

Against: Wright

Abstain: Connelly

Attorney Walter Toto asked to have the Public hearing for 3M Investments, LLC carried until the October 8th meeting due to the length of the Public Hearing for 258 Gatzmer Avenue.

Motion to Carry:

Motion: Wright

Second: Davino

In Favor: Davino, Howard, Kozar, Spillane, Wright, Walker, Connelly

PUBLIC HEARING: 258 Gatzmer Ave: Block 72, Lots 1&2 & Block 72.01, Lot 1

The applicant is Alex & Gabriel Properties, LLC. The applicant is represented by Walter Toto, Esq. the site is located in the RB -Retail Business District Zone. The site is the old Busco Brothers property. The applicant proposes to construct 1 multi-use building for retail and residential apartments consisting of 1 and 2 bedrooms. The proposed building will be three stories.

Walter Toto, Attorney for Alex & Gabriel Properties (258 Gatzmer Ave) the old Busco Brothers Property opened the public hearing. Board Attorney Michael Balint asked if a traffic expert was available tonight. Mr. Toto explained the hearing probably wouldn't be finished tonight and one can be brought in if needed.

The applicant is seeking a use variance to put apartments in a district not zoned for them.

Christine Mazzaro Cofone – Planner - Miss. Cofone discussed the proposed property is within walking distance to the downtown area which by approving the apartments would bring more people to the area, therefore it would be increase spending power to the downtown businesses. All the parking will be on the property keeping the streets open for the downtown businesses. She emphasized a lot on the fact that it is so close to the other businesses and restaurants in town and is walkable. She feels there are a lot of benefits to these mixed-use residential buildings. The buildings will have 34 residential 1- and 2-bedroom apartments and 5 retail businesses. There is sufficient space to build and the area already has nice single-family homes. This can be an asset with attractive buildings. Walkable to Veterans park where there is a bus stop.

Board Chairman opened it up for the Board Members to ask questions regarding Miss. Cofone's testimony.

Board Engineer John LeCompte has concerns about the parking being in 2 separate lots which are separated by an existing street.

Board Chairman John Walker is concerned that Jamesburg already has 9-10 vacant businesses and they are proposing more retail stores. Miss Cofone explains they wanted to have all residential but feels *mixed* retail and residential is good for the town.

Board Member Brian Wright it is extremely difficult to walk to the downtown area from that property. There is an extremely dangerous intersection to cross. Would not be safe for children to walk to school. Miss. Cofone is confident the walk would be safe. You also mentioned walking to NJ Transit busses and trains. There are no active trains or NJ transit Busses. Mr. Wright also has concerns on whether or not the property could be subdivided in the future. Board Attorney Balint explained there would be a deed restriction that would run with the land. Board Member Davino agrees it is not safe to walk downtown from the property. Other board members also had concerns about children being able to walk safely to school. They children would have to cross over Gatzmer Ave to get safely to the walkways where there are crossing guards.

Board Attorney Michael Balint called for a brief recess.

Board Chairman John walker explained when they came back from recess that members of the public were having a group chat on the side panel which is not permitted. They shut it down.

Alternate Board Member Pat Connelly asked if this is the best use for this property? The planner feels it is a reasonable use

Michael Testa – Architect – We are proposing 2 buildings. Ground floors will be retail, 2nd and 3rd floors will consist of 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. There will be a gym, common area, elevator, sealed trash area. All handicap accessible. There will be 2 egress points. The exterior of the building would be a blend of siding, trim work and stone. He went on to show exhibits of the elevations, facades, and floor plans. All apartments will be rentals. All units will have washers and dryers, this makes it more desirable to rent. The trash will be taken out through the back of the building. Residents will not have to take the trash outside. There will be a trash shoot on each floor.

Several Board members had questions. Regarding the name of the complex, parking, sidewalks, drainage, sprinklers in common areas and room bedroom sizes. Mr. Testa answered some of the questions, the others will be addressed when the site plan is gone over.

Bhaskar Halari – Engineer – Mr. Halari discussed the variance plan including the size of the property, building, parking, sidewalks, landscaping, signage, lighting and storm water. The county is looking to widen Gatzmer Avenue by 4ft and provide a sidewalk. The 95 parking spaces consist of 2 separate parking lots. The 2nd lot is across Sherman Street. There are concerns with people having to walk across the street to get to the building located on the other lot. Chairman John Walker asked if there was any talk about vacating the street. The Engineer feels it would make sense to vacate the street, this would help the Borough, they wouldn't have to maintain it. The engineer explained the plans include the widening of Gatzmer Avenue but not the sidewalk.

There will be no turning restrictions coming out of the property. Board Member Brian Wright questioned Sherman Street being an access road for the Railroad. Board Attorney Balint explained we can provide an access way with an easement. A question was brought up about deliveries being made and there is no spot for that. Since there are 5 extra parking spaces the Engineer explained they can use some of those spots to make a larger spot for deliveries. There would be no tractor trailers, just small box trucks. The Engineer continued to go through the compliance letter from Remington & Vernick discussed what would be done and what would be added to the site plan.

There was also discussion of the parking lot and interior landscaping.

Several members of the Board had questions and concerns regarding the 2 properties, the parking and the street since between the parking lots being vacated since it is being used by the Railroad. Drainage was also a concern with Board members and the fact that the 5 corners is a dangerous intersection without having people walking through it to go to the downtown area. Concerns also came up about having a traffic expert at the next hearing. It is necessary to have a traffic study done.

Motion to Open Public Comment:

Motion: Wright

Second: Connelly

In Favor:

Several residents spoke on behalf of this application.

- Brian Young – 16 Ridgeview Road – Concerned with the amount of people, impact on schools, far walk from town, already commercial vacancies, just do not want it.
- Rosemarie Spillane – 29A Lincoln Avenue – Concerned about the safety of the children. Crossing guard at that intersection, very dangerous, cars fly by.
- Michelle Scott – 7 Fernwood Lane – Member of the Board of ed. Concerned with the safety of the children when school reopens. Traffics has gotten worse throughout the years. Would like to see traffic study and Financial Impact Study
- Gary Murphy – 251 Gatzmer Avenue – Concerned with parking on Sherman Street. His tenants already struggle with parking. Will bring too much traffic and more crime due to the stores.
- Peter Florczak – 265 Gatzmer Avenue – Concerned with blind spot on the road, stormwater management issues, speed limit should be reduced, and the railroad.
- Brian Taylor - 9 Hillside Avenue – Concerned with the children walking to school. Would need to have a 3rd crossing guard at intersection. Rental inspector already has 800 apartments. Would we need to hire another inspector? Employee parking, was it factored in? there's no parking on a county road. We already have 11 apartment complexes in a one square mile town. Would they be low income?
- John Miller – 247 Gatzmer Avenue – His main concern is drainage. The roads flood, drainage system doesn't work. This property is zoned for zero

- apartments. Just do not want the apartment complex.
- Roberto Sanchez – 13 Antoinette Court – A business owner in town, tried to purchase this property, the town wanted a lot from me. We do not need more apartments in town. If this gets approve, what kind of retail stores will be there. Will it be limited to certain things?
 - Ashley McMaster – 6 Lincoln Avenue – Concerned with the amount of traffic already. It's impossible to get out of driveway. Once kid go back to school the traffic will only get worse.
 - Linda Linke – 292 Gatzmer Avenue – Thinks the plan is nice, but the traffic will be bad. Traffic already backs up in front of house. With adding ore apartments will only make it worse. With a new Mosque and development already going up off Cranbury Road the traffic will increase. It is too scary to walk into town. Please think of us at this end of town and keep property as commercial.
 - Rick Reynolds – 14 Sedgwick Street – Agrees with all the other residents that spoke tonight. Traffic, water issues, the kids there is no play area so the kids will play on the railroad tracks. We also have too many rentals in town.
 - Joseph – 30 Dayton Road – Concerned with traffic. There is already a warehouse and 55 and older community going in up the street. Truck traffic will be worse. We already have many trucks hitting the bridge. Our downtown area already has a quaint feel to it. A lot can be done to beautify it.
 - Robin Yodice – 23 Hooker Street – Concerned with the traffic. This will only make it worse. I am against the project.

Motion to Close Public Comment:

Motion: Wright

Second: Connelly

In Favor:

Motion to Carry to November: (New documents to the Borough by the end of Sept)

Motion: Wright

Second: Davino

In Favor: Davino, Howard, Kozar, Spillane, Wright, Walker, Connelly

- Borough Attorney Mike Balint discussed a letter received from Otto Kostbar regarding the property at 61 East railroad Avenue (Jay's Liquor Store) He is looking to eliminate one of the retail stores and only having one store. No other changes to the property, The Zoning Officer can authorize this and issue permit. Chairman John Walker agrees tis can be approved administratively.
- Borough Attorney Mike Balint discussed the progression with Jamesburg Fuel. They are asking for a one-month extension. Several board members have an issue with this. They have already been granted extensions and seem to be doing nothing to get in compliance. Board Member Brian Wright explained this has been going on 2-4 years already, not to mention they have

fire violations not paid. Approval to close the entrances was already granted. Chairman John Walker discussed the Council will have to enforce any action and we should kick this back to them. The county is looking for a new survey, which they are saying is holding them up. There seems to be no progress. Mayor Marlene Lowande agrees this has been going on for years and there is always an excuse. This will be brought to Council.

Motion To Adjourn:

Motion: Wright

Second: Kozar

In Favor: All