the development of the
15 project.
16 As presently, we can see the project will
17 be a mixed-use project that will consist primarily
18 of building over 616 residential dwelling units, a
19 reasonable and relatively small amount of retail on
20 the ground floor, very limited amount of commercial
21 usage in the initial phase, and structured and
22 on-site parking sufficient to meet the requirements
23 of the redevelopment plan.
24 There is about 100,000 square feet of the
25 project that is not designated right now as to its

1 future use, but the agreement with the municipality
2 would allow it to be redeveloped subsequently for
3 nonresidential purposes, subject to reapplication to
4 the planning board of both the municipalities in the
5 county, when and if such additional use was desired.
6 The project, as I said, will involve
7 adaptive use. It also involves demolition of a
8 number of minor buildings on the site. It also
9 involves the environmental cleanup of the site. The
10 site, as I said, was used industrially. A
11 significant portion of the site was designated as
12 having limited future uses through the use of
13 engineering controls. Part of this project would be
14 to undertake any remediation necessary to eliminate
15 the deed restrictions associated with that part of
16 the site, to allow the entirety of the site to be
17 used for the uses that I outlined previously,
18 meaning the residential, retail, and parking uses
19 before -- all of those will be possible through the
20 cleanup that is included in this project.
21 The application has been done in respect
22 to the comment of the experts of the Hudson County
23 Planning Board, and also the comments provided by
24 experts for the Borough of East Newark. So there
25 have been adjustments made regarding access

1 questions, and sidewalk questions, and questions
2 also regarding the provision of water, which will be
3 new water supply provided through the Town of
4 Kearny. And also with new sewer -- storm sewer
5 output to be done out the Passaic River. So the
6 project has been a long time coming.
7 It has had the benefit of the comments of
8 your professionals as the Board, as well as the
9 professionals of the whole community, the Borough of
10 East Newark, and we believe that as finally
11 submitted, it is responsive to all those concerns,
12 and it will provide a very significant increase in
13 the tax base of the Borough of East Newark, and will
14 bring back an obsolete structure to make it a
15 productive part of the landscape of Hudson County
16 going forward.
17 I'm happy to elaborate on any of the
18 points I just made or to defer to any of the other
19 witnesses who are available regarding architecture,
20 engineering, traffic issues. Paul, I hope that
21 suffices.
22 MR. JEMAS: Tom, if I could just ask
23 a question? You're familiar with a letter that --
24 the most recent letter we got from Mr. Panagopoulos,
25 which is dated October 6th, 2020, that we had a

1 meeting prior to this meeting. I think we had it on
2 October 7th, where we went through each and every
3 one of those items in order to satisfy the traffic,
4 engineering, architectural, and other aspects of
5 this project, which were then supplemented by the
6 letter that came from Ms. Lee dated October 16th.
7 As far as you know, in your professional opinion, we
8 resolved with the Board's professionals those items
9 set forth therein, correct?
10 MR. BANKER: Yes. I was -- yes, I am
11 familiar wit the letter, I read the letter, I was
12 party to the conversation you referred to, and I
13 believe based on my participation in that call, that
14 all of the concerns raised in that communication
15 were addressed and satisfied either on the call or
16 by subsequent submission by the professionals
17 associated with this project.
18 MR. JEMAS: Thank you, Tom. Madam
19 Chairwoman, if you want and if the Board prefers, I
20 will go through our professionals and have them
21 briefly comment on the project? We anticipated that
22 because of all the work that was done and the
23 documentation that was submitted as reviewed and
24 I'll call approved, I'm not trying to put words in
25 anybody's mouth, we thought that we were sort of

moving towards the end of this, but I'll be pleased to do that if the Board prefers to desires to have that kind of testimony.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Let me first check if anyone has any questions for the witness that just spoke. Mr. Malavasi, I don't know if there's anything you want to say to the Board about this?

COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Nothing for this applicant. And I did want to -- I would like to hear from the traffic engineer just to discuss where -- we've all seen a bunch of things, especially one of the entries, and if we could get some testimony on the record as to what their final -- what they believe to -- what we've asked for, what they are going to provide, so the Board understands how access is going to be provided to this site.

MR. JEMAS: Madam Chairwoman, with that, I would request that we have Mr. Staigar sworn, so he can provide a response to Mr. Malavasi.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. Any other -- Commissioners, any other questions for the previous witness before we move forward?

COMMISSIONER JETER: I don't have any questions.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. All right. So let's --

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Any questions from the public?

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Yes. If there is anyone in the public who has questions for that previous witness?

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Madam Chair, I would just like to make a comment that this project was long overdue. Like Mr. Banker said, this should have been done about 30 years ago. So I'm looking forward to seeing something like this happen. It's going to be exciting.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Great. Thank you. Okay. Let's swear in the next witness.

MR. JEMAS: Joseph Staigar. Our traffic engineer.

(The witness is sworn.)

MS. BOGDANSKI: Okay. And if you could just state your name for the record spelling your first and last name? Also, stating the name of your firm?

MR. STAIGAR: Yes. My name is Joseph Staigar. S-T-A-I-G-A-R. The firm is Dynamic Traffic. We're headquartered at 245 Main Street in

Chester, New Jersey.

MR. JEMAS: Could you explain your credentials to the Board briefly, Mr. Staigar?

MR. STAIGAR: Yes. I have a bachelor of science, master of science degree, civil engineering, New Jersey Institute of Technology. I've also asked a professor of traffic engineer. I'm a traffic engineer licensed in the State of New Jersey, as well as other states in the northeast. I'm a professional planner licensed in the State of New Jersey. I've appeared before this Board numerous occasions in the capacity of a traffic engineer and expert, and throughout Hudson County and throughout the State of New Jersey on, I'd say over a thousand occasions.

MR. JEMAS: And your license is still in good standing as of this moment, correct?

MR. STAIGAR: Correct.

MR. JEMAS: Madam Chairwoman, I respectfully submit that Mr. Staigar offers expert testimony as a traffic engineer and otherwise.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. He's accepted. Thank you.

MR. JEMAS: Joe, knowing what we -- you know, the discussions -- the many discussions

that we've had, would you highlight what those items are with regard to -- I believe that Mr. Malavasi -- if I'm not pronouncing that right, I apologize if I'm not. I can do the Greek names. Would you just go through it? I know turning and that kind of stuff, entering and exit? If you would be kind enough to do that?

MR. STAIGAR: Yes. We went through quite a few iterations of analysis and redesign of the plan in order to address some of the comments that we got -- all the comments I believe that we received from the county engineer's office. A lot of them had to do with the interior of the site and the way that the driveways operate.

In regards to the ingress and egress, we have four driveways. There are two driveways on Passaic Avenue, which is the County road; and two driveways on Central Avenue, on the County road. We're going to disallow left turns out -- I'm sorry. If we start at the southerly driveway, closest to Central Avenue or the Clay Street Bridge, that will be a right in and right out. And the northerly driveway will be restricted left turns out. And those left turns would then be transposed to Central Avenue as basically right turns. If you're making a

1 left outside --
2 MS. GIARRATANA: Excuse me, Joe. I'm
3 so sorry. I think it would be helpful for the
4 Commissioners if maybe either Stephanie and I shared
5 our screen with the plan, so they can visualize as
6 you're speaking about the different driveways.
7 Stephanie, would you mind sharing that?
8 MS. LEE: Yes, I'll do that in a
9 second.
10 MR. BANKER: I have it open, if it
11 helps. If you want me to share?
12 MS. GIARRATANA: Oh, yes. Go for it.
13 Sorry to interrupt.
14 MR. STAIGAR: That's the grading
15 plan. I know there's a lot of pipelines and
16 underground basins. If you have maybe something
17 simpler? If there's a layout plan? I can work with
18 that, if need be. I think we're getting somewhere.
19 Yes, that would be very helpful. In fact, it
20 highlights where the driveways are. You can see the
21 -- Passaic Avenue is on the top of the page. Yes.
22 There. And Central is on the left side there. And
23 where the two, I'll call them dark appendages, those
24 are the driveways. They are depicting pavement and
25 parking spaces also and they are wider than -- they

1 are shown as wider than they actually are, but
2 that's just the overall pavement. But anyways, it
3 gives the Board an idea of where the location of the
4 driveways are.
5 So on Passaic Avenue, the two driveways,
6 the one on the left is the southerly driveway. The
7 north arrow is pointing to the right. The southerly
8 driveway, right in and right out. And the northerly
9 driveway will allow free movements, right in and
10 right out, and the left in, but the left turn
11 restriction. So there will be no left turns out of
12 the site on Passaic Avenue. And then therefore,
13 those movements will be transposed onto Central
14 Avenue.
15 The key intersection obviously is the
16 intersection of Passaic Avenue, Central Avenue, and
17 the Clay Street Bridge. Yes. It's on the left-hand
18 corner. And there is a County improvement plan, the
19 timing is perfect, because we're coming along at the
20 same time that the improvement is being made at the
21 intersection. And basically that improvement
22 entails adding a right-turn lane southerly
23 southbound. Southbound right turn lane into the
24 intersection to increase the capacity and increase
25 the safety aspects of the intersection itself.

1 So we took that into account when we did
2 our analysis of what the impacts might be. We took
3 a look at what other improvements could be made. We
4 optimized the timing of the light. We utilized the
5 most current traffic counts that we had. We do have
6 pre-COVID traffic counts that we relied upon. So we
7 have normalized -- what we consider normalized, not
8 -- and I think as far as we probably can imagine, it
9 will probably be the higher traffic volumes because
10 even ITE is predicting in the future that traffic
11 volumes during peak hours are particularly going to
12 be lighter than they have been.
13 Only because we've all learned as a
14 society, we don't need to be at work nine to five.
15 So -- but we utilize, as I said, the pre-COVID
16 pandemic traffic volumes to do our analysis. The
17 intersection works fairly well. It's still going to
18 have issues in terms of queuing and such, but we're
19 not making things worse overall in terms of our
20 traffic. We're increasing traffic, but with
21 mitigating those potential impacts are A, the town
22 improvement, but also the other improvements that
23 were -- we have been implementing as well, retiming
24 of the light. We're recommending that as well.
25 So we have sufficient parking and not

1 anticipating any overflow onto the streets, Central
2 Avenue has parking, and I believe the site plan
3 working in concert with your engineers and planners,
4 I think we have a site plan that will work safely
5 and efficiently in terms of an overall impact
6 basically on the surrounding roadway navigating a
7 county road.
8 COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: That pretty
9 much addresses -- I just wanted it for the record
10 that that north driveway will be restricted to left
11 turns in, but no left turns out. So you clarified
12 that for me. Thank you. And just so the Board
13 knows, we are -- the county project is actually
14 widening Passaic Avenue from Central all the way up
15 to Johnson. As a matter of fact, anybody who has
16 been out there lately, the west side of the road,
17 the abutment has already been removed. The road is
18 a bit wider now too, so that's very helpful to this
19 area. Anybody that's there knows that with all this
20 development on Passaic Avenue, it's pretty busy now,
21 especially like on Saturdays.
22 MR. STAIGAR: It's quite an
23 improvement.
24 COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Yeah, it'll
25 be a lot better. There will be a dedicated right

1 turn lane for the Clay Street Bridge, which should
2 reduce the queues at that level by quite a bit.
3 MR. BANKER: Joe, are you able to
4 talk about the new bus stop that you're adding also
5 a little bit?
6 MR. STAIGAR: Yes. In fact, you can
7 see the bus stop -- we're looking at the bus stop
8 right where it is circling. In fact, it could be a
9 turn -- well, we'll call it a turn out for the bus.
10 So we get the bus out of the through lane, the
11 northbound through lane, and into I'll call it a
12 little cut out at the -- into the curb. We locate
13 it there, because you can see the lightly gray area,
14 that's a grass area. The building is set back far
15 enough so that we'll be able to, either through
16 dedication or reservation -- well, not reservation,
17 dedication of easement, whatever the County desires,
18 that little area.
19 So the sidewalk will be kicked out a
20 little bit to accommodate the left turn out. We've
21 had some discussions with the New Jersey Transit, we
22 have them some preliminary layout for that. It
23 looks like we got a response back that they agree
24 with it and we're going to go move ahead with more
25 detailed plans. So this just happened just over the

1 last day and we want to share that with the
2 engineering department so you know what we're
3 looking at doing there. And the County.
4 MR. BANKER: We'll make a submission
5 -- I guess we can call it a preliminary interim
6 submission so that you know what -- where we're
7 headed with this.
8 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Anyone else have
9 any questions?
10 MR. TRIDENTE: Madam Chair, I have a
11 question.
12 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Yes?
13 MR. TRIDENTE: I don't know if the
14 architect of record is going to make any
15 presentation, but I would like to have someone
16 discuss the shade tree contribution and issues along
17 the frontage of Passaic Avenue. Passaic Avenue.
18 MR. JEMAS: We will have Mr. Bleeker
19 sworn in as soon as we're done with Mr. Staigar and
20 he will address those items.
21 MR. TRIDENTE: Thank you very much.
22 MR. JEMAS: You're very welcome.
23 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Any other questions
24 for Mr. Staigar? Is there anyone in the public that
25 has a question? Okay. We'll swear in our next

1 witness.
2 MR. JEMAS: That would be -- with
3 your permission, Madam Chairwoman, who is the
4 architect for the project.
5 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay.
6 MS. BOGDANSKI: Okay. Mr. Bleeker,
7 if you could unmute yourself?
8 MR. BLEEKER: Okay. I did.
9 (The witness is sworn.)
10 MS. BOGDANSKI: Okay. And if you
11 could state your name for the record, spelling your
12 first and last name? And also stating the name of
13 your firm?
14 MR. BLEEKER: Okay. My name is John
15 Bleaker. J-O-H-N; B-L-E-E-K-E-R. I'm a founding
16 member of Bleeker Architectural Group.
17 MR. JEMAS: John, would you be kind
18 enough to share your credentials briefly with the
19 Board?
20 MR. BLEEKER: I'll be glad to. I
21 completed my formal education in 1983. I received a
22 bachelor of science in architecture with a minor in
23 civil engineering. I've been employed since
24 actually 1980 in an architectural engineering and
25 surveying firm. So I have over 40 years experience

1 working in the field. I also have 37 years
2 experience as a licensed professional. And almost
3 immediately after getting my license, I became a
4 principal in the company. I've testified over 2,500
5 times and been accepted as an expert witness in
6 planning boards, zoning boards, and courts of law.
7 I am currently the Passaic County Architectural
8 Expert for the Construction Board of Appeals, and I
9 have been such for almost 18 years.
10 MR. JEMAS: And your license is in
11 good standing as we speak; is that correct?
12 MR. BLEEKER: Right. I am currently.
13 MR. JEMAS: Ms. Chairwoman, I
14 respectfully submit that Mr. Bleeker is an expert in
15 architecture and that he is permitted to offer such
16 expert testimony at this time?
17 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: He's accepted.
18 Thank you.
19 MR. JEMAS: John, would you briefly
20 describe, and also more particularly hone in on what
21 Mr. Tridente was requesting and what we have
22 discussed with the Board Consultant already for many
23 months?
24 MR. BLEEKER: I'll be glad to. Just
25 as brief summary of the project itself, Mr. Banker

1 touched upon it earlier, we have 616 residential
2 units, which is actually going to be completed in
3 approximately eight major buildings that are all pre
4 existing buildings, we're adaptively reusing all
5 those structures. We do have a smaller building,
6 which will make a total of nine buildings that will
7 remain on-site. We have a lot of ancillary
8 structures, including a few structures that are
9 close to the property line or slightly approaching
10 the property line along Passaic Avenue.
11 I do want to make the Board aware that
12 those little structures will all be removed. So the
13 reason or need for any encroachment easements or
14 permits any longer, once this project is completely
15 approved and completed with the construction
16 demolition as we propose. Only the main structure
17 will remain and they are setback sufficiently from
18 the property line, especially along Passaic Avenue,
19 where a few small encroachments had occurred
20 previously.
21 We are going to have 1,345 parking spaces,
22 which are going to be completely on-site, and we are
23 going to be constructing a four-floor parking garage
24 as one of the later phases of the project, to give
25 us a total of 1,345 parking spaces. In accordance

1 with your ordinance, we are required to have 1,306
2 parking spaces. So we are well in excess of parking
3 for the project.
4 With regards to the shade trees in the
5 land development regulations along Passaic Avenue,
6 we have provided a site plan, which is shown on
7 drawing ST-4. And that shows all the new shade
8 trees that we are going to be planting on the entire
9 site. And specifically also along Passaic Avenue.
10 We have had this reviewed by your department, as
11 well as this in compliance with the redevelopment
12 plan from the municipality you originally had.
13 And basically, you know, the detail of
14 this area for plantings has been something that we
15 have significant discussion about, and I believe we
16 all came up with a satisfactory resolution with
17 regards to how to do this, and how to do it, and it
18 is shown on our drawing ST-4, for your information.
19 MR. JEMAS: I have no further -- are
20 you done, John?
21 MR. BLEEKER: Yes. Unless the Board
22 would like to address anything?
23 MR. JEMAS: Yes, I have no further
24 questions, Madam Chairwoman. If the Board has
25 questions they would like to discuss with Mr.

1 Bleaker?
2 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Yes. Mario, were
3 your questions answered?
4 MR. TRIDENTE: I was just hoping that
5 for the record Mr. Bleeker could just advise the
6 Board of how many shade trees are being planted?
7 And how many are -- how many trees are being made?
8 MR. BLEEKER: Our plan currently
9 shows for the planting of 23 in the County roadway.
10 That is what we are proposing.
11 MR. TRIDENTE: And you're required
12 29, so we would have to make the contribution for
13 six. I just want to remind the applicant that the
14 contribution should include a B-6 proof after wages
15 with sworn amendments. And also with an ADA
16 compliant street grade. No further comment. Thank
17 you.
18 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Any other
19 questions?
20 MR. JEMAS: I have no further
21 questions about Mr. Bleeker, unless the public has
22 questions?
23 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. Is there
24 anyone from the public who has questions? Okay.
25 MR. JEMAS: Madam Chairwoman, with

1 your permission, the next witness would be our
2 engineer, Mr. Michael Petry.
3 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. We'll swear
4 him in.
5 (The witness is sworn.)
6 MS. BOGDANSKI: And if you could
7 state your name for the record, spelling your first
8 and last name, and stating the name of your firm?
9 MR. PETRY: J. Michael Petry. The
10 initial J. Michael. M-I-C-H-A-E-L. Petry.
11 P-E-T-R-Y. The firm is Petry Engineering, LLC.
12 We're located in Fairfield, New Jersey.
13 MR. JEMAS: Michael, your license is
14 in good standing?
15 MR. PETRY: It is.
16 MR. JEMAS: All right. I will
17 respectfully submit that Mr. Petry is an expert in
18 engineering and can testify as to this matter as to
19 those items, including drainage and a number of
20 other things that he's been working on for a long
21 time.
22 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: If the
23 Commissioners feel comfortable, then yes, he is
24 accepted.
25 MR. JEMAS: Michael, could you

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1 discuss the application and what we've been through
2 with the help of the four consultants and how we've
3 resolved the issues that were pending?
4 MR. PETRY: Certainly. So what's
5 been placed on the screen is the utility plan and
6 our firm was responsible for grading, drainage, and
7 utilities for this project. As part of our work
8 with East Newark, our firm performed a study of the
9 existing sanitary sewer line that runs down Passaic
10 Avenue. That is a trunk main and that has oodles,
11 and oodles, and oodles of capacity, in the technical
12 term. Our proposal will tie into that utilizing the
13 existing manhole connections that are located within
14 Passaic Avenue.
15 From a water prospective, the -- our firm
16 performed the water study of the entire area. It
17 was deemed to have inadequate capacity and
18 inadequate flow to even service the existing
19 conditions in the area. As part of our improvement,
20 we will be upgrading the water mains along the
21 frontage of this property with ten inch mains that
22 will loop through the site and back to this fire,
23 which is in Kearny, and those pipes will prove to
24 have not only sufficient capacity for our facility,
25 but sufficient capacity for the surrounding

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1 neighborhood that is under-serviced at this time.
2 From the storm water management
3 prospective, we are basically following the existing
4 grade and the existing drainage pattern. What we
5 have established at this time is a -- is the fact
6 that -- despite the fact that we are a major
7 development, we are reducing overall runoff from the
8 site, because we are reducing overall imperviousness
9 on the site. The site is virtually a hundred
10 percent impervious today and when we're finished
11 it's going to have -- it's going to have planting
12 areas, it's going to have areas that will be
13 landscaped within the facility. So while we don't
14 need retention, we are providing a subsurface storm
15 system. Because quite frankly, we understand that
16 the area floods.
17 Passaic Avenue goes under water in a
18 hundred year storm up to about Elevation 10. We
19 understand that we don't want our site to be
20 negatively impacted to whatever extent we can avoid
21 that. So we have provided a subsurface storage
22 system within our property that all of our drainage
23 ties to, so that we can lessen the impact, not only
24 on our residents and those who are -- who we are
25 practically serving, but we can lessen the impact on

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1 Passaic Avenue.
2 Simultaneously, what the municipality has
3 asked us to do is to replace the municipal pipe that
4 runs through the property across the street to the
5 BASF property, which is currently vacant, and to
6 take that pipe out to the Passaic River with a pipe
7 that has sufficient capacity. They've also asked
8 that we provide backflow preventers on that pipe.
9 Right now, it looks like it's going to be a pair of
10 pipes, rather than a single pipe. And they have
11 asked that we first separate the stormwater that's
12 on Central Avenue and tie it into that same
13 discharge pipe, because East Newark is in the
14 process of separating their storm from their sewer.
15 So as part of our work, we will be taking
16 the storm water that's been Central and taking it
17 out of the sewer system, and we'll be providing it
18 as part of the connection to the Passaic River
19 storm. So we're making a good deal of offsite
20 improvement as part of this project, and those
21 improvements are not only going to serve this
22 development, but they are going to serve surrounding
23 areas, and they are going to improve the drainage
24 condition on Passaic Avenue.
25 MR. JEMAS: Madam Chairwoman, I have

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1 no further questions about Mr. Petry at this time.
2 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Do any of the other
3 Commissioners have any questions?
4 COMMISSIONER JETER: No.
5 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Is there anyone
6 from the public who has any questions or comments?
7 Okay. Does that exhaust your expert witnesses?
8 MR. JEMAS: Yeah, right now. I mean,
9 Mr. Viokis is with us and -- and so is Mr. Gomez, if
10 there are any questions of the applicants, but we --
11 and I say this genuinely, with all the work that
12 we've done here with your consultants, this has been
13 one of the more exhaustive applications that I've
14 seen in terms of crossing the T's and dotting the
15 I's. You did a great job. That's why when we came
16 this evening, we understood that we covered all the
17 bases with the help of your consultants, and we
18 believe that the application is ready for approval.
19 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Okay. Anyone else?
20 Any comments or questions before we move forward?
21 Do I have a motion?
22 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I make a motion
23 to approve.
24 COMMISSIONER JETER: I Second.
25 MS. GIARRATANA: On a motion made by

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1 Commissioner Choffo and seconded by Commissioner
2 Jeter. Commissioner Allen.
3 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Yes.
4 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Choffo.
5 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Aye.
6 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner
7 Bettinger. Commissioner Jeter.
8 COMMISSIONER JETER: Yes.
9 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner
10 Malavasi.
11 COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Aye.
12 MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman Lugo.
13 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Aye.
14 MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman, the
15 motion has passed.
16 MR. JEMAS: Thank you very, very
17 much. On behalf of the applicant, we really
18 appreciate everything that you've done here and
19 we're looking forward to this project going forward
20 and improving our community.
21 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Thank you so much.
22 MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman, can I
23 just -- can I say for the record that the -- we'll
24 have a pending condition of approval to come to an
25 agreement with the applicant on the contribution to

1 the Passaic Avenue contribution.
2 MR. JEMAS: We agree.
3 MS. GIARRATANA: Okay. Thank you.
4 MR. JEMAS: Thank you very much.
5 Have a good evening. Stay well, everyone.
6 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Thank you.
7 MS. GIARRATANA: I would like to go
8 then back to item A on the agenda, which was the
9 memorialization of resolutions considered at the
10 previous meeting. The first application was
11 2020-19-SP. The applicant was Nicholas Babalis.
12 The location was 251 14th Street, Block 117, Lots 5
13 and 7 in Hoboken. It's an application to construct
14 a five-story building with 23 dwelling units, 4,400
15 square-feet of retail ground commercial space, and
16 23 off-street parking spaces. Do I have a motion?
17 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: I'd like to make
18 that motion, please.
19 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I second.
20 MS. GIARRATANA: On a motion made by
21 Commissioner Allen and seconded my Commissioner
22 Choffo. Commissioner Allen.
23 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Yes.
24 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Choffo.
25 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I vote aye.

1 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner
2 Malavasi.
3 COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: I vote aye.
4 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner NG --
5 oh, my apologies. He is not present. Chairwoman
6 Lugo.
7 COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Aye.
8 MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman Lugo.
9 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Aye.
10 MS. GIARRATANA: The next application
11 to be memorialized was 2020-36-SP. This is Harrison
12 Urban Renewal, LLC at 700 Frank E. Rodgers
13 Boulevard, Block 133, Lots 1.03 and 1.05 in
14 Harrison. Do I have a motion?
15 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I make a
16 motion. I make a motion.
17 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: I'll second
18 that.
19 MS. GIARRATANA: On a motion made by
20 Commissioner Choffo and seconded by Commissioner
21 Allen. Commissioner Allen.
22 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Yes.
23 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Choffo.
24 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Aye.
25 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner

1 Bettinger. Commissioner Jeter.
2 COMMISSIONER JETER: Yes.
3 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner
4 Malavasi.
5 COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Aye.
6 MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman Lugo.
7 CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Aye.
8 MS. GIARRATANA: The motion has
9 passed. Skipping ahead to Applications to be
10 Dismissed, this is actually carried over from
11 September, and it is -- my apologies. This is
12 application 2020-007-SP/SD, Russo Acquisitions, LLC,
13 1 Bellgrove Drive, Block 14, Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 in
14 Kearny. This was dismissed at the applicants
15 request with no prejudice. Do I have a motion?
16 COMMISSIONER JETER: Motion.
17 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Second.
18 MS. GIARRATANA: On a motion made by
19 Commissioner Jeter and seconded by Commissioner
20 Choffo. Commissioner Allen.
21 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Yes.
22 MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner
23 Bettinger. I think she is still having issues with
24 her audio. Commissioner Choffo.
25 COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I vote aye.

MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Bettinger. Commissioner Jeter.
COMMISSIONER JETER: Yes.
MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Malavasi.
COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Aye.
MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman Lugo.
CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Aye.
MS. GIARRATANA: The motion has passed. The next item on the agenda are applications to be exempt. There's quite a few of them, so bear with me.
First we have application 2020-038-SP. The applicant is 700 Belleville Turnpike Associates, LLC at 700 Belleville Turnpike, Block 150.01, Lot 64.01 in Kearny. This is a site plan application not along a county road.
Application 2020-039-SP. This is Coles Jersey Development Co, LLC at 258 through 282 16th Street, Block 23, Lot 4.00 -- my apologies. Lot 4.022 in Jersey City. It's a subdivision application not along a County road.
Application 2020-040-SP. The applicant is BCP, LLC at W 2nd Street, Block 362, Lot 1 in Bayonne. A site plan application not along a County

road.
Application 2020-041-SP. Applicant BCP, LLC at 796 Avenue East, Block 393, Lot 19 in Bayonne. A site plan application not along a County road.
Application 2020-040-SP; Applicant, GIRT Realty, LLC at 7900 Westside Avenue, Block 453.0, Lots 1.02 and 25.011 in Jersey City. It's a site application not along a County road.
Application 2020-043-SP. Amazon.Com Services, Inc at 5 Logistic Drive, Block 289, Lots 1, 2, 3, and 5 in Kearny. It's a site application not along a County road.
Application 2020-044-SP; equinox, Inc. at 275 Hartz Way, Block 22, Lot 2, in Secaucus. It's a site plan application not along a County road.
Application 2020-045-SP. The applicant is 628 Grand Street, LLC at 68 Grand Street, Block 78, Lot 21 in Hoboken. It's a site plan application not along a county road.
2020-046-SP/SC. The applicant is 199 Summit, LLC. The location is 199 through 201 Summit Avenue, Block 15201, Lots 1 through 9, 18, 19, 53, 54 through 66, and 89 in Jersey City. It's a site plan application not along a County road.

Application 2020-047-SP/SC. Applicant is Sixth Wave Logistics at 69 New Hook Access Road, Block 416, Lots 1 and 2 in Bayonne. And that's a site plan and subdivision application not along a County road.
Do I have a motion?
COMMISSIONER JETER: Motion.
MS. GIARRATANA: Was that Jeter?
COMMISSIONER JETER: Yes, it was.
MS. GIARRATANA: Okay. Thank you.
COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I'll second it.
MS. GIARRATANA: On a motion made by Commissioner Allen -- I'm sorry. On a motion made Commissioner Jeter and seconded by Commissioner Choffo. Commissioner Allen.
COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Yes.
MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Choffo.
COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: I vote aye.
MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Bettinger. Commissioner Jeter.
COMMISSIONER JETER: Yes.
MS. GIARRATANA: Commissioner Malavasi.
COMMISSIONER MALAVASI: Aye.
MS. GIARRATANA: Chairwoman Lugo.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Aye.
MS. GIARRATANA: The motion has passed. For old business, we have none. For new business, I wanted to just bring up about remote meetings. We're looking into what's available to have the board room. The last time we checked, they didn't have any staff there. Not even their commissioners are told to follow the HCIA protocols, particularly for space. But we'll explore and kind of host the meeting from there for November.
And I'm not sure Commissioner Bettinger is able to participate right now, but I just wanted to mention to the Board that we're very sad to mention that this is Renee's last meeting. She has been an asset, a staple, a founding member of the Planning Board for 18 years, Chairwoman for three different -- on three to four different occasions, and definitely a mentor to me, as I started on this -- started with the County Planning Office over nine years ago. So we're really going to miss her, and we'd like to invite her back for a potential in-person celebration, or if it has to be virtual, either in November or December. So I will reach out to her about that.
And then sadly, this is also Stephanie's

last meeting. She is moving back to California, closer to her family. We're going to miss her so much. She's done a great job since she's been on board. I couldn't have done COVID without her. We were able to keep the Board up and moving. Applicants left and right sent us messages about how appreciative they were about, you know, Stephanie keeping things going, and we also will be inviting her back for a celebration before the year is through.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Thank you. On behalf of the Board, Stephanie, thank you so much, we appreciate all the work that you've done, you've been awesome to work with. And Renee, if you can hear us, without me like breaking down, you are an example and I am so grateful to have worked with you and been able to be your friend. And I will always appreciate everything you did for me since I started. Woman to woman, there's not a lot of ladies on this Board, but we will rep for you, we promise. Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Thank you, Stephanie, for an excellent job, we appreciate it. Good looking moving back to California.

COMMISSIONER JETER: Kudos,

Stephanie. I appreciate the e-mails. I forgot to check in with you. I don't know who is going to take charge of that now, because I always forget, but I thank you. And Renee, it was a great experience meeting you and sitting next to you and just laughing at the quiet jokes that only you and I have seemed to have gotten. Thank you, guys.

MS. GIARRATANA: Thank you so much, everyone. Our next meeting is Tuesday, November 17th at 6:30. I also will have the next year's plan prepared for review.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Just a question for you.

MS. GIARRATANA: Sure.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: What was the contribution for the project? What was their liability. We didn't talk about that. How much of a contribution are we talking about?

MS. GIARRATANA: Our calculation came to about 700,000.

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

COMMISSIONER CHOFFO: Motion.

COMMISSIONER JETER: Motion. Aye.

CHAIRWOMAN LUGO: All right. Thank you, guys.

MS. GIARRATANA: Thank you.

(Whereupon the proceeding is then concluded at 7:41 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR, License No. 30XI00234700, and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, hereby certify that the proceedings herein are from the notes taken by me of a Regular Meeting of the Hudson County Board of Chosen Freeholders, held on Tuesday, October 20, 2020; and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Shari Cathey

SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR
A NOTARY PUBLIC of the
State of New Jersey
I.D. No. 2283786
Commission Expires 2/4/22

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