

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**March 9, 2015**

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Flynn at 7:42 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.

**Members present:** Julia Allen, Jerry Cook, Elizabeth Duffy, Cheryl Filler, Betty Ann Fort, Christopher John, Ronald Monaco, Ben Smith, Marygrace Flynn

**Also present:** Attorney, Trishka Waterbury Cecil  
Engineer, John Hansen  
Planner, Michael Sullivan  
Environmental, Dr. Stephen Souza

**MINUTES:**

A Motion was made by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Monaco, that the Minutes of February 23, 2015 be approved as circulated. Motion was carried with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Ryland Inn Property, LLC**  
**Block 14, Lot 29**  
**Site Plans**

**Present for Applicant:** Jay Bohn, Attorney  
William Tanner, Engineer  
Gabe Bailer, Planner and Project Manager  
Jose Carballo, Architect  
Frank Cretella, Owner/Applicant

Attorney Cecil advised that Chairwoman Flynn had listened to the audio recordings of the minutes of February 23, 2015 and thus, everyone on the Board was eligible to vote.

**Exhibit A-14** was introduced: Overall Site Plan, dated March 3, 2015 prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates

Mr. Tanner described the existing structures on the plans as well as the proposed structures; pointing out the various driveways and parking lots onsite.

**Exhibit A-15** was introduced: Overall Site Plan with Landscaping, dated March 3, 2015 prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates

Mr. Tanner referenced the landscaping along the walking areas and wall. He also revealed the proposed walls between the two (2) parking lots. The walls will be three (3) feet in height and six (6) feet apart to allow for landscaping between them.

Ms. Filler inquired about the height of the wall in front of the property.

Mr. Tanner indicated that the wall in front of the property is five and one half (5 ½) feet in height when viewed from the parking lot and four (4) feet in height when viewed from Old Highway 28.

Ms. Duffy asked about the height of the landscaping between the two (2) walls as she was concerned the landscaping would block the view of the Ryland Inn.

Mr. Tanner referenced Readington Township Land Use Ordinance §148-63 as to why shade trees were to be planted between the two walls.

Mr. Cretella advised that the two (2) walls will hold back earth when the front parking lot is lowered. The landscaping between the walls is part of an ordinance to provide shade in the parking lots. Mr. Cretella proposed moving the trees to another location on-site with the Board's approval.

Mr. Sullivan advised the Board that if the trees would be better served elsewhere so as not to obscure the view, the trees can be moved. Mr. Sullivan expressed concern about the soil containment between the two (2) walls and tree root evolvment over time.

Discussion continued about the shade trees. It was suggested that the trees be relocated to the back of the property to keep a clear view of the Ryland Inn.

Discussion ensued about the wall in the front of the property.

Mr. Hansen advised the Board to continue discussing the issue, until a conclusion was met. The engineering and drainage as it pertains to the wall can be worked out once the decision is finalized.

A conclusion was made that the front wall would be five and one half (5 ½) feet in height as viewed from the parking lot, graded in the front, with no landscaping.

Ms. Duffy requested that the whiteboard fencing in the paddock remain, as such, this would become a condition of application approval.

Break at 8:25 P.M.

Reconvened at 8:33 P.M

Mr. Tanner advised the Board that Applicant accepted the Clarke Caton Hintz report dated February 19, 2015 as it stands with the following comments/questions:

Page 7 of 22 #5.1(b) refers to a pedestrian walkway between the main parking area and the Banquet Hall. Mr. Tanner indicated that the site would be serviced with valet parking. For those who wish to self-park, a five (5) foot wide path has been proposed. At the request of Mr. Sullivan, cross-hatch striping would be included.

Page 8 of 22 #4 refers to the number of parking spaces and will be addressed at a later time by Mr. Bailer.

Page 9 of 22 #7(a) refers to loading areas. Mr. Tanner indicated that the fifteen (15) foot wide sidewalk area for delivery trucks will be removed. Going forward deliveries between the buildings will be by golf cart.

Page 10 of 22 #8(c) refers to the location of a dumpster on-site. Mr. Tanner indicated the location of a permanent trash enclosure by the hydro-garden.

Page 10 of 22 #8 refers to the site triangle. Mr. Tanner advised that everything currently proposed in the site triangle will be removed.

Ms. Fort questioned the retaining wall referenced on page 12 of 22 #4(a)(ii). Mr. Tanner advised that the wall would be three (3) feet in height, but diminish as it approaches the Ryland Inn and be seventy (70) feet in length. The materials used would be the same as the wall in the front of the property to keep the site married together.

Page 13 of 22 #6(b) refers to a thirty (30) inch oak southeast of the Guest House. Mr. Tanner advised that this space is being redesigned with large pines to deformalize the space, and create a meandering path. He will work with an arborist to complete this project. Page 14 of 22 #6(d) refers to a row of existing trees. Mr. Tanner advised that they are working to keep trees that are currently on-site.

Chairwoman Flynn questioned whether the site would include an irrigation system.

Mr. Tanner advised that the current plans do no call for an irrigation system, but Applicant will retain two (2) wells on-site should he wish to incorporate one at a later date.

Ms. Fort questioned the three (3) areas on-site where proposed grade changes exceed two (2) feet referenced on page 14 of 22 #5.3. Attorney Cecil referenced **Exhibit 11** which indicates the locations of the cut/fill on the property. Mr. Tanner advised that **Exhibit 11** shows a point by point analysis every twenty-five (25) feet of the new and

old surface heights. The Board inquired as to whether the total amount of cut/fill would exceed thirty five percent (35%). Mr. Sullivan advised that Readington Township Land Use Ordinance §148-60.1 does not permit more than thirty-five percent (35%) of the site to have any topographic changes. The exact percentage is required to determine if a variance is required.

The Board inquired about grading and run-off from the property. Mr. Tanner advised that drainage will run underground and with the proposed site changes, drainage will improve.

Break at 9:16 P.M.

Reconvened at 9:23 P.M

Page 18 of 22 #5.6(1)(b) refers to directional sign height and area requirements as they relate to Land Use Ordinance §148-116.8 C. Mr. Tanner testified that the proposed signs are drawn to scale and are three and one half (3 ½) feet high by four (4) feet hanging from a seven (7) foot tall pole. The signs will sit two (2) feet off the ground.

Mr. Hansen requested that the signs be moved from the right of way and outside of the site triangle.

**Exhibit A-17** was introduced: Variance Request List

**Exhibit A-18** was introduced: Design Waivers Requested

Mr. Bailer read the variances requested as it relates to each phase. In general, Applicant requests the following variances: site grading above two (2) feet; minimum front yard setback; minimum side yard setback; parking between a building line and street right of way; directional site area and height; and identification sign area.

Mr. Bailer testified that Applicant requests waivers for the following items: street tree quantity; parking area tree quantity; hairpin striped parking spaces; parking area planting strip width; traffic flow arrows; and size of parking stalls.

Mr. Monaco questioned the relevance of the variances spelled out by phase.

Mr. Hansen indicated that it's important in a phased application as there is no guarantee that all phases will be built.

Mr. Cretella advised the Board that the reason he phased the application is so that he can obtain a Certificate of Occupancy per phase. All in all, he needs a full site plan approval for funding.

Mr. Monaco requested testimony as it relates to the proposed hotel.

**Exhibit A-19** was introduced. Proposed Conditions.

Mr. Bailer indicated that the proposed site requires 44.38% of impervious coverage.

The Board expressed concern that Applicant was wrapping up testimony before addressing the requested revisions to the proposed hotel.

Mr. Bailer advised that Applicant has removed the proposed cooking school and the helicopter pad.

Mr. Sullivan had two (2) outstanding issues as to the accessory use and the nature of this use; as well as the impervious coverage. As those items have been addressed, he had no further fact finding issues.

Mr. Tanner advised the Board that he calculated the topographic changes to the site at 32%.

**Exhibit A-20** was introduced. Ryland Hotel revision date March 9, 2015.

Mr. Carbello testified that the hotel now resembles a large house, as the visual mass has been reduced by thirty percent (30%).

Mr. Sullivan was pleased with the revisions as they had chipped away at the mass of the building as it relates to the street. The proposed building has a more rural feel and is more in-line with the property. He advised Applicant that the new drawings should be presented to the Historic Preservation Commission for review.

#### PUBLIC QUESTION

Todd Terricone – 6 Lamington Road – wanted to know if the hotel roof line could be diminished.

Mr. Carballo indicated that if the slope of the roof was cut, it would damage the style of the building. He further testified that lowering the building height by a few feet will not make a significant difference in appearance.

Chairwoman Flynn inquired about the attic and where utilities would be placed.

Mr. Carbello advised that the attic was just that, an attic. Utilities would be located in a basement area that would be large enough to hold the utilities and sprinkler system.

Attorney Bohn advised that no further plans would be provided. Moving forward Applicant will be working on conditions, not plan revisions. An extension was granted until the end of March 23, 2015 with no further notice required.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A Motion was made by Ms. Fort, seconded by Mr. Cook, to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 P.M. The motion was carried with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebekah Harms". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Rebekah Harms  
Planning Board Secretary