

**MINUTES  
PLANNING BOARD OF THE BOROUGH OF MADISON  
REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETING MARCH 15, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Planning Board of the Borough of Madison was held on the 15th day of March 2022 at 7:30 P.M., via a Zoom electronic meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Planning Board Vice Chairman, Mr. John Forte. Mr. Forte requested the reading of the Public Meeting Notice. Ms. Boardman read the following statement in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act:

“Let the minutes reflect that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner: At the reorganization meeting of the Board held on January 18, 2022, the Board by Resolution adopted a schedule of meetings. On January 19, 2022, a copy of the schedule of meetings will be posted at the bulletin board at the entrance to the Hartley Dodge Memorial, sent to the Madison Eagle and the Daily Record, and filed with the Borough Clerk all in accordance with the “Open Public Meetings Act”.

Beginning in **April 2020**, in response to public safety considerations and legal authorization, the Planning Board began conducting its monthly meetings on the previously noticed dates remotely using the Zoom platform, and subsequently separate notices have been published each month advising of this change and indicating that the procedures and requirements for monitoring such meetings and for making public comment, along with an explanation of the audio muting function of the electronic communications platform being utilized, is provided with detailed information on “How to Use Zoom and Participate” found on the Rosenet Webpage Communications / Virtual Meetings at <HTTP://www.rosenet.org/1273/Virtual-Meetings>.

The following roll call was recorded:

Present: Astri Baillie, Mayor Conley, Eric Range, Peter Flemming, John Forte, Ann Huber, George Limbach, and Tom Harris

Excused: Steve Tombalakian

Absent: None

Also Present: Vince Loughlin, Planning Board Attorney  
Susan Blickstein, Board Planner  
Dennis Harrington, Board Engineer  
Frances Boardman, Board Secretary  
Harold Maltz, Traffic Expert

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the previous meeting were not ready for approval.

**Comments by the Public:**

Mr. Forte opened the floor to the public for anyone that wished to be heard on any matter that was not on this evening’s agenda. Seeing none, that portion of the meeting was closed.

**RESOLUTIONS FOR MEMORIALIZATION –**

**OLD BUSINESS –**

**CASE NO. P 21-007**

**Preliminary & Final Site Plan with Variances**

**RPM Development, LLC**

**28 Walnut Street & Community Place**

**Block: 1601, Lots: 42 and 1.01**

A transcript of this evening's meeting is being prepared by Laura Carucci.

Mr. Azzolini provided a brief recap of the previous meetings held on February 15, 2022 and March 1, 2022 regarding this application. Changes have occurred to the plan after discussion with Borough Professionals and hearing the neighbors' concerns.

Mr. Kevin Shelly, Shorepoint Engineering remains under oath. Mr. Shelly began by sharing his screen. Marked into evidence was:

Exhibit A-6: Updated layout of 28 Walnut Street, prepared by Shorepoint Engineering, dated March 15, 2022

Mr. Shelly stated that the site had been revisited and an updated layout of the buildings was discussed. Mr. Shelly testified that the front of the building has been shifted back five feet towards the rear of the property line. This has created a new variance of a 25.5-foot rear setback. There is a slight increase in the impervious lot coverage by .3%.

The proposed retaining wall constructability was discussed, and Mr. Shelly stated that this retaining wall would not compromise the adjacent property.

Mr. Shelly had no further testimony. Mr. Forte opened the meeting to the Board members and Borough Professionals for questions of Mr. Shelly.

Mr. Harrington inquired about the swale grading. Mr. Shelly responded that the integrity of the swale would be maintained. Mr. Harrington commented on the retaining wall and recommended that a condition in the resolution if approved state that test pits be done at certain locations on site. A variance for the height of the retaining wall and fence exceeding the Ordinance was discussed.

Dr. Blickstein asked Mr. Shelly what the distance from the front of the building on Walnut Street to the edge of the sidewalk was. Mr. Shelly responded that it was 36.3 feet from the covered front porch to Walnut Street.

Mr. Limbach inquired about a revised landscape plan. Mr. Shelly stated that one was not being presented this evening, but one would be prepared.

There were no further questions from the Board, Mr. Forte then opened the meeting to the public for questions.

Larry Wickman, 33 Walnut Street was sworn in. Mr. Wickman asked how far the retaining wall being proposed was from Walnut Street. Mr. Shelly answered 33.86 feet. Mr. Wickman asked if the applicant had considered reducing the number of units. Mr. Shelly stated "No".

Mr. Denis Castanon, 39 Walnut Street inquired if the applicant had considered changing the entrance and exit into the site, having the entrance closer to Ridgedale Avenue and the exit closer to Central Avenue School. Mr. Shelly stated that it was not considered.

Ms. Pat Schultz, 57 Ridgedale Avenue asked what could be done to ensure the safety of the children and pedestrians. Mr. Shelly stated that the buildings were shifted back five feet to ease the concerns of the community.

Jennifer Baumgartner, 31 Walnut Street asked if the trees on the west side of the property line were going to be removed. Mr. Shelly answered "Yes".

Mr. Alberto Luzarraga, Esq. asked if there were going to be any plantings proposed for the retaining wall. Mr. Shelly stated that there is no additional landscaping being proposed.

There being no further questions from the public that portion of the hearing was closed.

Mr. John McDonough remains under oath. Mr. McDonough provided testimony regarding the five foot shift to the rear of the buildings. He stated that this shift provides a 25% front and rear setback with is compatible with the homes across the street. He also stated that the .3% increase in Impervious Coverage is a very modest increase and these variances will have a minimal impact on the application.

Mr. Forte asked the Board and Borough Professionals if they had any questions for Mr. McDonough, seeing none he opened the meeting to questions from the public.

Mr. Denis Castanon, 29 Walnut Street asked if pavers were considered to decrease the impervious coverage. Mr. Azzolini stated that pavers are being utilized in the interior walkways between Building B and C.

There were no further questions from the public. Mr. Forte closed that portion of the hearing.

The presentation this evening by Mr. Azzolini was completed.

At this time, Mr. Forte opened the meeting to the public for comments.

Each member of the public wishing to speak this evening was sworn in prior to his or her comments.

Mohamad Seyam, 36 Central Avenue, stated that he was not in favor of the application. He feels that the buffer being provided to the school is lacking.

Ms. Lois Bhatt, 117 Green Avenue, is in full support of this application.

Mrs. Jennifer Baumgartner, 31 Walnut Street, is in opposition to this development. She feels that the development is too dense for the area in which it is being proposed.

Ms. Joanna Ortynska, 43 Ridgedale Avenue, has serious concerns with the number of units proposed. She feels that the development has no charm and urges the Borough to work with the developer.

Mr. Denis Castanon, 29 Walnut Street, asked the Board to hear the concerns of the neighborhood. Safety is a large concern. He echoed the comments of the others stating that the density of the project is a concern.

Mr. Steve Esposito, 5 DeHart Place, stated that the project needs modifications. He echoed the sentiments of his fellow neighbors stating the density and safety issues.

Ms. Pat Schultz, 57 Ridgedale Avenue, agreed with her neighbors and is in opposition of this project.

Mr. Ethan Yoesting, 33 South Street, is in support of this development agreeing with the comments made by Ms. Bhatt. He does not feel that safety is an issue with this project.

Ms. Janine Hansons, 15 Walnut Street, has concerns with the number of units and is in opposition of this development.

Ms. Susan Wickman, 33 Walnut Street, stated that this development is squeezing in too many units into a small area. She feels that this development is unfair to all concerned.

Mr. Larry Wickman, 33 Walnut Street, stated that the development of the 14 units on Community Place will have no privacy from Central Avenue School. Street parking spaces are being lost on Walnut Street. He feels that the traffic study that was done is flawed and this development will create traffic problems on Walnut Street, Ridgedale Avenue and Central Avenue.

Mr. Andrew Dutton, 7 DeHart Place, feels that this is a massive project on a small lot and needs to be scaled down. He is in opposition to this project.

Ms. Catherine Thompson, 29 Walnut Street, agrees with the previous statements of her neighbors and is in opposition to this project.

Mr. Paul Daly, 32 Longview Avenue, expressed his support of the development.

There were no further comments by the public. Mr. Azzolini provided his closing statement.

Mr. Forte asked Dr. Blickstein to provide an overview on the redevelopment plan/project. Dr. Blickstein stated that a redevelopment plan/project is not a typical application. There are dates that need to be met and a very tight schedule. The Borough has worked with the Developer from concept to site plan. During testimony, justifications for the proposed application have been provided.

The hearing was closed and the Board began its deliberation.

Mr. Loughlin provided a list of conditions that would be incorporated into the resolution as discussed during these hearings. Mr. Forte asked for a motion to approve the application with the conditions outlined this evening, this motion was made by Ms. Baillie, seconded by Ms. Huber.

The following roll call was recorded:

“Ayes” – Mayor Conley, Mr. Range, Ms. Baillie, Mr. Flemming, Mr. Forte, Ms. Huber, Mr. Limbach and Mr. Harris

“Nays” - None

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

**PLANNING DISCUSSION** – Mayor Conley stated that the April 5, 2022 Planning Board meeting would most likely be in person.

**CORRESPONDENCE** –

Since there was no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Forte asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35pm.; seconded by Mr. Range. A voice vote of “aye” was heard by all members present and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fran Boardman, Board Secretary