

**MINUTES
TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING
September 18, 2014**

The West Orange Zoning Board of Adjustment held a regular meeting on September 18, 2014 commencing 8:00 PM at 66 Main Street, West Orange, N.J. in Council Chambers.

Chairman Buechler called the meeting to order at approximately 8:00 P.M. It was announced that notification of this meeting was given to the Township Clerk, the West Orange Chronicle, and posted on the Township Bulletin Board on November 21, 2013 in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Act."

Chairman Buechler asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alice Beirne, Esq., Board Attorney, read the Opening Statement.

PRESENT: B. Buechler, D. Gabry, W. Merklinger,
W. Steinhart, M. Sussman, A. Weiss

ABSENT: G. Bullock (excused)
P. Neuer (recused)
B. Quentzel (excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Grygiel, Consulting Planner
Eric Keller, Consulting Engineer
Alice Beirne, Esq., Board Attorney
Rose DeSena, Board Secretary
D. Dillon, Audio-Digital Transcription Service

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Future Meetings: October 23, 2014 (Regular Meeting) – 8:00 pm
October 30, 2014 (Special Meeting) – 8:00 pm
November 20, 2014 (Regular Meeting) – 8:00 pm
December 18, 2014 (Regular Meeting) – 8:00 pm

Chairman Buechler announced that the following applications that were scheduled to be heard at this meeting have requested to be carried over to the next regular Zoning Board meeting held on October 23, 2014 and that no further notice will be required:

- ZB-14-00/Wang
- ZB-14-04/Patin

Chairman Buechler also announced that application ZB-14-06 for New Cingular Wireless, PCS, LLC (AT&T) has been withdrawn by the applicant.

Chairman Buechler stated that he has reviewed the Rules of Procedure for the Zoning Board of Adjustment and incorporated some suggested revisions into them. He said that he has extra copies with him for the other Board Members so that they can review them. Chairman Buechler said that if any Board Member has any revisions, to email them to the other Board Members before the next regular meeting on October 23, 2014.

Chairman Buechler instructed the Board Secretary to add the amended Rules of Procedure for the Zoning Board of Adjustment to the October 23, 2014 regular meeting agenda for adoption.

SWEARING IN

Consulting Planner for the Township, Paul Grygiel and Consulting Engineer for the Township, Eric Keller were sworn under oath.

MINUTES

Adopt Minutes: August 21, 2014 (regular meeting)

Chairman Buechler asked the Board Members if they had any additional comments for the August 21, 2014 regular meeting that were submitted to them for review. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Ms. Gabry made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2014 regular Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting as submitted to the Board members; Mr. Sussman seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Chairman Buechler noted for the record that Mr. Steinhart was not present at the August 21, 2014 meeting and did not vote on the minutes.

September 4, 2014 (special meeting)

Chairman Buechler asked the Board Members if they had any additional comments for the September 4, 2014 special meeting that were submitted to them for review. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Mr. Steinhart made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 4, 2014 special Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting as submitted to the Board members; Ms. Gabry seconded the motion and all were in favor.

APPLICATION

1. **ZB-14-08/Sai Hira Ram Trust, Inc.**
Block: 177.02; Lots: 15.01 & 16; Zone: R-4
23-27 Laurel Avenue
Seeking "D" and several "C" variances for converting two properties
To use as a house of worship and related uses

EXHIBITS

- A-1 – Floor Plans – four (4) sheets dated 2/14/12 with a revision date of 8/15/13
- A-2 – Colored Elevations - revision date of 8/15/13
- A-3 – Existing Meditation Room and Temple Elevations
- A-4 – Materials Board
- A-5 – Boundary and Topographic Survey dated 12/11/07
- A-6 – Layout Sheet - dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 4/15/14
- A-7 – Grading, Drainage and Utility Plan – dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 3/17/14
- A-8 – Lighting Plan – dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 3/17/14
- A-9 – Landscape and Tree Replacement Plan – dated 5/27/08 with a revision date of 3/17/14

Robert Williams, Esq., attorney for the applicant, approached the podium. Mr. Williams detailed the application stating that the applicant is seeking preliminary and final site plan approval to develop a house of worship at Laurel Avenue. He said that the property is in an R-4 zone and the application is before this Board because it does not meet all of the conditional use requirements.

Ms. Gabry asked Mr. Williams who Anita S. Thani is. She said that she signed the application and is listed as a trustee but did not see her name on the list of trustees. Mr. Williams stated that she is the secretary of the trust but is not a trustee and that was an error; he said that she is authorized to sign for the trust.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Williams what the relation of the Sun King Private Limited is to Sai Hira Ram Trust; Mr. Williams said that the applicant, Sai Hira Ram Trust will lease the property from the Sun King Private Limited.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Williams what the relationship is between Sun King and Sai Hira Ram; he said that they are separate entities. Chairman Buechler said that the corporate disclosure shows some of the people are trustees of both entities and asked Mr. Williams how they are related; he said that some of them will be involved in how the church is being operated.

Ms. Gabry asked Mr. Williams if there was a variance granted when the garages on the property were constructed; he said that there were no prior resolutions for this property. He said that when the garages were constructed it was vacant property and he thinks that pony rides were given on that part of the property.

Ms. Weiss asked Mr. Williams how many members are in the congregation; he said there are 29 members that worship from 11am to 12pm on Thursday followed by lunch. He said that they also have two celebrations a year on New Year's and Thanksgiving.

Ms. Weiss asked Mr. Williams how many members they are projecting in the future; he said that they are projecting 75 to 100 members over an eight to ten year period.

Mr. Williams stated that the party who owns the property is located Dubai and they pay taxes on the property. He said that the applicant, Sai Hira Ram Trust, is a House of Worship and is tax exempt.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Williams if any members of the congregation will be testifying because he has questions for them; he replied yes.

Mr. Williams called his first witness.

J. Michael Petry approached the podium and was sworn under oath. Mr. Petry detailed his professional background as a Professional Civil Engineer and stated that he has testified before this Board many times.

Chairman Buechler accepted Mr. Petry as an expert in civil engineering.

Mr. Petry presented the Boundary and Topographic survey, dated 12/11/07, showing the existing conditions of the property.

Chairman Buechler noted for the record that the Boundary and Topographic survey dated 12/11/07 was pre-marked as Exhibit A-5 for identification.

Mr. Petry referred to Exhibit A-5 and stated that the property is located along Laurel Avenue. He said that the deed for this property says that Laurel Avenue runs east and west but he has difficulty referring to Laurel Avenue as running east and west because technically it runs north and south.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Petry if the deed is correct in referring to Laurel Avenue as running east and west; he said for the deed of this property it is correct.

Mr. Petry stated that the property consists of two tax lots; lot 15.01 and lot 16, and is over two (2) acres of land located in an R-4 zone. He said that the structure located on lot 16 has been used as a House of Worship but he is not aware of any approvals for this use.

Mr. Petry said that the second lot, lot 15.01, has an abandoned structure in the rear of the property with garages and a residential unit above the garages. He said that there are also no records of any approvals for that structure.

Mr. Petry said that there are several trees on the property and that the majority of the property is an open lawn area.

Mr. Petry presented the layout sheet, dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 4/15/14.

Chairman Buechler stated for the record that the Layout sheet, dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 4/15/14, was pre-marked as Exhibit A-6 for identification.

Mr. Petry referred to Exhibit A-6 and said that the applicant is proposing to build a House of Worship. He said that the caretakers home and prayer room will be located in the existing house on the property and that the main temple will be located where the other abandoned house is located.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Petry if they are proposing to take down the abandoned house; he replied yes. He said that the garages will be renovated and that the living quarters above the garages will be used for visiting dignitaries.

Ms. Weiss stated for the record that the applicant should consider taking the garages down because they are not well maintained.

Mr. Petry stated that they are proposing forty eight (48) parking spaces and an additional three parking spaces can be proposed if needed. He said that a total of fifty one (51) parking spaces are being proposed.

Mr. Petry referred to Exhibit A-6 and detailed where the driveways and the three handicap parking spaces will be located.

Mr. Petry presented the Grading, Drainage and Utility Plan, dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 3/17/14.

Chairman Buechler stated for the record that the Grading, Drainage and Utility Plan, dated 5/27/09 with a revision date of 3/17/14, was pre-marked as Exhibit A-7 for identification.

Mr. Petry referred to Exhibit A-7 and began detailing it. He said that the property slopes from the right to the left and that they are proposing to construct a block wall so that the driveway could be graded downward. Mr. Petry said that the parking lot will also be graded for the collection of the storm water.

Mr. Petry said the roof leaders will connect to the recharge system and that the water will discharge into the ground; he said that this is a new regulation. Mr. Petry stated that the storm water runoff met the criteria in the Township ordinance.

Ms. Weiss asked Mr. Petry who came up with the plan to keep the existing garages; he said the applicant. He said that they are keeping the residence above the garages for visiting dignitaries. Mr. Petry said that it is the owners desire to keep it.

Chairman Buechler asked when Sun King acquired the real estate; Mr. Williams stated they acquired the property in two transactions in 2005 and in 2006.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Williams when they starting using the caretakers residence; he said he did not know. He said that the prior owner, the East Orange House of God, was using it.

Mr. Petry presented the Lighting plan dated 5/27/09 and with a revision date of 3/17/14.

Chairman Buechler stated for the record that the Lighting plan dated 5/27/09 and with a revision date of 3/17/14 was pre-marked as Exhibit A-8 for identification.

Mr. Petry referred to Exhibit A-8 and began detailing the lighting plan, stating that this design is for a residential area. He said that they will be installing 12' high shoe box fixtures and that the fixtures on the residential side of the property will have outside shields. Mr. Petry said that the bollard lights that they are proposing are waist high and will not visible to the residents. He said that the parking lot will not be over lit.

Ms. Weiss asked Mr. Petry if there is a photo of the bollard lights; he said yes it is on the detail sheet.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Petry if they are proposing any lighting near the garages; he said the only lighting for the garages will be on the structure itself.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Petry if they are proposing any lighting on the driveway to the garages; he said no. He said that they usually do not light driveways of residences.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Petry if any lighting is being proposed for the caretakers house driveway; he replied no.

Chairman Buechler asked if they are installing lighting on the walkway of the caretaker's house as a safety measure. Mr. Williams said that the members meet during the daytime only.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Williams if they might meet at night in the future; he said that if the hours change it would be common sense to install some lighting on the walkway.

Ms. Gabry asked Mr. Williams if the application stated that there are Sunday meetings as well; he said no. He said the meetings are only on Thursdays, Thanksgiving and on New Year's. Mr. Williams said that the small facility will be opened from 8 am to 12 pm and 4pm to 8 pm for small prayer groups. He said that the Temple is open only on a Thursday.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Williams what their religion is; he said it is a Hindu lifestyle and not a religion. He said it is a way of life.

Mr. Petry said that the garage for the caretaker's residence will have lights on both sides of the door. He said that they are proposing lights at the entry door of the caretaker's residence and that they can add landscape lamps along the walkway.

Mr. Petry presented the Landscape and Tree Replacement plan dated 5/27/09 and with a revision date of 3/17/14.

Chairman Buechler noted for the record that the Landscape and Tree Replacement plan dated 5/27/09 and with a revision date of 3/17/14 was pre-marked at Exhibit A-9.

Mr. Petry referred to Exhibit A-9 and detailed the landscaping plan and where they would be replacing the trees and what types of trees they will be planting. He said that twenty four (24) trees will be removed and twenty six (26) trees will be planted.

Ms. Weiss stated for the record that there are a lot of deer in that area and she hoped this was considered when the landscaping plan was designed.

Mr. Petry stated that he will address the following comments in the Omland Engineering report dated September 12, 2014:

- Item # 1 regarding addition of items to the plans – Mr. Petry stated that the applicant will comply
- Item #2 regarding the inconsistency of the owner and applicant information - Mr. Petry stated that the applicant complied.
- Item #3 regarding the merging of the two lots – Mr. Petry stated that the applicant is combining the lots.
- Item #4 regarding the site line of the driveway entrances to be published on the plans – Mr. Petry stated that the applicant will comply.
- Item #5 regarding the applicant extending the public utility and easement across to the easterly property line – Mr. Petry stated that the applicant will comply.
- Item #6 regarding the Township Engineer requesting that the applicant extend the existing sanitary sewer to the easterly property line so that the adjacent dwellings are able to connect to the public sewer system. - Mr. Petry stated that the applicant does not have a problem with the Town or the two residents building the pipe to the existing sewer line but the applicant will not pay for it because the sewer line is a Township sewer. Chairman Buechler stated that Mr. Keller should meet with the Township Engineer, Mr. Lepore, and Mr. Petry and if the residents want to connect to the existing sewer line then the applicant should not have to pay for it. He said that this should be done before the parking lot is paved.
- Item #7 regarding the site plans not depicting a solid waste enclosure for the main temple building – Mr. Petry stated that the waste from the temple is stored at the care takers house and that there is a fenced in area for the refuse. He said that the Township will pick up the refuse but they may have to change the location for the refuse.
- Item #8 regarding accommodations for the recycling collection – Mr. Petry said that a portion of the fenced in area for refuse will be designated for recyclables.
- Item #9 regarding the plans not showing the dimension of the width of the driveway to the care takers house – Mr. Petry said that the width of the driveway is 12 feet wide
- Item #10 regarding the stop sign and stop bar at the main driveway aligning – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #11 regarding the site plans not showing the relocated position of the fire hydrant – Mr. Petry said that the applicant will consult with the Township's Fire Official.
- Item #12 regarding the access gate across the driveway leading to the garages in the rear of the temple – Mr. Petry stated that the rear portion of the property is not for general use.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Petry what the gate will look like and what it is made of; he said he will incorporate a detail of the gate and materials in the plan. Mr. Petry said that the gate will open manually. Mr. Keller asked Mr. Petry if the will have a Knox box; he replied yes.

- Item #13 regarding an “authorized vehicles only” sign at the access gate – Mr. Keller said that the sign is inappropriate. He said that if the gate is closed there is no need for the sign. Mr. Petry said they will eliminate the sign.
- Item #14 regarding the elimination of the third garage located in the rear of the property of lot 15.01 – Mr. Petry stated that the applicant will eliminate that garage if the Board determines that the parking space requirement is met. Mr. Keller stated that the third garage in question has nothing above it. He said that he understands the two garage spaces for the caretaker but who is going to use the three garage spaces.

Chairman Buechler stated that they must exclude those three parking spaces because the sign will say no parking and they cannot be used.

Mr. Petry said that they have to have those parking spaces for the residence above the garage because the Township ordinance requires 1.8 parking spaces for the residence. Mr. Steinhart asked Mr. Petry what the parking equation is without the two parking spaces; he said that he calculated thirty-two (32) parking spaces are required for the temple, 1.8 parking spaces for the residential use, twelve (12) parking spaces for the meditation room in the caretakers house and two (2) parking spaces for the use of the caretakers house as a residential unit. Mr. Petry said that, according to the Planners report, they are required to have seventy-two (72) parking spaces and they are proposing fifty-one (51) parking spaces. He said that their parking calculations were based on the use of the property. Mr. Petry said that the members pray and then they eat and the seventy-two (72) parking spaces required is based on everything being used simultaneously.

Chairman Buechler said that the Board has to consider the possibility of another Church moving in and utilizing all of the buildings simultaneously if this Church moves out.

Mr. Keller said that the shape of the third garage is not wide enough to get a vehicle into it and that counting it as a parking space is not valid.

Mr. Petry said that he will consult with the applicant on this and address it at the next meeting.

- Item #15 regarding the grading along the front of the temple – Mr. Petry said that they will work on making the grading a little better.
- Item #16 regarding the handicapped parking spaces not providing a maximum of two percent (2%) slope in all directions – Mr. Petry said that they will revise it per Mr. Keller’s suggestion.
- Item #18 regarding consulting with the Township Fire Official about the placement of fire zones on the site – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #19 – Mr. Petry said that the Architect will address this item.
- Item #20 regarding security lighting – Mr. Petry said that he welcomes any suggestion that the Board for security lighting.

Mr. Keller said that the intent was not to have the parking lot lights on all of the time. Mr. Petry said the lights will only be on during the evening hours if the facility is being utilized. He said that a single light will be left on during the night for security.

Mr. Keller said that they can use LED lights for the parking light fixtures; Mr. Petry said that the applicant is looking into using solar power and other alternative methods.

- Item #21 regarding the appropriate well abandonment records, for the existing well on Lot 15.01, provided to the Township Health Department – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #22 regarding the required water service diameter and appropriate detail for the proposed building on Lot 15.01 having to be published on the plans – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #23 regarding the removal of any reference to the Borough of Fairfield from the construction details – Mr. Petry said they will comply.
- Item #24 regarding identifying where the construction staging and material storage areas are anticipated to be during the construction project on the soil erosion and sediment control plan – Mr. Petry said they will comply.
- Item #25 regarding providing the Essex County Engineer with a copy of the stormwater management report – Mr. Petry said they will comply.
- Item #26 regarding using the underground detention or infiltration basin as temporary sediment basins – Mr. Petry said that they will not use them as catch basins.
- Item #27 regarding the dimensional discrepancies on the plans for the footprint of the underground piping network – Mr. Petry said that he will discuss that with Mr. Keller.
- Item #28 regarding retrofitting the existing inlets along the property frontage with a water quality curb piece – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #29 regarding graded maintenance access into the stormwater basin shown on the site plans – Mr. Petry said that he will discuss that with Mr. Keller.
- Item #30 regarding the landscape and tree removal plan being difficult to review – Mr. Petry said that they will turn off the grading and associated labels on these plans.
- Item #31 regarding moving the evergreen trees along Laurel Avenue further back from the street – Mr. Petry said that they will modify the plan.
- Item #32 regarding changing the detail sheets from Class “C” concrete to Class “B” concrete – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #33 regarding providing an as-built of the lots and constructed improvements, above and below ground, if application is approved – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.
- Item #34 regarding acquiring building permits for any retaining walls over four feet high – Mr. Petry said that all of the walls will be less than four feet high.
- Item #35 regarding submitting an engineer’s estimate of construction costs – Mr. Petry said they will comply.
- Item #36 regarding outside agency approvals being required – Mr. Petry said that they will comply.

Mr. Petry referred to the Township’s Fire Sub Code Official memo dated September 2, 2014 and said that they will comply with all of the comments in this memo.

Mr. Keller said that the Township’s Fire Sub Code Official wants them to provide striping along the entire length of the driveway access road and no parking signage; Mr. Petry said that they will comply.

There were no further questions from the Board members for Mr. Petry.

Chairman Buechler called for a recess at 9:36 pm.

Chairman Buechler resumed the meeting at 9:49 pm.

Chairman Buechler asked the Board Professionals if they have any further questions for Mr. Petry.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Petry what the increase of impervious coverage will be as a result of the drainage plan; he said approximately 50.9% increase of impervious coverage. Mr. Petry said that the existing impervious coverage is approximately 15%.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Petry why they are proposing a recharge component for the house if it is not required in this zone; he said that recharge puts clean water back into the ground and it helps reduce the retention requirement.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Petry if the soils are adequate; he replied yes.

Mr. Grygiel asked Mr. Petry to discuss what the criteria is for when and if the three parking spaces being proposed as future parking spaces will be constructed; Mr. Petry said that they discussed this with their client and they feel that the number of parking spaces being proposed is sufficient. Mr. Petry said that in the future if they feel there is a need for the additional three parking spaces then they will construct them. He said that they added the impervious coverage for both proposals.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Petry why not just construct the three additional parking spaces today; he said that it is not a big deal.

There were no further questions for Mr. Petry from the Board Professionals.

Chairman Buechler asked if any members of the public had any questions for Mr. Petry; seeing none, Mr. Williams called his next witness.

Drazen Cackovic approached the podium and was sworn under oath. Mr. Cackovic detailed his credentials as a licensed Architect in the State of New Jersey and said that he has testified before this Board before.

Chairman Buechler accepted Mr. Cackovic as an expert in architecture.

Mr. Cackovic presented four (4) sheets of the architectural floor plans dated 2/14/12 with a revision date of 8/15/13.

Chairman Buechler stated that the four (4) sheets of the architectural floor plans, dated 2/14/12 with a revision date of 8/15/13, were pre-marked as Exhibit A-1 for identification.

Mr. Cackovic referred to Exhibit A-1 and detailed the caretaker's residence, the meditation room, the exterior elevations and the façade.

Mr. Cackovic presented a sample board of the materials that will be used throughout the project.

Chairman Buechler stated that the material board was pre-marked as Exhibit A-4 for identification.

Mr. Cackovic referred to Exhibit A-4 and detailed all of the materials being used on the project and what they will be used on. He said that the roof will be a standing seam metal roof with roof shingles and the exterior will be stucco with white Azek PVC trim board.

Mr. Cackovic referred to Exhibit A-1 and detailed the floor plans for the temple/prayer hall.

Mr. Cackovic presented a colored rendering of the elevations of the temple/prayer hall with a revision date of 8/15/13.

Chairman Buechler stated that the colored rendering of the exterior elevations of the temple/prayer hall was pre-marked as Exhibit A-2 for identification.

Mr. Cackovic referred to Exhibit A-2 and detailed the exterior elevations along with all of the windows.

Mr. Cackovic stated that they are not required to install a sprinkler system in the building. He said New Jersey code requires sprinkler systems in buildings over 12,000 sq. feet and the temple is 6000 sq. feet and under the required number of occupancy.

Mr. Keller stated that the Township Fire Official or Code Official will correct them if this is not the code that is required for installing sprinkler systems.

There were no questions for Mr. Cackovic from the Board Members.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Cackovic why they are keeping the breezeway; he said that this provides temporary shoring.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Cackovic if the lower level storage area has windows; he replied yes.

Mr. Keller asked Mr. Cackovic if the lower level storage area has any purpose other than storage; he replied no.

There were no further questions for Mr. Cackovic from the Board Professionals.

Chairman Buechler asked if any members of the public had any questions for Mr. Cackovic; seeing none, Mr. Williams called his next witness.

Anita Thani approached the podium and was sworn under oath and stated that she is the secretary for the applicant.

Mr. Williams asked Ms. Thani if the members meet on Thursdays; she replied yes. She said that they meet from 11am to 12pm every Thursday and then they have lunch from 12 pm to 1pm.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani if they meet any other times; she replied no.

Ms. Weiss asked Ms. Thani if they meet on Thursday because it is part of their religion; she said yes. She said Hindu is a way of life and this is one of their ways; she said that it is not a religion. Ms. Thani said that they worship Sai and his main day is Thursday.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani if they meet any other day of the week; she said no. She said that they celebrate Indian New Year and Thanksgiving and that is the only holidays they celebrate. Ms. Thani said that Thanksgiving is on a Thursday and that the Indian New Year is October 23, 2014 on a Thursday this year.

Ms. Gabry asked Mr. Thani what activities go on in the other buildings besides the temple; she said that the small building will be used for meditation and prayers.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani when they started utilizing the building; she said in 2008.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani how often the members come; she said on Thursday.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani how many people use the meditation room; she said that all of the members can use the meditation room and that it opens from 8am to 12pm and then 4pm to 8pm except on Thursday.

Ms. Gabry asked Ms. Thani why not just meditate in the big room instead of the small room; she said that it does not make sense to open the big space for just a couple of people.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani how many members they currently have; she said twenty-nine (29) members.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani if the members are adults and children; she said the members are adults. She said that has not seen any children.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani if they intend on the membership growing; she replied yes.

Mr. Steinhart asked Ms. Thani what other activities are involved in their organization in addition to meditation; she said that they have a food drive twice a year. She said they do not have any fundraisers.

Ms. Gabry asked Ms. Thani how their organization is supported; she said with private donations.

Ms. Weiss asked Ms. Thani who leads the members in their prayer; she said all of the members are taught the prayers and that anyone can lead the prayer.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani who the caretaker is; she said that they will select an experienced caretaker.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani if the caretaker will be paid; she said yes.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani what the purpose will be for the apartment over the garages; she said that it is a place for any person who is invited to visit or for dignitaries who come from overseas to visit. She said that it is a place for them to rest.

Chairman Buechler asked Mr. Thani what a dignitary is in their organization; she said that it is a high priest or someone who comes to lecture. Ms. Thani said that they do not have a priest in their organization but they do have high priests who visit them.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani where the dignitaries come from; she said they come from India or Panama.

Chairman Buechler asked Ms. Thani how often they expect the visitor residence to be used; she said once or twice a year but she was not sure. She said the room is for resting.

Chairman Buechler stated that this Board is concerned that the apartment will be used all of the time and that would make it another use on this property.

Mr. Williams said that it is a religious use and it is a small apartment.

Chairman Buechler said that no one knows what is going to happen in ten years.

Mr. Steinhart asked Ms. Thani what the origin of their organization is; she said that they follow the teachings of Sai Baba.

Mr. Merklinger said that he personally does not have a problem with the apartment. He said that in their culture some individuals are called princesses and are considered dignitaries.

Mr. Sussman stated that in the planners report prepared by Peter Steck, it says that the organization meets on Thursday evening from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm s and on Sundays; Mr. Williams said that is incorrect. He said that Mr. Steck will supply a revised planner report.

Chairman Buechler said that the planners report must be submitted at least ten (10) days before the next meeting.

Mr. Williams said that the traffic report is also being amended.

Ms. Gabry asked Ms. Thani if there is a special even planned when the dignitaries come to visit; she replied no.

Mr. Merklinger asked Ms. Thani why they receive some support from outside of this area; she said that, because they are successful, they have the ability to donate to them.

Mr. Merklinger asked Ms. Thani what makes them donate to their organization; she said because her father was a priest and knew them from India. Ms. Thani said that all donations come from within the United States.

Ms. Weiss asked Ms. Thani how people get into the meditation building; she said that they have a volunteer that opens the building every day of the week.

Mr. Sussman asked Ms. Thani if there are any classes there; she replied no.

Mr. Steinhart asked Ms. Thani what the future of their organization is; she said that they want people to have a nice place to come and meditate.

Ms. Weiss asked Ms. Thani if she knew the people who own the land; she said that it was her father's family.

There were no further questions for Ms. Thani from the Board Members of the Board Professionals.

There were no questions for Ms. Thani from any members of the public.

Chairman Buechler noted that it was 10:50 pm and that the Zoning Board meetings end at 11:00 pm.

Chairman Buechler stated for the record that there are currently three applications on the Zoning Board's October 23, 2014 agenda and that this application will be carried over to the November 20, 2014 meeting and that no further notice will be necessary.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Buechler at 10:52 pm.

Adopted: October 23, 2014


Rose DeSena
Zoning Board Secretary