

**Township of Washington
Bergen County, New Jersey
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2015**

CALL TO ORDER –

Open Public Meetings Act Statement – In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, notification of this meeting has been sent to The Ridgewood News, our official newspaper in the Township of Washington and notice has been posted on the bulletin board at Town Hall.

First Order of Business: Salutation to the Flag

Oath of Office, Mr. Bernard Golick, Vice Chairman, Board Member

Roll Call Taken:

Messrs. Dumaresq (absent), Murphy, Pinnick, Sabino, Chairman Calamari (absent), Councilman Sears, Mayor Sobkowicz, Golick.

Also in Attendance: Board Attorney Mr. Robert Wortalik, Board Engineer, and Paul Azzolina.

Approval of Minutes: Councilman Sears, Mr. Murphy.
January 28, 2015

**Roll Call Taken; All Board Members Present Approve
Mr. Golick Abstain**

Open Public Portion: Councilman Sears, Mr. Murphy.

Roll Call Taken

No Public Comment

Close Public Portion: Councilman Sears, Mr. Murphy.
Roll Call Taken

**Robin Meyer NYC, LLC d/b/a Bark Place, 273 Pascack Road, Block 3402,
Lots 18-20 WTC, Washington Town Center: Dog Grooming Salon**

Vice Chairman Golick: asked the applicant to introduce themselves and asked for a brief description of the business.

Joel Ives, Architect, 1425 Plaza Road, Fair Lawn, New Jersey 07410

Robin Droescher, 170 Larch Avenue, Bogota, New Jersey 07603

Mr. Ives and Ms. Droescher both sworn in.

Architect Mr. Ives: he provided a new drawing, a schematic drawing which illustrates the project better; existing space within the shopping center; convert it into a dog grooming facility, with a reception area in the front, sales counter, boutique items for sale with a rear window; behind that would be a pen area; behind that a storage area for products with a small office behind; the pink area is a bathroom which was existing; only area on plan that didn't change, would also be a stacked washer and dryer; behind the toilet area would be special sinks specifically designed for dog bathing, with filters to capture the hair so the hair doesn't go into the drain; the rear door is existing; not making any changes to the ceiling, other than moving a few lighting fixtures;

Mr. Sears: asked about ventilation.

Mr. Ives: stated going to putting in a whole rooftop unit to handle this space which will be designed by an engineer; it will be for ventilation and air conditioning; the current unit will be disconnected; a properly designed rooftop unit will be able to ventilate, heat it and air condition the space properly.

Mr. Sears: asked if there is a date when that unit will be installed.

Mr. Ives: replied no.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if the unit will go on the roof.

Mr. Ives: replied yes.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked how big is the unit?

Mr. Ives: replied that will be designed by the engineers.

Steve DeMathis of DeMathis Real Estate/Property Manager WTC, 110 Fairview Avenue, Verona, New Jersey 07044

Mr. DeMathis was sworn in.

Mr. DeMathis: stated he handles all the affairs of the Washington Township Center, such as maintenance, capital improvements and leasing with the new tenants; is here to answer any questions that may arise with regard to the HVAC.

Mayor Sobkowicz: would like to know how big the unit is and if it can be seen from the front.

Mr. DeMathis: stated there are currently 35 to 40 units on the roof which are not visible to the human eye; history of records indicated that there was a 50 ton unit that serviced the larger space; now they have subdivided the spaces; this particular small space has 15 tons servicing it which is grossly overkill and it is nonfunctioning at this time; proposals are in and very significant, what is existing needs to be removed and replaced new; it is being designed by a mechanical engineer; those design plans will be submitted with a permit to the building department; construction officials would review it; once approved the permits would be paid and the units would be put in; it will be situated on top.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if any other units will be removed.

Mr. DeMathis: stated the defunct 15 ton unit that currently sits there now being removed off the rooftop and any of the old duct work that is inside the building will be removed.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked what is being planned to buffer sound and asked for a description.

Mr. Ives: stated the shaded area on the plan is where insulation is run along the ceiling about 4 feet wide; that keeps the sound from jumping over the wall; common technique; in addition 2 x 4 intimate panels, they are about 4 inches thick will be placed on the wall of the facility to absorb sound and keep the sound from bouncing around; they will be above the ceiling and on the wall; these panels are sometimes seen in the back of theatres, they are colorful panels.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if a description can be given of how you are going to handle hair separation.

Ms. Droescher: stated Pet Edge leading company does all the grooming supplies; the drain is specifically designed and every night the trap gets changed.

Vice-Chairman Golick: stated that what was presented is for each individual station.

Ms. Droescher: stated that there are two bathing tubs and each tub's plumbing fixture will have that attached to it.

Vice-Chairman Golick: asked if there is anything that prevents disease from spreading from animal to animal; are there any standards that need to be applied.

Ms. Droescher: stated that everyone coming in must submit a vet vaccination forms and all vaccinations need to be up to date.

Vice-Chairman Golick: asked if anyone can come in without the certification of the animal.

Ms. Droescher: stated no; all the other animals need to be protected as well as the people working there.

Councilman Sears: stated a Knox box would be required on the outside of the building since a key would be needed to get in after hours; asked if any animals will be staying overnight.

Ms. Droescher: stated absolutely not; that is a whole different type of operation; her primary number one goal is safety first for the employees and the animals; the daycare area is 7:00 am to 7:00 pm it would be open for people who would want to drop off their animal before going to work; it would not be for vacation: it would be Monday through Friday, such as a daycare where someone would drop off their children.

Councilman Sears: asked what about the animal waste, will there be a private container outside of the store and how would that be picked up.

Ms. Droescher: stated it is like a diaper genie that is for babies, but for animals, the same type of thing; you put the waste inside and put into the receptacle and then put it in the dumpster every evening.

Councilman Sears: asked if there will be a separate dumpster which will be labeled animal waste.

Mr. Ives: stated yes, Ms. Droescher will coordinate that and abide to what the restrictions are with the haulers.

Vice-President Golick: makes a recommendation that there be a dumpster dedicated for this operation.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if there will be a service coming to pick up the waste or will it be put in the back in the dumpster.

Ms. Droescher: stated she will do whatever the recommendation is.

Vice-President Golick: stated it would have to be a secured and Board of Health governed type of a disposal cartridge; it could not be an open dumpster.

Mr. DeMathis: stated that the haulers are governed by regulations other than any municipal board; when Ms. Droescher works to get that coordinated he will

be working with her; they will bring a dumpster that will be secured and locked and Ms. Droescher will have the only key to it; the dumpster would not be able to be accessed unless you have the key and it will be labeled.

Councilman Sears: asked if a chemical list will be supplied.

Ms. Droescher: stated everything will be natural products; there will be no chemicals.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if it can be put in writing that they are natural products and whatever they are so there is a list on file.

Councilman Sears: asked if she owns any other stores.

Ms. Droescher: stated no, this would be her first store; she owns her own manufacturing company for the past five years that designs and manufacturer's dog accessory and apparel.

Councilman Sears: asked if this would be her first dog salon.

Ms. Droescher: stated yes; previously worked corporately for many years in New York; last job was at Liz Claiborne running the outlet stores so she is familiar with running a retail environment.

Councilman Sears: asked if she will be on premises and how many employees will there be.

Ms. Droescher: stated that yes she will be on the premises; maximum seven employees and herself would make eight.

(There was a discussion of where employees would park; parking along Pascack Road would be desirable since there are not enough spaces in the back for five or six more cars).

Councilman Sears: asked how would drop off be conducted of people bringing their dogs in since they cannot double park in the fire zone.

Ms. Droescher: stated that they would need to park properly and walk their dogs in.

Mayor Sobkowicz: stated that residents have complained that each store owner should have their own dumpster.

Mr. Sabino: asked which unit.

Vice-President Golick: stated it is near Body Empathy; first there is Rite-Aid, Body Empathy and this is the next store; south of it.

Mr. Murphy: asked if the dogs will be walked during the day or left in the pens throughout the course of the day.

Ms. Droescher: stated they would pick up the waste in the pen area as opposed to bringing them out.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if the dogs will be taken out for walks.

Mr. Murphy: stated if a dog is there from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm they would need to be taken out for a walk.

Ms. Droescher: stated it would probably be mid-day they would need to get out for a walk.

Vice-President Golick: stated he does not understand how it works since he has never seen a daycare for a dog; you can't keep them cooped up all day animals may become uneasy and a little hard to handle; would there be someone available to walk these dogs during the day.

Ms. Droescher: stated yes, absolutely; in the back there are six smaller pens for a time-out or if they want to sleep; there is also a larger area where there will be agility equipment with one or two people there at all times.

Vice-President Golick: asked the animals that are there from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm they will have to be walked during the day; there will be someone to do that; asked instead of going out the front will you go out the back door so there is control in that area.

Ms. Droescher: stated that presumably we will go out the back.

Vice-President Golick: stated he would recommend that.

Councilman Sears: asked how many dogs can you accommodate on a daily basis.

Ms. Droescher: stated the daycare maximum would have 8 dogs total; in this area most people have smaller dogs; within the grooming it would be a 3 hour turn time from the time they would come in, an hour to bathe, an hour to groom, and 15 or 20 minutes before the dog is ready to be picked up you would call the owner.

Councilman Sears: asked how many would be for the doggy day care center.

Ms. Droescher: stated that the maximum would be 8 total; then in the grooming if there are 3 groomers we would schedule three dogs every hour and fifteen minutes.

Vice-President Golick: asked that would be 30 dogs a day to groom for the three groomers?

Ms. Droescher: replied 15; an experienced groomer can groom one dog per hour, eight dogs a day; the grooming will only by 9:00 am - 5:00 pm; the financial plans are built on only having each groomer do five dogs; the 7:00 am to 7:00 pm would only be for daycare.

Councilman Sears: stated there would be 8 dogs in the daycare.

Ms. Droescher: replied yes; potentially there would be another 7 to 8 dogs on the premises for the grooming.

Councilman Sears: stated walking the dogs in the back with the smell of urine may be overwhelming.

Mayor Sobkowicz: stated she is not really sure if this is an allowable use in the shopping center; stated that the planning board attorney needs to check with the Township attorney to make sure it is an allowable use; the Township does have a specific list of items that are allowed at the shopping center and this is not on the list; before approval can be given we would have to have something from our Planning Board attorney in conjunction with the Township attorney as to whether or not this would be allowed in the shopping center.

Vice-President Golick: stated we have never seen this before; stated he has never seen a combination groomer and daycare in a shopping center where there is food and people walking; it has never existed before; there was a Coco Barkery at the location maybe five or ten years it was treats for dogs it was different; this facility would be a triple edge facility whereby you can have a daycare, grooming and trinkets/clothing for the dog/toys; the dogs have to stretch their legs and they would be taken in the back and there is going to be a lot of standards that are going to have to be met; this is a Board of Health issue, there is food and people walking and a Post Office back; how does it fit in.

Ms. Droescher: stated that there is a similar operation up in Oakland called the Spotted Dog that is also located in a strip mall center; they have been in operation a year plus.

Vice-President Golick: stated he is sure this is a good business opportunity, but is it a good opportunity in an environment of the people that are in the

shopping center, the Board of Health of the Township and all the other things that can be raised; it opens it up for some question.

Mayor Sobkowicz: stated that she is sure some people would use it.

Ms. Droescher: stated the pet products industry has been growing by leaps and bounds; in 2015 it is a 58 billion dollar industry; people are spending so much money on their animals.

Mr. DeMathis: stated that he likes to keep the Township and the Municipality informed; this is the first time being before the board; stated he has communicated with some officials to just digress; spoke of the preexisting ice problem in the back of the Post Office; existed many years before he was brought into the scene; has already had his engineers go out analyze the problem, they are putting together a plan and we will bring it before the board to have it reviewed; also have the municipal engineer review it; it is a horrific problem; doesn't understand how that not was addressed prior; spoke of Pet Value which is a Canadian company with about 450 stores in Canada and have 180 stores in the United States; they are a family business and are opening up one store a week; he has a relationship with the director and they have put one store in one of his centers; beautiful operation; we are looking for that cross over; Pet Value does not house animals, it is a neighborhood pet center; their model is to be within the center so everyone that shops for food can also get their specialty products; they will be providing a letter of intent shortly; the center that should not be at the vacancy rate it is at.

Councilman Sears: asked if the existing fire alarm system will be updated?

Mr. DeMathis: stated yes, it will be done according to building code.

Councilman Sears: asked if there is a fire how will the evacuation of the dogs be handled?

Ms. Droescher: stated there will be 8 employees with a maximum of 16 dogs; two dogs would be assigned per person; as you would do in a school we would do fire drills.

Vice-President Golick: asked if there would be a rack with leashes for the animals.

Ms. Droescher: stated yes, every dog that comes in comes in on a lease with have a pegboard; like hanging your coat up.

Mr. Sabino: asked have the other tenants in the center been told that a dog grooming place is being considered.

Mr. DeMathis: stated no he does not have communication with the other merchants about potential tenants.

Vice-President Golick: asked whose job would that be?

Mr. DeMathis: asked to communicate with an existing tenant about a new tenant that is coming in?

Vice-President Golick: stated yes and what they are going to be doing; the tenants could be at the Planning Board meeting.

Mr. DeMathis: stated that would be their only notice.

Vice-President Golick: stated he believes as a courtesy if you are the leasing agent for the shopping he would have gotten a letter out to the southern half of the center to the people that are there letting them know there is an application for a grooming and doggy day care; they know the Planning Board has to approve and inspect it; stated that you would not want someone bringing in an automobile rebuilding or manufacturing place where there would be chemicals used and so forth; so we need to know what is going to be done there and it would be nice if the tenants know what is coming and if there is any way to contact them he would do so.

Mr. DeMathis: stated he will contact every owner personally tomorrow; he will contact them and let them know there is an application before the Planning Board for this type of use and if they have any concerns to voice them to me or email me and he can present them.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if there is a schematic for the sign?

Ms. Droescher: stated she does have it.

Mayor Sobkowicz: stated it needs to bring to the Building Department.

(There was a discussion of the new signage in the shopping center, the previous colors and how it came to be that the shopping center tenants now use their own logos).

Mr. DeMathis: stated he feels this is going to be one of the strongest real estate markets since 2008; the calls he is getting from the calls on this centers and other centers people are out and looking to open up new businesses; stated his job is to pick quality tenants with the appropriate experience and credit background in the hopes of that they are successful; his goal in his office is to have the center fully occupied by August; he has four potential tenants right now.

Jessica Sweeney, 16 Riverside Place, Garfield, New Jersey

Ms. Sweeney was sworn in.

Vice-President Golick: asked you will be shampooing and washing the animals.

Ms. Sweeney: stated she will be working with Robin; she has experience in managing restaurants and retailers; she is SAFE Certified which is a certification that goes with the Board of Health required in the State of New Jersey; with regard to the chemicals, it is law that anyone who uses chemicals has a Material Safety Data Book that will have a sheet in it for every single chemical that is in the building, telling exactly what is in it, how it interacts with other chemicals and what is safe and not safe.

Mayor Sobkowicz: stated that the license needs to be displayed at all times along with having the MSD sheets available at all times.

Councilman Sears: asked if there is any way a container can be carried around that can be sprayed on the urine.

Ms. Droescher: stated yes, that there is something called Nature's Miracle which totally eliminates the smell of urine; it is used inside the house on rugs; it comes in spray bottles that we can use; stated only the daycare animals would be walked not the animals brought in for grooming, 8 would be the maximum.

Vice-President Golick: asked if there is a piece of grass or astro-turf that can be carried since there are no trees back there.

Ms. Sweeney: replies they do make them, they are 3 x 5 sections of grass that can be used.

Mr. DeMathis: stated the Nature's Miracle is all natural enzymes.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked if all the dogs are barking are the people in the next unit able to hear it?

Mr. Ives: stated there would be insulation on the ceiling and also the free standing panels; stated they will also be using acoustical ceiling.

Ms. Droescher: stated that she and Ms. Sweeney both have their grooming licenses; stated when there are 8 or 10 dogs in a space they really don't bark since they are in a neutral environment.

Mayor Sobkowicz: asked what is going to be sold in the place?

Ms. Droscher: stated she is going to Orlando for the largest pet product show and will be selling clothing, novelty dog treats, beds, leashes; an upscale boutique type of environment; she will not have food.

Vice-President Golick: stated he would like to do some work on this application and meet at the end of the month relative to it; we do need a determination on permitted use it is not a personal thing it is an accessory to animal life; we will have to have our town attorney investigate our zoning law to see what the interpretation is for this application at this site.

Mr. Azzolina: stated the application covered a majority of the questions; asked the number of employees would be 7, and some days 8.

Ms. Droscher: replied yes.

Mr. Azzolina: asked if doggy day care can vary from a full day to a few hours.

Ms. Droscher: stated yes; it could be that someone wants to run into the City for five hours and don't want to leave their dog along; it is by appointment only there will not be any walk-ins.

Mr. Azzolina: asked what would be the weight class is considered to a small dog and large dog.

Ms. Droscher: stated over 35-40 pounds is considered a large dog; three large dogs and five small dogs would be the maximum; 35 pounds and up are large; stated she probably would not accept a dog that is over 60-65 pounds; within a doggy day care the dogs must be dog friendly to one another must get along or otherwise we will not accept the animal; within a dog care situation the dogs must all be compatible or else the animal will not be accepted.

Vice-President Golick: asked do you screen the animal or ask question of the people that are coming in.

Ms. Droscher: stated the animals are actually screened; the first people first come first serve; introduce one dog at a time and see if they are compatible.

Mr. Azzolina: asked if the rear corridor would be allowed to be used since it was not allowed by the previous company.

Mr. DeMathis: asked for emails since he can show what the before photos looked like and after photos look like; stated he doesn't understand how tenants didn't file complaints to the town; all of the walls have been repainted white and the floors have been repainted battleship gray and new lighting has

been installed; inside of the building that are some walkways that go back there.

Councilman Sears: asked if the security cameras are going to be upgraded.

Mr. DeMathis: stated the history of the security camera situation is when there was an onsite office there was security camera surveillance of the facility, when the onsite office was terminated so was the operation of the onsite security cameras; stated next Tuesday a security camera is going to come look at the facility and walk through the facility to get a proposal to install a new system; stated he does have an office at the facility and has office hours 10:00 to 1:00 every Tuesday; stated at this time there are some very large expenses, such as the snow and the situation of the water freezing in the back is going to be a significant cost in dealing with his engineer and the municipal engineer to design 36 piping to be placed in their to prevent that percolation from hitting the surface; everything will be marked; hoping to get spaces leased up so this can be done; the break-in to the jewelry store in December was very tragic.

Vice-President Golick: asked if having better security would affect the insurance on the center.

Mr. DeMathis: stated residentially in homes they will give you 10%; commercial insurance is not the same they will not give you a discount.

Mr. Azzolina: asked if it can be elaborated on what the flooring inside would be?

Mr. Ives: stated it is a floating floor, not really nailed down and put on plastic strips.

Ms. Droscher: stated it is vinyl.

Mr. Ives: stated it looks like a wood floor.

Vice-President Golick: asked if acoustically the flooring would do anything to the building?

Mr. Ives: stated these strips would actually muffle the sound in the flooring; sub straight on the slab and the floor goes on top of that.

Vice-President Golick: stated if there are any questions, the Planning Board secretary can be emailed; also would like a letter directed to Mr. Poller relative to this application and have him look into the permitted uses and give the board a better interpretation of this.

Mayor Sobkowitz: stated the Township attorney will contact the other attorney.

Vice-President Golick: thanked everyone for their presentations; hopes that we can put something together.

Mayor Sobkowitz: stated our next meeting will be March 25th.

Ms. Droescher: stated she plans on being here; asked if there is anything further she needs to bring.

Mayor Sobkowitz: stated depending on what comes through we will take a vote; the first meeting of April we will memorialize it; if there is any other information you need to provide to us, by all means send it.

Mr. DeMathis: asked if there are any questions from the board will that be conveyed to us before the next meeting?

Mayor Sobkowitz: Correct; either way if anyone has any questions you can contact Bernie.

Mr. Sabino: stated what is important is the discussions with the other tenants and the reaction; please come back to us at the end of the month with that information.

Mr. DeMathis: stated he will send an email and also let them know in addition to that there will be a meeting on March 25th and if they would like to attend the meeting.

Vice-President Golick: stated it will be a work session meeting; many of them are busy during the day; the meeting is at 7:30 on March 25th.

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Sears, Mr. Sabino.

All Board Members present approve motion to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:52 pm

Respectfully submitted by:



Elaine Erlewein

Acting Planning Board Secretary