

**BOROUGH OF RIVERDALE**

MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

*Paul M. Carelli*  
Mayor

*Abubakar T. Jalloh*  
Registered Municipal  
Clerk



**RIVERDALE PLANNING BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**OCTOBER 3, 2024**

**The Regular Meeting of the Riverdale Planning Board is opening on October 3, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. Vice Chairman Warren Sheps read the Sunshine Law.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:**

**Mayor Paul Carelli**  
**Sal Poli**  
**Bobby Roberts**  
**Rick Malanga - 7:55 PM**  
**Michael Reilly**  
**Christopher Scilingo**  
**Vice Chairman Warren Sheps**  
**Chairman Scott Trouse – 7:40 PM**  
**Absent:**  
**Council Pres. Vincent Pellegrini**  
**Kevin Bulger (Alt. No. 1)**  
**James Talerico (Alt. No. 2)**

**Also, present is Board Attorney, John Barbarula and Board Engineer, Tom Boorady**

**HEARING FOR REDEVELOPMENT AREA DETERMINATION IN NEED:**

**79 NEWARK POMPTON TURNPIKE / BLOCK 26, LOT 21.01**

Kristin Russell, Professional Planner, of Colliers Engineering and Design was contracted by the Borough of Riverdale to conduct the area in need study for Block 26 Lot 21.01. This is the first step in the Redevelopment process to see if it qualifies for a redevelopment and if it does then the next step is to prepare a redevelopment plan. The property is a single parcel on the east side of Newark Pompton Turnpike just over an acre of property in front of the electrical substation. There is an easement on the right side to provide access to the utility company to get to the substation. To the right side is the empty Verizon building. This lot is currently vacant and split by a fence, the front it is partially paved with deteriorating gravel and the back is gravel and debris. The zone is Professional Office, allows both single family dwellings and professional office; the site is oversized for either. The history with evidence was found that in 2002 there were buildings on site, sometime between 2002 – 2006 the buildings were removed. It is important to recognize that it has been 18 years since the site has had activity on it. There is a set of criteria that the site must meet one of multiple to be an area in need of redevelopment. This site met two of the criteria; unimproved and vacant for 10 years or more and by reason of remote location and not likely to be developed by capital. The site would meet the Smart Growth Planning practices.

**CHAIRMAN SCOTT TROUSE IN ATTENDANCE AT 7:40PM**

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Vice Chairman Sheps opened questions to the Board.

Mayor Carelli asked if this was an expansion of the redevelopment area next to this site. Ms. Russell stated that would be part two of this process – Habitat for Humanity is looking to put housing on that site and is currently working on the redevelopment plan for that other site. Should this site in question be approved for an area in need of redevelopment the two sites could be combined into a single redevelopment plan and hopefully have some aesthetic and shared access plan between the two. It is not a requirement they could be two separate sites for redevelopment but it could work out to be a combined shared redevelopment plan.

Thereupon Vice Chairman Warren Sheps opened questions to the public.

Evette Michel – Who asked for the investigating? Ms. Russell stated that the Borough hired her to perform the work.

Thereupon Sal Poli set forth the motion seconded by Michael Reilly to close the public portion.

**ALL IN FAVOR / MOTION CARRIED**

**Thereupon Sal Poli set forth the motion seconded by Michael Reilly to approve the recommendation to the Mayor and Council to move forward with the Redevelopment Plan.**

**ROLL CALL:**  
Ayes: Poli, Reilly, Carelli, Roberts, Scilingo, Sheps  
Abstained: Trowse – I will have to recuse since I was not here to hear the whole testimony, with all that I have read it is something I would be in favor of I will have to recuse myself.  
Nays: None  
(6 Ayes – 1 Abstained – 0 Nays – Motion Carried)

**HEARING:**

- 1. Application No. SP04162024 / Bark Avenue Veterinary Services, LLC / 92 Route 23 North, Unit B / Block 40 Lot 4.05 / HB Zone**

Michael Lipari is council to the applicant Bark Ave Veterinary Services LLC. We are here seeking a minor site plan application to allow the applicants to operate the veterinary practice at 92 Route 23 North formerly an Italian Restaurant in Riverdale Square. This is in the Highway Business district, it is a permitted use, no variances. The ordinance requires an approval when there is a change of use. The applicants are both here Ben and Crimson Primicias and the contractor Patrick Dower.

Mr. Barbarula swore in Dr. Crimson Primicias and Ben Primicias. Mr. Primicias stated that they are looking for approval for Bark Ave Veterinary Services, it will be an animal hospital providing urgent, preventative, and wellness care needs for their patients. Dr. Primicias described her

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background. Mr. Barbarula questioned if there would be boarding. Dr. Primicias said that there would be no boarding overnight, they would like to stay open later hours and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM and weekends. They would start with Dr. Primicias as the only doctor with vet technician about 4-5 employees and could move up to 12 employees if they hire another doctor. The deliveries would be for medical supplies would be every other day and if office supplies are needed could be once a day.

Mr. Lipari stated that the building layout, exhibit 1, shows the unit in the shopping center building layout. The next plan is the floor plan of unit B, showing the interior layout. Next is the signage there will be two signs, one on the facade and the other will be on the pylon out front. It is a permitted use and not asking for any variances.

## **RICK MALANGA IN ATTENDANCE AT 7:55 PM**

Mr. Poli asked where the were going to be walking dogs that need to be taken out. Dr. Primicias stated that there will be no overnight boarding so there should not be walking needed that often but there is a grassy area outside in the back of the building that has grass to walk the dogs.

Vice Chairman Scheps stated that many pets may want to relive themselves before going into and out of the facility, what is their plan to address that? Dr. Primicias stated that they will have the staff monitor that along with their cleaning inside the building, they will offer baggies for owners to dispose of everything.

Chairman Trowse asked with dogs being loud at times will there be any special consideration taken for the tenants with the build out. Mr. Lipari stated that the architect said the way the walls are currently constructed you would not be able to heard anything though the walls. During the built out when they walls are open, they will determine if more sound proofing was needed.

Mr. Barbarula swore in Patrick Dower, general contractor for Bark Avenue Veterinary. The buildings existing walls have 2 hour rated demising walls that are insulated, they have 4 layers of 5/8 sheet rock on both sides and they have insulation in them that give a very high sound transmission rating. These walls will resist 60-70 decibels, all of these walls inside received sound insinuation blankets to further mitigate that. The ceiling is acoustic throughout to absorb noise and the structural ceiling is at least 16 feet up. The sound will go thought the acoustic ceiling but it will die very quickly and there are no residents above.

Mr. Reilly asked is walking the dogs was discussed with the landlord. Mr. Lipari stated that they have and they also discussed a designated location but that would be altering the site plan with a separate application, but the landlord is on board.

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Mr. Reilly asked being that they are a start-up what would the traffic looks like for the first year of business. Dr. Primicias stated that they are hoping for 12 patients a day to start for the first few months, they are looking to grow. Dr. Primicias stated she only works emergency right now so there will be no clients following her it will be a complete start-up.

Vice Chairman Sheps stated that if a patient comes in around 5:00 – 6:00 pm at night and needs emergency surgery that would require overnight boarding, what would happen in that case? Dr. Primicias stated that there are emergency animal hospitals within a 20-minute drive that they would send their patients. Mr. Lipari stated that it is a common practice in their field to have an agreement with other facilities to send their patients.

Chairman Trowse asked how the garbage and biohazards will be dealt with. Dr. Primicias stated that biohazard will be picked up a medical waste facility and other garbage will be going out with garbage and recycling. Chairman Trowse asked if there is one location for all the tenants to throw garbage out. Mr. Lipari stated that there are dumpster locations in the back of the buildings. Mr. Boorady stated that there are two locations for garbage in the back of the building.

Mr. Reilly asked if it was only cats and dogs? Dr. Primicias stated yes.

Chairman Trowse asked Mr. Boorady if there was any wastewater going down the drains is there any regulations. Mr. Boorady stated that there is not the hair is usually the issue there are drain filters to save the drains.

Vice Chairman Sheps asked if there was grooming. Dr Primicias stated no.

Mr. Reilly asked if there is a noise ordinance. Mr. Barbarula stated that there is a noise ordinance part of the policing code, if they get complaints, they will have to meet the ordinance.

Mr. Reilly asked if anything could be done with the ceiling tiles to help with the noise. Mr. Dower stated that all of the interior walls will be removed and if there was a need to add further sound mitigation above the ceiling it is doable. The walls between the units go up to the roof.

Chairman Trowse asked if the unit has its own HVAC system. Mr. Lipari responded yes.

Vice Chairman Sheps opened the hearing to the public.

Evette Michel asked what would be the greatest number of animals at a time. Mr. Lipari responded that five animals would be the max.

Thereupon Sal Poli set forth the motion seconded by Rick Malanga to close the public portion.

**ALL IN FAVOR / MOTION CARRIED**

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Mr. Barbarula stated that this is an approved use on an approved site. The applicant stated the hours of operation would be from 8AM to 8PM. The site does allow longer hours and they could expand the hours to the ordinance. Municipal sound ordinances do apply to all of the businesses on all of the sites. The restrictions that are recommended if approved is that there is no boarding and that all animal waste is stored inside until disposed of in the dumpsters not the public garbage cans.

Mr. Lipari came forward for his closing statement and stated that this is a permitted use, all of the questions were answered, it is a less intense use than a restaurant and a valuable service to bring to Riverdale.

Vice Chairman Sheps opened to the public. No one from the came forward. Thereupon Chairman Scott Trowse set forth the motion seconded by Rick Malanga to close to public portion.

**ALL IN FAVOR / MOTION CARRIED**

Thereupon Sal Poli set forth the motion seconded by Rick Malanga to approve the application with the stipulation laid out by attorney John Barbarula.

**ROLL CALL:** Ayes: Poli, Malanga, Carelli, Roberts, Reilly, Scilingo, Sheps, Trowse  
Nays: None  
(8 Ayes – 0 Nays – Motion Carried)

Mr. Barbarula stated that the resolution will be memorialized on October 24, 2024 meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Thereupon Rick Malanga set forth the motion seconded by Sal Poli to adjourn the meeting.

**ALL IN FAVOR / MOTION CARRIED**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM**

**Respectfully submitted by:**

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**Stephanie Colella, Planning Board Secretary**

**\*\*\*NO VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDINGS OF THESE PROCEEDINGS WITHOUT EXPRESSED  
PREMISSION FROM THE BOARD\*\*\***