



BOROUGH OF LEONIA
Leonia Planning Board
MINUTES

November 24, 2020

7:30 PM

REMOTE MEETING VIA GOTOMEETING

The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held a special meeting on November 24, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. via remote video conference in lieu of an in-person meeting due to the Coronavirus pandemic and Governor Murphy’s Executive Orders 107 and 152 that restrict public gatherings.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Judah Zeigler, Councilman Pasquale Fusco, Chairman Michael DeGidio, Vice Chair Vincent Petti*, William Russell, Ron Wolf, Timothy Ford, Sean Thompson, Ira Gold, Haeseok Ko, Damee Choi

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Patrick Botten

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Board Attorney Daniel L. Steinhagen*, Zoning Officer Dan Melfi, Planning Board Engineer Robert Costa, Planning Board Traffic Engineer John Corak

Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM

ROLL CALL, OPENING MEETING STATEMENT, FLAG SALUTE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2020 meeting made by: Mayor Zeigler

Seconded: Mr. Russell

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Mayor Zeigler:	yes	Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Thompson	yes
Mr. Wolf:	yes	Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Ko:	yes

RECESS

Motion to recess until Planning Board Attorney joins the meeting was made at 7:38 PM by: Mr. Wolf

Seconded: Mr. Ford

All in Favor – Motion Passed

Meeting recording was paused

Planning Board Attorney joined the meeting at 7:42 PM

Meeting recording resumed at 7:43 PM and a motion to resume meeting was made by: Mayor Zeigler

Seconded: Mr. Ford

All in Favor – Motion Passed

PB20-09 - Kulite Semiconductor, 400 Willow Tree Road, Block 802, Lot 21 Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval for Installation of Lighting and Generator Improvements, continued

Chairman DeGidio recused himself as Chair for this application. Mr. Russell was once again named as Acting Chair.

Francis Regan, attorney for the applicant addressed the Board and advised of the applicant’s revisions to the site plan following recommendations made at the October meeting.

Craig Stires, representing Stires Associates, was recalled to provide testimony. Mr. Stires was reminded that he was previously sworn in at the October 28, 2020 meeting and was still under oath.

Mr. Stires reviewed the proposed plans that were previously discussed in the October meeting as well as the revised plans. Mr. Stires detailed the proximity of the new generator location to the building and distance from property line. Mr. Stires also testified that given the new proposed location, applicant no longer requires a front yard variance and that the sound attenuation will meet state requirements at the property line. Mr. Stires also advised that seven parking spots will be removed for the generator, however, the number of parking spots would still comply with the parking ordinance.

Upon questioning from Mr. Regan, Mr. Stires reviewed the alternative option of using two generators instead of one generator and the impact to additional space and noise.

Mr. Stires provided additional testimony regarding the revised lighting plan. Mr. Stires advised that the light poles will be replaced with 25-foot poles and will be placed in the same or similar location as existing light poles. Mr. Stires also stated that the lights will be LED and will also be shielded. Mr. Stires advised that with the exception of two locations, the light spillover meets or complies with the ordinance requirements.

Discussion was held regarding the height of the light poles and further clarification of spillover calculations on the plan. Mr. Costa suggested that if the Board approved the lighting plan, the Board should revisit lighting in the field in 6 months to compare the spillover calculation versus output. Per Mr. Costa, the LED lights could be modified through dimming or increasing as necessary.

*At 8:02 PM, it was noted by Mr. Steinhagen that Vice Chair Petti joined the meeting.

The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Mr. Stires.

No members of the public provided questions.

Hearing no questions from the public, the public questioning portion was closed.

Further discussion was held regarding recommendations made by Costa Engineering. Mr. Costa recommended that sleeves, reflective strips or curbing be installed around the generator. Discussion was also held regarding an email from Cooper Electric regarding the decibel levels from the generator as well as an additional conversation held between Mr. Costa and Cooper Electric regarding sound impact at property line.

The meeting was opened to the public for comments.

No members of the public provided comments.

Hearing no comments from the public, the public comments portion was closed.

Motion to approve PB20-09, with conditions presented by Costa Engineering made by: Mr. Wolf

Seconded: Mr. Ford

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Mayor Zeigler:	yes	Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes
Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Ko:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Thompson	yes	Ms. Choi:	Yes

Chairman DeGidio resumed position as Chair.

PB20-08 - Kulite Semiconductor, 1 Willow Tree Road, Block 801, Lot 2, Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval for Installation of Emergency Generator, continued

Mr. Regan addressed the Board.

Mr. Stires reviewed the revised plan and detailed the changes made to the plan based on comments made by the Board at the October meeting. Per Mr. Stires, the new proposed location of the generator will be 7.5 feet off of the building in order to allow access to the generator when the generator doors are opened. Mr. Stires acknowledged that the applicant would need a variance for the additional 2.5 feet away from the building.

Mr. Stires also provided testimony regarding the sound attenuation and stated that the sound will comply with state requirements due to the location of the closest receptor. Mr. Stires confirmed that the generator will be on a concrete pad and the connection will come down the property line and into the rear of the building.

Discussion was held regarding the need for the additional 2.5-foot variance away from the building. Mr. Stires reviewed the aerial photo which was marked and submitted in the October meeting. Mr. Stires described features of the plan such as the location of the generation in relation to the building, parking lot, rail line and surrounding area.

Mr. Costa reviewed contents of his review letter for the application and detailed additional requirements such as relief from ordinance decibel levels, restoring pavement and grass area.

Chairman DeGidio inquired about the landscaping in the area. Mr. Stires addressed current landscaping and identified an area for potential landscaping given the equipment congregated near the location of the generator. Discussion was held regarding adding trees to screen the area.

Mr. Regan provided clarification that the transfer switch is located outside the building. Mr. Stires confirmed the location of the circuit breaker and detailed the area on the site plan where the rest of the equipment is located outside of the building.

The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Mr. Stires.

No members of the public provided questions.

Hearing no questions from the public, the public questioning portion was closed.

No further comments were made by the Board.

The meeting was opened to the public for comments.

No members of the public provided comments.

Hearing no comments from the public, motion was made to close public comments section of meeting made by: Councilman Fusco

Seconded: Mr. Russell

All in Favor – Motion Passed

Motion to approve PB20-08, with conditions discussed by Board made by: Mr. Ford

Seconded: Mr. Russell

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Mayor Zeigler:	yes	Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Thompson	yes
Mr. Wolf:	yes	Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Ko:	yes

PB20-10 - Kulite Semiconductor, Schor Avenue, Block 503, Lot 26, Use Variance and Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval for Installation of Parking Facility with Lifts

Mr. Steinhagen advised that Mayor Zeigler and Councilman Fusco were not eligible to participate in this matter under the municipal land use law.

John Corak, representing Stonefield Engineers, was sworn in to provide testimony in traffic and transportation engineering on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Regan addressed the board regarding the details and purpose of the application. Mr. Regan provided some historical background on parking options discussed in previous parking lot applications that came before the Board. Mr. Regan also detailed current employee headcount along with the current and future expectation for employee parking needs.

Mr. Stires provided testimony regarding his involvement in the preparation of the site plan and proposed improvements. Mr. Stires elaborated on the existing condition and dimensions of the lot as well as his historical understanding of parking lot allowances at each Kulite location.

Mr. Stires was sworn in for this application and attested to the fact that everything mentioned prior to his swearing in for this application was true.

Mr. Stires further testified that the requirements of the parking ordinance are currently being met, however, there still remains employee parking on borough roads. Mr. Stires advised that the intention would be to install lifts over 42 of the 46 parking spots available at the site. Mr. Stires stated that there would be no other improvements with the exception of the hydraulic pump for the lifts and a kiosk for parking attendants. Mr. Stires also advised that in lieu of landscaping, the applicant proposes to install a 10-foot fence and artificial boxwood on the fence itself to provide screening.

Mr. Stires provided an overview of how the lift operation would work and clarified the appearance of the lifts in comparison to the depiction on the proposed plans. Mr. Stires confirmed the hours of operation for using the lifts. Further testimony was provided regarding the location of ADA parking spots, impact of installation on the lot surface and current fencing. Mr. Stires provided a description of the surrounding areas and current dimensions of the drive aisles and parking spaces.

Discussion was held regarding selection of this site for the parking lifts versus other Kulite locations. Mr. Costa provided clarification regarding previous comments he made regarding parking solutions to the applicant. Mr. Steinhagen also provided clarification regarding use variance type for this application and advised that this application is a D-1 use variance.

Further discussion was held regarding the dimensions of the lifts in relation to the privacy screening and potential for traffic back-up on Willow Tree Road. Mr. Steinhagen also inquired about the parking lift space versus lift dimension and the reduction to the aisle width of the exterior spaces on the North and South side of the lot. Additional discussion was held regarding the gates across the driveway and existing lighting.

The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Mr. Stires.

No members of the public provided questions.

Hearing no questions from the public, the public questioning portion was closed.

Michael Good, representing Kulite Semiconductor, was sworn in and provided testimony as plant manager. Mr. Good confirmed the hours of operation and detailed the anticipated parking lift operations with parking attendants. Mr. Good further detailed the employee parking expectations based on current hours of operation for hourly employees. Mr. Good elaborated on the start times for the hourly employees and indicated that employees are assigned to specific parking lots, however, this lot is intended to be on a first come, first served basis. Mr. Good stated that the lifts are rated for SUVs and confirmed that a vendor has been selected for the lifts. Mr. Good also advised that the vendor will install the lifts and will provide maintenance.

Mr. Good provided his understanding of the hydraulic pump and noise that is generated from the lifts. Mr. Good confirmed that there is a manual override on each of the lifts.

It was noted that testimony regarding the operational aspects of the lifts made by Mr. Good be carefully evaluated as Mr. Good may not be fully knowledgeable in the area. It was also suggested that a representative from the parking lift company be present at the next meeting in order to provide expert testimony. Further recommendation was made that the Board obtain detailed specifications for the lifts and that the applicant provide information on how the cars will be queued as the cars enter or leave the lot.

Mr. Regan requested that the Board carry this application to the next meeting.

Further discussion was held regarding consideration of other Kulite sites for the installation of the lifts and other methods for transporting the workforce to Kulite. Mr. Good advised that the pandemic has had an impact on carpooling, however, it is expected that carpooling would resume after the pandemic. Mr. Good also advised that the applicant previously considered the lot for a parking garage, however, the size did not meet requirements.

The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Mr. Good.

No members of the public provided questions.

Hearing no questions from the public, the public questioning portion was closed.

Mr. Steinhagen recommended examining the average estimated transaction time for car drop-off. Ms. Choi also recommended providing a description of other site options that were considered for the parking lifts.

Mr. Regan approved the extension of time for the Board to act on this application.

Mr. Steinhagen announced to members of the public that the Kulite Semiconductor matter for Schor Avenue was being carried to the December 16, 2020 remote meeting of the Planning Board. Steinhagen advised that there will be no further notice published or mailed to property owners within 200 feet. Mr. Steinhagen also advised that the login information for the meeting will be posted to the Borough website in advance of the December meeting.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman DeGidio reviewed the memo provided by Mr. Janota from H2M regarding status of planning initiatives. No further comments or questions were raised by the Board.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

Councilman Fusco had nothing new to report.

BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT:

Mr. Steinhagen had nothing new to report.

PLANNING BOARD ENGINEER REPORT:

Mr. Costa had nothing further to report.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT/INTERPERTATIONS:

Mr. Melfi had nothing additional to report.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no public comment.

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Mayor Zeigler
Seconded: Councilman Fusco
All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Copeland
Planning Board Secretary