

UNION BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

MEETING

March 14, 2018

THE FOLLOWING NOTES FROM THE MEETING ARE NOT INTENDED AS A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT BUT RATHER AS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE WITNESSES AND ACTIONS OF THE ZONING BOARD

The Board of Adjustment of The Township of Union convened its regular meeting on March 14, 2018, pursuant to the Sunshine Law of The State of New Jersey, at 7:30 p.m., and the following members were present: DiGiovanni, Ciampi, Petkov, Wiley, Demovic, Alexander and Galante. Absent was Howe and Saraiva. Also present were Robert J. Pansulla, Esq., Board Attorney; Anthony Monguso, Construction Official; and Tiffany Abrantes, Meeting Clerk.

Mr. Galante then asked for the approval of the minutes of the February 28, 2018 meeting, and the minutes of that meeting were then moved by Mr. DiGiovanni and seconded by Mr. Ciampi. All members present who were eligible to vote were in favor with the exception of Mr. Wiley who abstained since he was absent for the February 28, 2018 meeting.

Mr. Galante then asked for communications and Mr. Monguso advised there were no communications and hence, there were none to be read.

The first matter to come to the attention of the Board was Calendar No. 3314 Joaquim Sousa, for Resolution of Approval. Mr. Pansulla had been directed by the Board to prepare a Resolution of Approval containing findings of fact and conclusions and has presented the Board with a Resolution of Approval; copies of which had been distributed to the Board members for their review prior to the start of the meeting. Mr. Galante then asked for a motion after there were no additions or corrections and Mr. Petkov then made a motion that the Board adopt the Resolution of Approval as written as accurately memorializing the previous findings of the Board which was seconded by Mr. Ciampi. On the vote: Petkov, yes; Ciampi, yes; Demovic, yes; and Galante, yes.

The final matter to come to the attention of the Board was Calendar No. 3309 Agape Foundation, Inc., to build a church with community center. Stephen F. Hehl, Esq. came forward on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Hehl gave a brief overview of the matter and that he would be presenting five witnesses. Mr. Pansulla then marked into evidence the application, site plan with survey, architectural plans and storm water report. Mr. Hehl then called his first witness Thomas J. Quinn, engineer, from EKA Associates, to testify. The witness gave his qualifications and was accepted to testify. Mr. Quinn gave a review of the zoning on the property and areas around. He gave an overview of the survey and reviewed the coverages and the driveways with egress and ingress on Stuyvesant Avenue and Pleasant Parkway. Mr. Quinn gave a review of the parking, lighting and landscaping. He added into evidence an emergency vehicle maneuvering plan. After several clarifying questions by the Board, Mr. Galante opened the witness to the public for cross-examination on the testimony given and coming forward to question the witness was Manuel Castro.

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Mr. Hehl called upon his next witness, Richard T. Potter, architect, from Potter Architects, to testify. The witness gave his qualifications and was accepted to testify. He described the interior and exterior of the building. He provided the details for the proposed building and discussed the function and safety features. Mr. Potter added into evidence a photo of a church that he designed some time ago of a similar nature to establish the look, and promote the longevity of the materials used. He reviewed the basement and main floor plans of the church. After several clarifying questions by the Board, Mr. Galante opened the witness to the public for cross-examination on the testimony given and no one came forward to question the witness. Mr. Hehl called upon his next witness, Christiana Ero, a representative member of the church, to testify. The witness was accepted to testify. Ms. Ero gave an overview of the congregation and all the services the community center offers. Mr. Hehl added into evidence a list of the parishioners. Ms. Ero gave an overview of the hours of operation for worship and services that the church provides. After several clarifying questions by the Board, Mr. Galante opened the witness to the public for cross-examination on the testimony given and no one came forward to question the witness. Mr. Hehl called upon his next witness, Justin Taylor, a traffic engineer, of Dynamic Traffic, LLC. The witness gave his qualifications and was accepted to testify. Mr. Taylor gave an overview of the traffic and parking along Stuyvesant Avenue, noting sufficient available parking spaces. He feels that adequate parking spaces are available that would be sufficient for the size of the congregation. After several clarifying questions by the Board, Mr. Galante opened the witness to the public for cross-examination on the testimony given and Manuel Castro came forward to question the witness. Mr. Hehl called upon his next witness, James Watson, a planner, from EKA Associates, P.A., to testify. The witness was accepted to testify. He addressed all the variances with the comments from Maser Consulting. He testified that there is no negative impact to the surrounding community and the statutory criteria is satisfied through this application. After several clarifying questions by the Board, Mr. Galante opened the witness to the public for cross-examination on the testimony given and no one came forward to question the witness. Mr. Galante then opened the matter up for public comments. Mr. Hehl then gave a brief closing statement asking the Board to grant this application, and it was noted on the record that there were many persons in the audience who were in attendance to support the application but did not desire to make an oral public statement. The Board then went into conference on the matter. The Board felt this was a good application, and that the appropriate statutory criteria had been satisfied. The property was vacant, dilapidated and in need of repair. The Applicant committed through the purchase of the adjacent property, also in need of repair, to convert what was existing into new residential housing. The religious use and proposed community center were of a modest, limited size to which the property was particularly suited to support as proposed and designed.

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Mr. Galante then asked for a motion and Mr. Petkov then made a motion that the Board grant the variances applicable to the application and that counsel is directed to prepare a resolution consistent with the Board's decision, which was seconded by Mr. DiGiovanni. On the vote: DiGiovanni, yes; Demovic, yes; Ciampi, yes; Petkov, yes; Wiley, yes; Alexander, yes and Galante, yes. The Resolution of Approval will be read at the April 4, 2018, meeting.

There being no further business to come to the attention of the Board, Mr. DiGiovanni then made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Demovic. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Anthony Monguso, Board of Adjustment Secretary