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CA

2/2/82

Transcript of Proceedings - witnesses:

- Strong
- Ney

+ exhibits list

P 94

CA 002584 S

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
BOROUGH OF SOUTH PLAINFIELD
COUNTY OF UNION
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of:)

APPLICATION OF ELDERLODGE,
INCORPORATED.)

Transcript of
Proceedings

-----)

Tuesday, February 2, 1982
South Plainfield, New Jersey

B E F O R E:

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

RONALD HEPBURN, Chairman
CARL ABRUZZESE
CYNTHIA GANUN
BRUCE HAGER
ROBERT HORNE
FRANK LAFERRARA
JACK LYNCH
ALBERT RYNO

LAURA WILLARD, Secretary
JOHN GRAF, Zoning Officer
WILLIAM LANE, Board Attorney

A P P E A R A N C E S:

MESSRS. ABRAMS, DALTO, GRAN, HENDRICKS
& REINA,
Attorneys for the Applicant
By: ANGELO H. DALTO, ESQ.

RAYMOND S. MILLER, ESQ.
Attorney for Objectors.

Thomas Ciccarelli,
Shorthand Reporter

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I N D E X

<u>Witness</u>	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Cross</u>
Robert Strong		
MR. DALTO:	9	
Henry J. Ney		
MR. DALTO:	74	

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THE CHAIRMAN: Will the Secretary please call the next case.

THE SECRETARY: 2-82, Elderlodge, Incorporated, a New Jersey Corporation, owner of property on Hamilton Boulevard known as Lots 5, 6A, 6B, 7 and 12 and part of Block 259, located in a BC-2 and R-7.5 Zone.

Request permission to erect a 100-unit six-story senior citizens housing project to be marketed as low-cost condominium units.

Contrary to the requirements of Section 704 and the Schedule of Requirements for the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of South Plainfield. Lot size is 1.4 acres, plus or minus. Present use of premises; commercial building and vacant land.

The proposed action is contrary to the ordinance in the following particulars: Senior citizen housing, multi-family housing, specifically permitted in the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of South Plainfield. Height restricted to a 35-foot maximum height and, Applicant requested an interpretation of the parking requirements.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anybody

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1 representing Elderlodge, Incorporated?

2 MR. DALTO: Mr. Chairman, I have three
3 witnesses that I am prepared to present this
4 evening. There are two other witnesses who are
5 not here this evening that I -- two or three
6 other witnesses that I would like to present
7 and I got the impression from your last session
8 last month that you were intending to adjourn
9 this to your next --

10 THE CHAIRMAN: You are almost right. We
11 are intending to adjourn this to the next
12 meeting which will be the 23rd of February.
13 We will be meeting on the first and fourth
14 Tuesday. The fourth Tuesday will be
15 continuations where we do not finish on the
16 first Tuesday.

17 MR. DALTO: I see. I sort of gauged
18 my witnesses for next Tuesday, but I will
19 certainly work on getting them available
20 for the 23rd.

21 The application before the Board this
22 evening is for a 100-unit senior citizens
23 housing project with 50 parking spaces on a
24 parcel of 1.45 acres of land. The units are to
25 be marketed on the condominium principle which,

1 in effect, means that each unit within the
2 complex will be owned on a fee-simple basis
3 by each property owner and they will each
4 own a percentage of the common elements, the
5 common elements being the building, the exterior,
6 the land and the amenities in general.

7 The application is one for a use
8 variance and we will be attempting it through
9 the special reasons that are necessary for
10 this kind of a variance.

11 In that context, I want to point out to
12 the Board that there is substantial case law,
13 developing case law, with respect to the fact
14 that the providing of senior citizen housing
15 is a special reason for the granting of this
16 type of variance. In addition, one of the
17 zoning purposes -- and that's set forth in
18 N.J.S.A. 40:55D-66G, is to provide for senior
19 citizen community housing.

20 This is one of the purposes of zoning
21 and, as the Board knows, the special reasons
22 that the statute speaks of are those reasons
23 for zoning generally.

24 The case law that we will be relying on
25 and I will give the Board certain citations and,

1 I guess, I'm directing them to Mr. Lane, but
2 I will give them to the Board at this point,
3 Taxpayers Association of Weymouth v. Weymouth
4 Township, 71 N.J. 249; Shephard v. Woodlawn
5 Township Community and Planning Board, 71 N.J.
6 230; DeSimone v. Greater Englewood Housing
7 Corporation, #1 - 56 N.J. 428; and Weiner v.
8 Zoning Board of Adjustment of Glassboro,
9 144 N.J. Super. 509.

10 MR. LANE: Excuse me, 509?

11 MR. DALTO: 509.

12 MR. LANE: Excuse me, Mr. Dalto, are
13 any of those cases subsequent to the revision
14 of the municipal Land Use Law including senior
15 citizen community housing?

16 MR. DALTO: Weiner is.

17 The one quote from the cases I would
18 give the Board the benefit of is as follows:

19 "This Court accepts the beneficial
20 public welfare purpose of encouraging housing
21 for senior citizens and the propriety of such
22 a use as a permissible grant for a special
23 reason variance."

24 So that you have within the context of
25 that citation the indication that senior citizen

1 housing, and encouraging it, per se, is a
2 special reason that can establish the basis
3 for the grant of that type of variance. In
4 addition to the special reason of providing
5 senior citizen housing, we will be relying on
6 the fact that this particular property is
7 uniquely and particularly suited to the type
8 of use to which we intend to put it and that
9 it is probably the most appropriate use of the
10 site.

11 We will rely on the fact that there is
12 a need for such housing within the community and
13 that providing this particular facility we will
14 be serving that need. Obviously, the final
15 negative criteria that we must show the Board
16 is that there will be no detriment to the
17 public good.

18 We want to point out, not only will
19 there be no detriment, but that the granting
20 of the use will actually result in a benefit by
21 eliminating obsolescent buildings and by
22 providing a use in a particular area where
23 it's best suited to accomplish a particular
24 result.

25 With that introduction, I'd like to

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present my first witness, Mr. Robert Strong.

MR. LANE: Mr. Dalto, before you do, I have to do my job.

Mr. Chairman, the Affidavit of Publication and Notice are in order and while Mr. Strong is coming up here let me address myself to one or two questions to you, Mr. Dalto.

The portion of the statute -- the purposes of the action that you cited before reverts to, and you quoted it correctly, as being "Senior Citizen Community Housing Construction." The word "community" is very, very obvious there. Do you have any either legislative authority or case authority to establish that the present application falls into that category? Obviously, that is not defined. I seen the definitions portions of the statute. That's not defined.

MR. DALTO: We do have a witness who's among the three witnesses I hope to bring before the Board at your next session who will go into detail on that aspect of the application.

MR. LANE: So you will be establishing or attempting to establish that by testimony as

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1 opposed --

2 MR. DALTO: It will not only be
3 testimony, it will be statute and regulations.
4 The witness that I'm talking about is a
5 witness who's within the Division of Aging.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dalto, before you
7 introduce your next witness, would you state
8 the principals, owners, stockholders of
9 Elderlodge, Incorporated?

10 MR. DALTO: I submit the principals of
11 Elderlodge, Incorporated as being Harry Popik
12 and Eugene Moretti. They are both stockholders
13 in excess of ten percent.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You may go
15 to your first witness.

16 MR. DALTO: Mr. Robert Strong. Did
17 you want to swear him in?

18 R O B E R T S T R O N G , sworn.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and
20 address.

21 MR. STRONG: My name is Robert Strong.
22 I reside on Queens Road in Mount Airy, West
23 Amwell Township, New Jersey.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: You have been before
25 this Board, have you?

1 MR. STRONG: Several occasions.

2 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. DALTO:

3 Q Just briefly, Mr. Strong, for any new members
4 of the Board, what is your profession?

5 A I am a professional planning and zoning consultant.
6 I hold a license issued by the State of New Jersey and have
7 for quite a few years now.

8 Q How long have you been engaged in the profession
9 of planning?

10 A Twenty-six, twenty-seven years now.

11 Q As a matter of fact, on one occasion were you
12 involved in the zoning ordinance for the Borough of South
13 Plainfield?

14 A Yes, back in the, I guess, the 1960's and the
15 revisions that were conducted by Community Planning Association,
16 Herbert Smith Associates. I was actively engaged with that
17 firm at the time and participated in the work done here in
18 South Plainfield.

19 Q So that you're personally familiar with the
20 Borough of South Plainfield?

21 A I am.

22 Q Mr. Strong, did you at my request make a study
23 of the particular property and the application which is
24 before the Board this evening?

25 A Yes, I did.

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Q And for what purpose?

A The purpose of my report was to prepare, really for the Board of Adjustment, a planning and zoning evaluation of the various ramifications which would be involved in the application which is before us.

Q And would you, for the purposes of identifying the site, describe the site itself?

A The site is located on the westerly side of Hamilton Boulevard, essentially at its intersection with South Plainfield Avenue in what was originally the Central Business District of the Borough.

So far as the tax map and the lots are concerned, it is located in Block 259. It consists of Lots 5, 6A, 6B, 7 and 12. The property itself includes a total of 1.45 acres, some 63,500 square feet. It has frontage of 305 feet on Hamilton Boulevard and essentially, runs through the block to the bridge. With the exception of any slope backing area of the ramp, the property is essentially level, essentially at grade with Hamilton Boulevard. Lakeview Avenue to the rear is elevated in the area of the site about 20 to 30 feet above that grade.

At the present time, there are three structures on the site, two of which are commercial structures of marginal construction. There is also a very sound two-family dwelling on the property.

1 If this is approved, all of the structures would
2 be removed.

3 Other than this, there really are no other physical
4 characteristics of the site which are really pertinent to
5 the application. There are no streams or rock outcroppings
6 or anything else of that nature that might affect the
7 application. There is public water and public sewerage
8 service available at the site.

9 Q Would you describe briefly, and generally for
10 the Board, the proposed development?

11 A Yes. The development is to consist of a six-story
12 structure, a single building containing 100 one-bedroom
13 condominium apartment units restricted to occupancy by
14 senior citizens of 55 years of age or more. The building
15 itself is an L-shaped structure with the two longer faces
16 facing Hamilton Boulevard and the southerly property line,
17 which is that exposed to the commercial development in the
18 area.

19 At ground level, the structure occupies 14,600 square
20 feet and covers about 34 percent of the site. The 100 units
21 in the structure are all identical, all one-bedroom units.
22 They consist of a kitchen, a living room, a bedroom, and a
23 bath. Each have a private balcony of about 35 square feet and
24 an interior space of about 750 square feet.

25 The access on the site is through a single driveway at

1 the northerly side of the building which would provide
2 access into a parking area for 50 parking spaces together
3 with access to a surface parking area directly in front of
4 the building. All egress would occur at the southerly
5 property line, essentially at a point opposite South
6 Plainfield Avenue.

7 As indicated, the development is condominium. Each
8 unit would be owner-occupied, and at least based upon the
9 current estimates of construction cost, it's been projected
10 the sales price of the units would be in the \$55,000 to
11 \$60,000 range.

12 We feel that this would bring the units within the
13 reach of moderate income families, which I think is consistent
14 with the character of South Plainfield and is in keeping
15 with the intent of the application here to at least give
16 occupancy preference to present residents of South Plainfield.

17 Q Would you describe the area surrounding the
18 subject site and, specifically, the applicability of those
19 conditions to the site itself?

20 A Yes. In this site -- this area, there is really a
21 mixture of primary residential and commercial uses. I
22 suggested earlier the site in general is really in part of
23 what was originally the Central Business District of South
24 Plainfield, which has somewhat reached a point of stagnation
25 in terms of any growth and development. Immediately to the

1 north of the site there are three residential properties
2 within the same block and then proceeding north towards
3 Main Avenue. We essentially have a fairly substantial
4 block of essentially residential development, residential
5 use, until you reach Main Avenue at which point you hit
6 pretty much solid commercial use; the former Shop-Rite
7 building together with a mixture of public and commercial
8 uses.

9 To the east of the site it's predominantly commercial
10 development. Of particular pertinence, directly across the
11 street is the former, I think, Queens City Savings building
12 which is now operated by the Borough as a senior citizens
13 center. That is immediately across Hamilton Boulevard
14 from the site.

15 Going up South Plainfield Avenue there are a series
16 of relatively small commercial uses primarily indicated,
17 day-to-day retail and service needs of the surrounding area.
18 There are several restaurants, a number of barber and beauty
19 shops, gas stations, a number of other ancillary activities
20 at the intersection of South Plainfield Avenue and Front
21 Street. There are other restaurants, the Arthur Treacher's
22 together with the Drug Fair. The most significant lacking
23 is, in terms of a substantial food market in the immediate
24 vicinity, there is none at the present time. Although, I
25 have heard rumors there apparently is some interest in

1 reactivating the Shop-Rite property into some form of food
2 outlet. I think perhaps the presence of an additional 100
3 units that are proposed by this application would perhaps
4 provide some stimulus to that kind of facility being
5 provided in the area.

6 Other things which I think are somewhat pertinent to
7 this application is the Spring Lake Park project of
8 Middlesex County which is essentially about a quarter of a
9 mile north of the site, on the northerly side of Main Avenue.
10 That facility, according to my understanding from county
11 officials, is now on the verge of being put into final
12 design and put out to bid. Construction should start shortly.
13 Apparently that has been some long time in coming, but it
14 is finally down to the point of approaching construction.

15 I think those are the major pertinent items.

16 Q Could you have an opinion as to what the impact
17 of the Spring Lake Park facility would have to this particular
18 site and this application?

19 A The Spring Lake site, as it is to be developed, I
20 think, will provide a facility that is particularly pertinent
21 in the development on this site. The nature of Spring Lake
22 Park is that it is going to be predominately a passive-type
23 recreation facility. This parcel of property is such that
24 there is simply not room for a football field or a baseball
25 field and that kind of recreation facility. There will be

1 primarily walkways, a small playground area, a few
2 basketball courts and things of that nature. The type of
3 recreation facility that I think is pertinent to a senior
4 citizen project as we hope to have at this facility.

5 Q In your research for your appearance this
6 evening, did you make a study of the planning and zoning
7 regulations applicable to this site and the Borough in
8 general?

9 A Yes, I did.

10 Q Would you describe those?

11 A Well, taking the planning situation first, the Master
12 Plan of the Borough of South Plainfield was adopted in May
13 of 1978. It was a full comprehensive revision of the prior
14 Master Plan which went back to 1973. The land use element
15 of that Master Plan did include, specifically, two sites in
16 the Borough for designation of senior citizen housing. There
17 wasn't a great deal of description of the analysis of the
18 need, but to quote from the report, "The areas were set aside
19 in recognition of the special needs of the elderly, many of
20 whom neither desire or are able to maintain a single-family
21 home." That is about the major quote that pertains to those
22 proposals.

23 The sites that were proposed on the Master Plan; one
24 was in the southerly portion of the Borough on the westerly
25 side of Fleet Avenue. A second was on the abandoned Front

1 School property which is located about a hundred and
2 fifty feet from the site.

3 Collectively in the concept of the Master Plan, those
4 two sites would have provided for between 200 and 300 senior
5 citizen apartment units. So apparently at the time of the
6 1978 plan, the Borough Planning Board conceived 200 to 300
7 units as a reasonable basis for immediate housing needs for
8 senior citizens in the Borough. The Master Plan did make such
9 a proposal. The subsequent zoning regulations did not
10 incorporate those proposals, at least in their final form.
11 It would appear that at some point in time in the preparation
12 of the ordinance they were including the definition of
13 senior citizen communities still present in the ordinance,
14 but the term is not asked anywhere that I can find beyond that.

15 It would appear, at any rate, that some point in
16 time there was need to define the term and whatever went
17 into the ordinance after that got dropped out.

18 Q Specifically, what is the definition of senior
19 citizen communities listed in the ordinance, and what
20 section are you referring to?

21 A That is included in Section 104.2 and then sub-
22 paragraph 59 under that, on page seven of the ordinance book.
23 It simply defines a community where the inhabitants exceed
24 55 years of age.

25 Q And in this instance, the qualifying age will

1 be 55 for residents.

2 Will you continue.

3 A As a consequence of the 1978 zoning ordinance, this
4 property was divided between two zoning districts. The
5 frontage along Hamilton Boulevard, roughly about 25 feet,
6 is included within the OBC-2, Central Business District Zone.
7 The rear of the parcel, which is roughly half of it, is
8 included in an R-7.5 Residential District. The frontage, the
9 OBC-2 Zone, permits one and two-family dwellings, a rather
10 wide variety of retail and service businesses, parks,
11 schools, assembly halls, theaters, and public uses.

12 The R-7.5 Zone permits only one-family dwellings plus
13 parks, playgrounds, professional offices in homes and home
14 occupations.

15 Needless to say, neither of these includes senior
16 citizen housing and as a consequence, the use variance is
17 required for this proposal.

18 I compared the requirements, the quantitative
19 requirements of both the R-7.5 Zone and the OBC-2 Zone to
20 the development standards as proposed on the site plan which
21 is before you. There are no violations of either zone at
22 any point on the plan other than the use which we've talked
23 about and the height of the building.

24 The six-story height would not be permitted in either
25 zone, but in terms of setbacks and all other quantitative

1 restrictions of the ordinance and things of that nature,
2 each one of the requirements is met and, in most cases,
3 substantially exceeded.

4 Specifically there are three variances or three
5 determinations which are required of this Board in reviewing
6 the plans.

7 First of all, to permit the multi-family dwellings
8 or senior citizens where only one and two-family dwellings
9 are permitted and the second is to permit a structure with
10 a height of 56 feet where a height of only 35 feet is
11 permitted, and thirdly, to provide an interpretation of
12 the ordinance where it's silent to require not more than 50
13 off-street parking spaces for this proposal.

14 Q Now, would you give the board the benefit of
15 the planning and zoning activities which form the basis of
16 your testimony here this evening?

17 A All right. Well, primarily this really concerns the
18 use variance.

19 As indicated initially, the property is split between
20 two zoning districts. The only use which is common to both
21 zoning districts is one-family residential dwellings. If
22 the site were to be developed strictly in accordance with
23 what would appear to be the intent of the ordinance as being
24 commercial along the frontage of Hamilton Boulevard, the
25 possibility of the rear portion of this parcel being developed

1 for one-family homes, then the physical circumstances border
2 on the impossible. It would almost appear that the map read
3 that Lakeview Avenue would be an accessible means of access
4 to the rear portion of the property, which is simply not
5 true. The only means of gaining access to the entire site
6 is from Hamilton Boulevard and so to utilize the rear of the
7 site for residential purposes would require passage through
8 the commercial zone and the commercial uses on Hamilton
9 Boulevard in order to reach what would probably be two small
10 parcels in the rear.

11 I think the likelihood of that ever occurring borders
12 on nil.

13 The alternative would be to attempt the development
14 of the entire property for one-family residences. One-
15 family residences are permitted in the OBC-2 Zone and they
16 are a permitted use, of course, in the R-7.5 Zone.

17 I attempted just to see how that would work out. It
18 would require the installation of a very short road off
19 Hamilton Boulevard to give some access and a maximum four
20 lots would be carved out of the property for residential use.

21 I think, given the general circumstances of the area,
22 the significant influence of commercial development and the
23 adjoining property, the Lakeview Avenue ramp property, to
24 theorize on the possibilities of that quantity of individual
25 residential units being constructed on the site, after

1 improvement of additional roads, is just extremely unlikely.

2 So that then in the present circumstances, it would
3 appear that the only really viable use is the abandonment of
4 the rear and the utilization of the front for the commercial
5 purposes. At the same time, look around that business area.
6 It's rather obvious that there has been very little new
7 construction and new development in the area in some
8 considerable period of time. From appearance, it would seem
9 that the Arthur Treacher building is probably the newest
10 construction in that area and it would certainly appear to
11 date, back at least a decade or so, that the marketing of this
12 site for commercial use at the present time, I think, would
13 be a very difficult proposition.

14 There are several parcels of land in the zone which
15 are not utilized and face a similar problem. The essence
16 of all this is, really, that there is a very difficult
17 situation in finding a reasonable use for this property that
18 is consistent with its location, consistent with the Borough's
19 zoning scheme and, at the same time, one which is feasible.

20 I feel that which is proposed here for senior citizen
21 housing represents one of the few available alternatives that
22 could make constructive use of this site to put it into use
23 in the Borough and cause no detriment to the adjoining area.
24 It enhances it to some degree.

25 Q In conjunction with your testimony here this

1 evening, did you cause a study to be made of the needs of
2 senior citizen housing in South Plainfield specifically?

3 A Yes, I did.

4 Q Would you give the Board the benefit of your
5 findings with respect to that?

6 A To the degree this type of evaluation is probable.
7 I'll be the first one to admit in any community, establishing
8 a well-defined need for housing for a specific group, such
9 as senior citizens is, at best, kind of a subjective judgment.

10 What we really can attempt to do is to determine
11 whether the general circumstances in the community are such
12 that the probability is that this kind of housing would be
13 readily accepted by the residents in the community and the
14 surrounding area.

15 The essence of much of this is that senior citizens
16 who do have some very specialized housing needs which are
17 not consistent with the housing needs of families that are
18 in the stages of their development.

19 The senior citizen tends to be a much less mobile
20 person. They drive less, if they own cars at that age. They
21 do most of their moving around either on foot or on public
22 transportation.

23 Their needs in terms of specific housing changes
24 considerably. One-story buildings become a problem for them.

25

1 Considerable amounts of maintenance become a problem for
2 them.

3 The situation which has developed in New Jersey and
4 nationally in the last several decades is that there simply
5 is not a supply of housing available which is more directly
6 suited to the needs of this growing element of the population.
7 Something like two-thirds of the elderly population in New
8 Jersey are homeowners. Most have found, however, that their
9 fixed incomes at that stage of their lives, in combination
10 with inflation and the effect upon taxes, maintenance costs,
11 utilities costs, things of that nature make home ownership a
12 very difficult situation for them.

13 Nationally we determined that more than 75 percent of
14 elderly-occupied homes were built prior to 1940. That is
15 probably not too far off here in South Plainfield. Much of
16 that housing built during that period is particularly
17 inappropriate to the housing needs of senior citizens today.
18 It tends to be costly to maintain, it tends to be unsafe in
19 terms of its construction characteristics, it tends to have
20 many other problems which senior citizens can no longer cope
21 with.

22 The elderly, generally, are looking for smaller units,
23 units which are easier for them to maintain, units in which
24 they can maintain their friendships and associations in the
25 community and one in which they can move about more freely

1 than they might in their existing accommodations.

2 We looked at particularly the population of South
3 Plainfield. We just recently obtained data from the 1980
4 census of population and determined that about 18.8 percent
5 of the Borough population, now 3,855 persons were age 55
6 and over and 6.8 percent of the Borough population was aged
7 65 and over. This, in effect, would be the segment of your
8 community which would be the primary demand for this
9 housing. Within the next five years from the census, now
10 down to three years, based upon the age distribution in 1980,
11 there would be, roughly, another 932 persons in the Borough
12 who would reach age 55 and become potential residents of
13 this project.

14 We went through some conversations of those population
15 figures into households and determined that the present
16 number of households which include "As head of households"
17 or composed of persons over 55 in the Borough is 2,548;
18 that's roughly 40 percent of the total households in the
19 Borough.

20 They are over age 55 and they are persons who are
21 initially potential residents of this project.

22 That, I think, pretty clearly documents the prospective
23 need here in South Plainfield. The senior citizens of South
24 Plainfield, in general, have essentially the same
25 characteristics that senior citizens do throughout the country.

1 They have the same problems, the same desires. I have no
2 doubt that if this were built, that it could be marketed
3 twice over to local residents who would be quite desirous
4 of finding a more desirable, more affordable, place to live
5 within their community and in close proximity to the things
6 that they are familiar with and have that as a place to live
7 out the rest of their lives.

8 Q Did you make a determination of the percentage
9 of owner-occupants in the Borough at the present time?

10 A At the present time, the owner occupancy of South
11 Plainfield is over 90 percent and, I think, among senior
12 citizens it is probably even higher than that, probably in
13 the 95 percent category.

14 Q And did you make a generalized study of the
15 property values and relate that to the feasibility of a
16 senior citizen purchasing one of the units in question?

17 A Yes. The feasibility of this venture is dependent
18 upon the economic ability of the residents of the Borough
19 being able to invest in the units that are proposed here.
20 As I indicated, the vast majority of local senior citizens
21 are homeowners, assuming that South Plainfield has a very
22 consistent average home value, generally in the \$70,000 to
23 \$80,000 range without a lot of deviation from that range.

24 So taking that as a general condition and assuming
25 that the senior citizens in most cases would own those homes

1 free of mortgages, having resided in there for some
2 considerable period of time and that the sale of that house
3 which would make available the house to younger elements of
4 the population which those homes are better suited for, would
5 enable movement and outright purchase of a condominium unit
6 free up. In most cases for those people, anything from
7 \$10,000 to \$20,000 in effect, out of their present home --
8 even if they invested in C.D.'s at current yields today could
9 produce an additional income for these people which is one
10 of their problems.

11 This, in and of itself, would probably carry most of the
12 carrying cost which would be attended to by their occupancy
13 here and leave their other sources of income, as they may
14 be social security, whatever pension they may have,
15 whatever forms of income they may have, much freer from their
16 normal living costs. It could free them from the obligation
17 that they now have to invest much of that money into the
18 maintenance and operation of their one-family dwelling.

19 Q Do you now indicate that based on the 1980
20 census figures in South Plainfield that approximately 2,400
21 families have senior citizens? Have you projected what, if
22 any of those 2,400 families would seek or desire this type
23 of housing?

24 A Well, the one standard that there is in the field and
25 which is promulgated by the Department of Housing and Urban

1 Development.

2 "Market analysis requirement for senior citizen
3 housing," that is, that the general need for local and
4 moderate income housing in the community and it is equal to
5 ten percent of the population over 60 years of age.

6 In South Plainfield this would equate to roughly 240
7 units as a minimum need for senior citizen housing.

8 MR. LANE: Excuse me. Mr. Strong, was
9 that population over 60 or 65?

10 MR. STRONG: That standard in particular
11 is 60.

12 MR. LANE: Sixty?

13 MR. STRONG: Yes.

14 MR. LANE: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

15 A So that in effect the 100 units that are being proposed
16 here are really a modest beginning towards a need by HUD
17 standards that would measure up to 240 units. A need by
18 the local planning board's judgment of several years ago.
19 That would be two and three hundred units as a very substantial
20 nucleus of local residents who are senior citizens.

21 If only something like five percent of these house-
22 holds existing in the Borough would find this particular
23 form of housing attractive, it would fill up the project
24 with no difficulty.

25

1 Q In your experience, are there any specific
2 planning criteria which make a particular site particularly
3 appropriate for senior citizen housing?

4 A Yes, there are a number of factors that are normally
5 considered in revealing a particular site for senior
6 citizen housing. I gave consideration to the specific needs
7 of senior citizens for facilities and services in locations
8 with these residents and initially, in proximity to shopping.
9 In this instant case there is, I think, a good variety of
10 commercial facilities in close proximity to the site with
11 the single exception that I mentioned of the food store,
12 of either the convenience-type, or something of that nature
13 that could take care of the daily needs of these people,
14 but there are facilities, there are drug facilities and
15 restaurants, there are barber and beauty shops and a number
16 of other features that are all within close walking distance
17 of the site.

18 Secondly, the availability of public transportation
19 and our investigations have indicated that in and about this
20 site of Hamilton Boulevard, Main Avenue, Lakeview Avenue and
21 Oak Tree Road. The major concentration of public transportation
22 which is available in South Plainfield is concentrated. This
23 applies both to local service bus routes and to New York bus
24 routes as they may be appropriate. Additionally, and not to
25 be overlooked, is the fact that a local taxi company has its

1 office within a few hundred feet of the site which would be
2 a very convenient facility. There are several churches
3 within close proximity, within walking distance of the site,
4 which is an important consideration for senior citizens.
5 There are recreation facilities, meaning, in particular,
6 the senior citizens center, which is directly across the
7 street. I think the presence of this housing facility would,
8 perhaps, even enhance the utilization of that facility beyond
9 that which goes on there today and redevelopment would
10 elaborate programs of this nature that I have seen in other
11 communities. Additionally, from the standpoint of just
12 normal passive recreation facilities, the presence of Spring
13 Lake Park, which should be in construction by next year, I
14 think, would satisfy that need rather well.

15 Medical care: There are a number of medical practices
16 in the immediate area, a hospital service. Of course, this is
17 Muhlenberg which is only two miles away from the site and
18 it's that type of facility. It is in relatively close
19 proximity. Additionally, the rescue squad, which is located
20 within a very close distance from the site, as well as the
21 borough police headquarters are in a location within close
22 proximity of the site. These are all services from time to
23 time that are needed in projects of this nature, so that
24 taking all of those things into account, I think the site
25 stands up fairly well and probably is superior to most other

1 locations in the borough that might be considered for such
2 housing.

3 Q If you would then focus on the second request
4 for variance, namely, the building height, would you tell
5 the Board how the use itself generates the requirement for
6 the variance required for height in this instance?

7 A Okay. First of all, the basic type of project within
8 the senior citizen aspect of the project virtually dictates
9 that a minimum size project be at least 100 units. To
10 attempt to develop the area as condominiums, whether it be
11 for senior citizens or not, whether it be condominium
12 units or rental, at a lower scale would generate costs
13 which would not be consistent with the number of units
14 involved. So we have to start out pretty much with a base
15 of 100 units. To go on a 100 unit structure and stay
16 within the height restrictions of the zoning ordinance would
17 cause, as is not uncommon in certain areas in the State,
18 a much higher building coverage in order to keep down to a
19 three-story height which might be permitted in the ordinance.
20 This would, of course, be much more consumptive of the site
21 and in combination with off-street parking would virtually
22 consume the entire site and reduce some of the amenities
23 that are provided for on the site at the present time.
24 At the same time, particularly, with respect to senior
25 citizen housing, and here again, there are differences of

1 opinion, but the general opinion which is the majority
2 opinion at the moment seems to be that senior citizens prefer
3 mid-rise structures to low-rise structures for reasons of
4 security an/ access and certain additional privacy factors,
5 things of that nature that they might not find in a mid-rise
6 structure and you won't find it in the more typical low-rise
7 apartment-type structure.

8 So these factors taken in combination with the greater
9 desire by senior citizens for mid-rise structures, virtually
10 dictate building to a six-story height. Also to develop
11 a structure on the site that is consistent with all of these
12 considerations. At the same time, and looking at the
13 surrounding environment, there are a number of other structures
14 in the surrounding area which, at least, appear to exceed
15 the 35-foot height limit. Included is the former elementary
16 school, portions of the Baptist Church steeple, and I know
17 the theater building is in excess but I couldn't quite
18 measure it, but that's in excess of 35 feet and in addition,
19 the presence of Lakeview Avenue to the rear of this building
20 which will serve as kind of a backdrop of some 20 or 30
21 feet will tend to reduce the apparent height of the building.
22 So, I think, a six-story building as proposed here can be
23 readily accommodated on the site and not appear to be out
24 of context with the area and would be consistent with other
25 things that exist in the area and will be beneficial to the

1 people that will occupy the structure.

2 Q As a planner, Mr. Strong, you are familiar
3 with the special reasons that are required for a use
4 variance, is that correct?

5 A I am.

6 Q Do you find any of those special reasons
7 inherent in this particular project?

8 A Yes, I do.

9 Q Would you describe those for the Board?

10 A Well, first of all, as I stated in the introduction,
11 one of the specific statutory purposes of zoning is to
12 encourage senior citizen community housing. I think by
13 the very nature of this application that statutory purpose
14 would be specifically promoted. This would encourage 100
15 senior citizen housing units in a community atmosphere.
16 Secondly, I think the property itself has a unique
17 characteristic and is uniquely sited to such a degree that
18 it will provide sufficient space and appropriate location
19 for a specific residence use which is not otherwise
20 provided for in South Plainfield. Thirdly, the density
21 which is proposed here, 100 units on approximately an acre
22 and a half, I think given the character of the housing and
23 the occupants appropriate population concentration, that
24 will contribute really to the well-being of these persons,
25 the senior citizens, that will occupy this structure.

1 Fourthly, I believe there is a strongly indicated if not
2 demonstrated need for senior citizen housing in South
3 Plainfield and that approval of this application will
4 assist in guiding appropriate development of land in a
5 manner that will promote the public health, safety, and
6 general welfare of the Borough's senior citizens. Fifth,
7 I think the particular property can be considered particularly
8 well suited for proposed use of the senior citizen housing
9 because of its unique location and at the same time, would
10 fulfill a public need for providing a form of housing which
11 is not available in the community. Finally, I believe
12 that the proposed development would be without detriment
13 to the surrounding area in South Plainfield. I think the
14 development as proposed would, in fact, benefit the
15 surrounding area by utilizing a site which is now vacant
16 land and some obsolete commercial buildings and put it into
17 a viable use. I think the presence of 100 units of senior
18 citizen housing in this location will increase the prospects
19 of preservation of the former Central Business District,
20 at least in its present form, and will aid in bolstering the
21 present business establishments that are still found in that
22 area. I think that constitutes this special reason.

23 Q In your opinion, would any detriment to the
24 public good or the intent and purpose of zone planning and
25 zoning ordinance result from the granting of this particular

1 application?

2 A No, I can see no detriment to the public good nor
3 can I see any detriment to the intent and purpose of the
4 zone plan. Essentially, the circumstances of this property
5 are such that if this application is granted it would not
6 precipitate other substantial changes in zoning that would
7 be inconsistent with the general zone plan of the Borough
8 and, in fact, I think it would enhance the zone plan and
9 preserve the future of the Central Business area.

10 Q Mr. Strong, for your testimony here this
11 evening, did you prepare a report which summarizes your
12 testimony?

13 A I did.

14 Q And does that report --

15 A It is.

16 Q I'd like to submit this to the Board for the
17 Board's perusal.

18 MR. LANE: Can we have that marked A-1.

19 (Report of planning considerations
20 received and marked Applicant's Exhibit A-1.)

21 Q In your written report, Mr. Strong, there are
22 a couple of exhibits. Would you just, briefly, describe
23 for the Board what those exhibits are intending to depict?

24 A Exhibit 1 which I mentioned briefly is a comparison
25 of the quantitative requirements of an R-7 zone, the OBC-2

1 zone, and the standards which are proposed for this property.
2 In terms of lot area, lot width and so forth, exhibit 2
3 is a simplified table showing the age distribution of the
4 population of South Plainfield as of the 1980 Census.
5 There is also a map exhibit which shows the location of the
6 property and the utilization of most of the properties in
7 the general vicinity including most of those I have talked
8 about in my testimony.

9 MR. DALTO: I have nothing further,
10 Mr. Strong.

11 MR. LANE: Mr. Strong, would you
12 classify this as low-income or moderate-
13 income housing?

14 MR. STRONG: Moderate.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: I have one question
16 concerning the report. I know for myself I
17 would like to have some time to read this
18 through.

19 MR. STRONG: I have no problem.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: I know there was some
21 statistics I would like to read.

22 MR. LANE: Mr. Strong. I'd like to ask
23 you a question about the parking.

24 MR. STRONG: Certainly.

25 MR. RYNO: I think you are going to be

1 qualified as one that is going to appear before
2 this Board to answer questions about parking.
3 As a professional planner, do you know how
4 -- do you equate 50 parking spaces to this
5 site?

6 MR. STRONG: As a professional planner,
7 I think it will be more than is needed for the
8 100 units. As a general proposition, I think
9 the general utilization of the parking lot by
10 the occupants is assuming we don't get parking
11 in the lot from other situations. This would
12 be in the 30 to 40 car range.

13 MR. RYNO: Are you saying that the
14 average senior citizen doesn't own a car?

15 MR. STRONG: That's correct, not the
16 average, but the incidence --

17 MR. RYNO: Most of my friends own two
18 cars and they are no different than me. Would
19 you say it is a fair assumption to say that
20 a single-family dwelling requires two parking
21 spaces? Now, on the basis of that I would
22 think that 100 units, single-family units,
23 would require possibly 200 parking spaces?

24 MR. STRONG: First of all, the typical
25 senior citizen household is not two people.

1 Fully half of the senior citizen households
2 are single people. Of that group in particular,
3 roughly 75 percent are single females. The
4 vast majority of those do not own automobiles.
5 They are beyond the point of being interested
6 in driving or automobiles. There was a study,
7 the only really extensive study I know --
8 I have done a lot of observations of specific
9 incidences, but to make a full-blown study
10 of a major quantity, the only one I know is
11 one that was done by the State Division of
12 Aging back about seven or eight years ago
13 which would have been at a point in time
14 where automobile ownership was probably at a
15 higher level than it is today because of the
16 lesser expense involved in owning an
17 automobile. Gasoline costs, insurance costs,
18 not to mention the purchase price of the car
19 itself. In a study which they made of some
20 3,070 moderate and middle-income housing units,
21 the average utilization of parking facilities,
22 and these are in New Jersey, was 31 percent of
23 the number of units. In lower-income housing,
24 which is not really applicable here, it is
25 less than that. The Division suggests a

1 standard of 35 to 45 parking spaces per 100
2 units. We have 50.

3 Just in the last couple of months I
4 maintained my home in West Amwell and a
5 small office in Lambertville. There are two
6 senior citizen housing projects in Lambertville,
7 one of which I go by on a daily basis. I just
8 made a point last month in driving past those
9 two facilities that one is a low-rise 14-unit
10 garden apartment-type of arrangement. It has
11 14 parking spaces. I have never seen --
12 excuse me, it has 21 units, there are 14
13 parking spaces. I have never seen more than
14 seven vehicles parked in this lot from 7:00 a.m.
15 in the morning to midnight. I have seen it
16 as low as four. The other building is a
17 four-story mid-rise consisting of 40 units.
18 It has 20 parking spaces. I have never seen
19 more than 12 vehicles in that lot. The
20 income level in those units is pretty much
21 the same as we would anticipate here. That
22 is the kind of incidence of parking that
23 showed up in the State study and those I
24 don't hang my head on because in those two
25 buildings the standard is not good, but they

1 are consistent with the study that the State
2 did. The ownership of automobiles by people,
3 particularly over 65, is not very substantial.
4 There just is not a lot of it. They tend to
5 rely on public transportation, trains, taxis,
6 and friends' automobiles.

7 MR. LANE: With regard to your comment
8 on page 9. I guess it's the fourth paragraph
9 where it says in one conservative estimate
10 as that accepted by HUD parking analysis
11 which equates housing needs for low and
12 moderate income families to ten percent of the
13 population over 60. You indicated before
14 we are not talking in terms of low income.
15 We are talking in terms of moderate. That
16 would be broken down into what percentage
17 of moderate income families?

18 MR. STRONG: No, it isn't, unfortunately.

19 MR. LANE: You mentioned before in your
20 testimony that you believe the present
21 application falls in the definition of senior
22 citizen community construction as put forth
23 in the purposes section of the Municipal
24 Land Use Act. Is it your interpretation that
25 any condominium applying to senior citizens

1 fall into that category? Leisure Village?

2 MR. STRONG: Pretty much, I think the
3 intent of that language was to encourage
4 senior citizen housing in a group form as
5 opposed to, say, a zoning which might permit
6 individual senior citizen housing. That
7 might achieve some degree of special privilege
8 over non-senior citizen with a zoning
9 ordinance that could say that in a certain
10 zone you could build housing for senior
11 citizens and it only has to be 750 square
12 feet.

13 MR. LANE: With a preference for --

14 MR. STRONG: The preference for group
15 housing is very important to the senior
16 citizen. The group aspect of their living at
17 that age becomes very significant to them
18 and the concentration of people of similar
19 needs, similar desires, similar problems
20 in housing in close proximity is very beneficial
21 to their situation.

22 MR. LANE: Has there been an estimate
23 of condominium fees that would be charged to
24 owners?

25 MR. STRONG: I think -- I know they

1 haven't been finalized as of yet. I know they
2 have been worked on.

3 MR. DALTO: Our architect will be
4 presenting those. They are being honed and
5 finalized at this point.

6 MR. LANE: Will there be security
7 provided for the residents?

8 MR. STRONG: It will be a secure
9 building. Again, the details I don't think
10 have been worked out. The architect has
11 talked in terms of such features as a passkey-
12 type of entry, voice communications between
13 the apartment and the lobby door, a
14 permanently locked lobby door. Other doors
15 of the building will be only opened from the
16 inside other than by a master key which would
17 be available to the local police and fire
18 department. That kind of -- basically, the
19 building is a secure building.

20 MR. LANE: Will there be a security
21 guard provided?

22 MR. STRONG: Yes.

23 MR. LANE: Will there be an assistant
24 superintendent provided?

25 MR. DALTO: Yes.

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MR. LANE: I presume that those particular employees would have to participate in the proposed parking also if they were to drive or if they resided there they would have to use the existing parking?

MR. STRONG: That's right.

MR. LANE: Do you know how many of the employees of the condominium association there would be?

MR. STRONG: I don't believe there would be two at any one time. Most of the maintenance activities on the site are obviously going to be contracted out and occasionally generate a electrician's vehicle, a plumber's vehicle, or that kind of thing, but I don't think the routine employment on the site will get beyond two.

MR. LANE: The age requirement would apparently apply to one. In the event that it's a husband and wife, it would only apply to the one?

MR. STRONG: It normally excludes any dependent children.

MR. LANE: Is that what's going to apply here?

1 MR. STRONG: I believe that was the
2 intention. Essentially, the units are really
3 not set up to accommodate more than the
4 maximum of one couple. They are one bedroom
5 units and they're in the -- look at the floor
6 plans for the units. They really are not
7 even capable of accommodating more than a
8 couple. It would be different, perhaps, but
9 two females or two males could occupy the
10 units, brothers or whatever, but I think you
11 will probably find that half of the units
12 would be occupied by singles and half by
13 couples. You end up with something in the
14 vicinity of 150 residents in the building.

15 MR. LANE: Is there any building in the
16 general area that is as tall? Is there any
17 building presently in existence that is as
18 tall as the proposed structure?

19 MR. STRONG: I think the highest point
20 is the Baptist Church. It is probably that
21 tall.

22 MR. LANE: That's the steeple. Except
23 for the steeple which is as tall --

24 MR. STRONG: The theater probably comes
25 within five to ten feet of it.

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MR. LANE: That's the closest?

MR. STRONG: That's the closest.

MR. LANE: I have no further questions.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have two. Looking on the application, I cannot find it on my map where you describe where lot 12 would be.

MR. HORNE: It's not on the plot plan.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't see it. At the same time six is apparently on the plot plan and not on the application.

MR. STRONG: Twelve is the irregular lot on the southwesterly corner. It's really -- perhaps the simple solution would be --

THE CHAIRMAN: I have the picture.

Much of your testimony was based on age, particularly, and some percentages that, as I said before, I want to go through, but could you give a description of the senior citizen needs in the, say, 55 to 65 age classification vs. age 65 and up? Are they generally the same particularly from a financial point of view?

MR. STRONG: No. I think the specific interest in this form of housing at age 55 is

1 not as great as it is at age 65 which is not
2 as great as it is at age 75. I think as
3 people proceed in years the problems of
4 individual home ownership become greater,
5 the demands become greater, the income
6 becomes more of a problem. I think in that
7 lower age group, the 55 to 65 age group, you
8 would probably find that the interest would
9 be greatest among single women, widows in
10 particular, women who have lost their husbands.
11 They may have no other families in the
12 immediate vicinity and find themselves the
13 owner of a one-family dwelling somewhere in
14 the community. I think you will find
15 significant numbers of such persons in the
16 community that would be interested in a project
17 such as this. This would let them retain
18 their identification within South Plainfield,
19 but certainly as you proceed on into the years,
20 I think your couples would probably occur
21 mostly in the 60 to 70 age group, but planning
22 beyond that, the number of couples diminishes
23 greatly and the vast majority of senior
24 citizen households are single person house-
25 holds. So that's the kind of situation.

1 The 55 limit, I think, is frequently
2 selected in projects such as this because it
3 is the age which most people are relatively
4 free of children, whose children have left
5 home or, at least, are old enough to be
6 independent. It is an age at which occasionally
7 death does frequently cause single person
8 households and the age at which the attractive
9 features of housing such as this does become
10 evident.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: What would you guess the
12 average age of a hundred units filled in
13 South Plainfield might be from your studies?

14 MR. STRONG: Probably -- I had not
15 really attempted to compute something like
16 that, but I would guess that the average age
17 would be in the vicinity of 70.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: And you mentioned before
19 in terms of anticipated incomes. What would
20 you anticipate the average income of the
21 average resident might be?

22 MR. STRONG: Again, that we can only go
23 by what we know the situation to be today.
24 Incomes of people today in, say, the over 75
25 category on the average are relatively low.

1 In approximately the \$6,000 median range.
2 As we go down into the 65 to 75 range, it
3 gets up into the \$10,000 median and below 65
4 it tends to be only somewhat below the median
5 in the community which the people may be
6 located. In South Plainfield at the present
7 time, at least the current estimated median
8 is around \$16,000. The problem we have with
9 this is the situation. The median in South
10 Plainfield is estimated at \$16,000.

11 MR. ABBRUZZESE: What age bracket
12 represents the community as it stands now?

13 MR. STRONG: The median in the 55 to
14 65 age group tends to be just slightly under
15 the median for the community. In other words,
16 South Plainfield, as a total community, it
17 is around 60,000. The 55 to 65 age group
18 in South Plainfield would probably have a
19 median income in the \$14,000 to \$16,000 range.
20 This is the situation. However, it is in
21 such a state of flux today, income, business,
22 changes in the social security structure, that
23 what might exist, say, ten years from now
24 with the current 55 to 65 age group which will
25 then be in the 65 to 75 age group, I think can

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be totally different from what we have today in that age group, but, I think, the problems are going to be the same. How it is all going to work out is going to be different.

THE CHAIRMAN: The court reporter indicates that he needs a break. We will take a five minute recess.

(Recess taken.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Noting the Board has all returned, I have just one last question in terms of economics from the senior citizen point of view.

Have you done studies determining whether senior citizens are better off owning or renting, what the break in points may be and what the relative incomes at those break in points might be?

MR. STRONG: No, that's it. Not at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll ask one more specific question. What's the determination factors in this application for purchase as opposed to rental?

MR. STRONG: I think as much of the character of the community. We anticipate

1 that the vast majority of the people in this
2 community that would be interested in this
3 kind of housing are owners of one-family
4 dwellings at the present time, are of moderate
5 income means and might probably prefer being
6 involved in an ownership situation in a
7 project such as this than in a straight rental.

8 As a general proposition, if we are dealing
9 with a lower-income spectrum and which we
10 would have to get involved in some form of
11 subsidies, we would have to be on a rental
12 basis, but I think the income level where the
13 market exists in this community is one that
14 can support the condominium future, one that
15 would be compatible with the community.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I think there's one

17 --

18 MR. HORNE: Mr. Strong, I have a couple
19 of questions getting back to parking. I took
20 the liberty today, anticipating some questions
21 on parking, and called the consultant to the
22 Planning Board in a nearby municipality which
23 has senior citizen housing. The answer I got
24 from him was that the rule of thumb, that
25 would be if it is a subsidized senior citizen

1 complex project, one parking place for every
2 four to five living units. If it is non-
3 subsidized, one to one and a half parking
4 spaces per unit, but not less than one.

5 MR. STRONG: All I can say is I
6 disagree with them.

7 MR. HORNE: I am just bringing that to
8 the attention of the Board. This is another
9 opinion.

10 MR. GRAF: Mr. Chairman, I took the
11 liberty of speaking to a consultant on this
12 and the one question he asked me is, "Is there
13 bus service available" and I said "Yes". He
14 said, "Point 5."

15 MR. HORNE: There are differing opinions
16 because the consultant did mention when he
17 asked me about busing, yes it is available,
18 he said the one thing about the people that
19 do get into non-subsidized type housing, they
20 don't normally use the public transportation
21 facilities.

22 MR. LANE: Mr. Dalto, are we talking
23 about non-subsidized or subsidized?

24 MR. DALTO: There are no subsidies
25 available.

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MR. RYNO: What determines whether it is subsidized or non-subsidized?

MR. DALTO: A federal grant.

THE CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, we will stick with Mr. Horne. I will come back to you.

MR. HORNE: And speaking about that parking, if there are 53 spots, and I can't see it on the plan, we take for granted if the 12 spots for visitors were taken up by visitors, that would leave 41 and if we had two people working at the building that would leave 39. Again, it is just food for thought. I don't know myself, but there are differing opinions on the parking standards. First of all, whatever they may be, take into account all forms of parking on the site and, I think, if you went back to the planning consultant that you called, he would agree that the standard, whatever it was, the one to one and a half included resident parking, visitor parking, employee parking, maintenance people parking, delivery parking, the whole gamut because there's no way to sort out whose car is a resident and whose car is not. You can't count cars on the parking lot.

1 Understand that I am only trying to
2 make a point. His recommendations would be
3 no less than 100 places for a building of
4 this size.

5 Secondly, with that still in mind,
6 we notice on the plan that that two-family
7 house is to be moved to an adjacent lot.
8 Does that house stay with the current owner
9 or is that part of the deal?

10 MR. STRONG: That house is being moved
11 totally from the site. The land underneath
12 that house and the entire site is going to be
13 used by this project.

14 MR. LAFERRARA: It showed it's being
15 moved.

16 MR. HORNE: It shows it's being moved
17 to a portion of Lot 5. Okay. And Lot 5 is
18 still owned by the applicant.

19 MR. STRONG: Not on the architect's
20 plan. It is being removed completely. If
21 you look at the architect's plan, you will see
22 the entire site is being consumed by building,
23 parking, and landscaping.

24 MR. GRAF: This is being moved to that
25 lot?

1 MR. DALTO: No. To clarify, the plot
2 plan that has been submitted to the Board is
3 the entire site including what has been shown
4 as the house being moved. That is what is
5 before the Board this evening.

6 MR. HORNE: The plan we have, it shows
7 the house moving to Lot 5. It is not valid?

8 MR. DALTO: No, it is incorrect.

9 MR. STRONG: There is room on the site
10 plan. If by some circumstance the 50 parking
11 spaces proved to be insufficient, there is
12 room that additional parking spaces of,
13 perhaps, another ten to fifteen spaces would
14 be created in that open area which is within
15 the L of the building in the back, but that
16 is about the extent of area that would be
17 provided for additional parking. I think as
18 a practical matter, if this building is
19 established by one means or another, all
20 parking will be accommodated on the site.
21 if for no other reason than for security
22 purposes. It is a consideration which is
23 extremely important to these people. It is
24 conceivable that, again, even that proved not
25 to be enough. There is land to the rear, the

1 existing auto parts store, which abuts this
2 property and there's a small strip of, I
3 believe, Borough-owned land between the site
4 and Lakeview Avenue that conceivably might
5 be a place that could be used for additional
6 parking even if 50 or 60 or 65 does not --
7 I honestly do not believe you will have that
8 problem.

9 MR. HORNE: I'm bringing that up
10 because there's a differing opinion.

11 MR. STRONG: This is an unusual
12 situation. There are ways out of it to keep
13 an on-site parking situation. That would be
14 resolving it.

15 MR. HORNE: I have family that lives
16 in Glen Lakes and I was surprised at the number
17 of people that do own automobiles in that
18 community. The only other question I had
19 at this time, was I was just wondering just
20 for the Board's thinking, I guess, is the
21 South Plainfield Fire Department able to
22 service a building 55 or 60 feet high?

23 MR. STRONG: The architect will
24 probably comment on this. Generally, it is
25 my understanding from my conversation that

1 the building is to be fully sprinklered.
2 It is to be totally fireproof and there will
3 be stand pipes on each floor to fight fires
4 from within the building rather than externally.

5 MR. GRAF: I think I can answer that.
6 We have a 100 foot ladder truck.

7 MR. HORNE: Is that what it is?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I just want to clarify
9 about this house moving bit that I missed.
10 Could you clarify, Mr. Dalto?

11 MR. DALTO: Probably what best expresses
12 it is the architect's site plan. It is one
13 that is binding on the application.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: The architects are not
15 the engineers.

16 MR. DALTO: Not the engineers. We
17 submitted that one purely for the 200 foot
18 radius area.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: So it is your proposition
20 then this house is just going to be removed?

21 MR. LAFERRARA: Well, I have a couple
22 of questions. Getting back to what was said,
23 I think I'd like the fire department to look
24 at the layout here and see if they can get
25 their equipment in and around the building

1 because I don't think the streets are wide
2 enough for the equipment that we have in town
3 right now.

4 MR. DALTO: I want to emphasize to
5 the Board that this is a bifurcated
6 application at this juncture. We are applying
7 for a use variance because, presumably,
8 if the use variance is granted you will then
9 move on the site plan. We are not at the
10 site plan at this particular point. We are
11 assuming if we get past the use variance
12 obstacle then we will go into the site plan
13 with the Board at hopefully another session.

14 MR. LAFERRARA: Another question is:
15 Is there going to be a basement to this building?

16 MR. DALTO: Yes.

17 MR. LAFERRARA: Is it going to be the
18 full size of the plan we see now or is it
19 just going to be a complimentary basement?

20 MR. STRONG: I don't think it is being
21 worked out to determine the physical extent
22 of it. It will be a basement which will be
23 specially large to accommodate the utilities,
24 services, heating, things of that nature;
25 laundry facilities, storage facilities,

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community room, things of that nature.

Whatever space is necessary.

MR. LAFERRARA: Each unit, as I was looking at it, is kind of -- there is really no storage area at all in there.

MR. STRONG: There will be individual storage departments for each one of the 100 units in the basement area. I don't think the specific size has been worked out.

MR. LAFERRARA: It doesn't show any basement.

MR. STRONG: No, there is a schematic of the first floor plan.

MR. LAFERRARA: The main entry, as I see it here, is on the corner of Hamilton Boulevard.

MR. STRONG: That's correct.

MR. LAFERRARA: Now, do you have any exterior stairwells?

MR. STRONG: Yes, on each end. The only entrance, the main entry at the corner of the building where it says, "Main Entry."

MR. LAFERRARA: I have no other questions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does anybody else over

1 this side have any questions?

2 MR. RYNO: Mr. Strong, I'm not too
3 familiar with senior citizen housing but
4 I'd like to ask you, does the job of taking
5 care of people for their basic needs, sleeping,
6 et.cetera, is this type of thing customarily
7 to be restrictive of the other facilities?
8 There are no other additional facilities
9 like a general meeting room?

10 MR. STRONG: There will be a community
11 room, laundry area, storage area, possibly
12 even some kind of small kitchen in the base-
13 ment in addition to the utility area.

14 MR. RYNO: Okay. How about outside
15 security? Is there going to be a fence
16 around this property?

17 MR. STRONG: No.

18 MR. RYNO: How are you going to protect
19 the people that come in and out of the parking
20 lot at night?

21 MR. STRONG: That's one of the reasons
22 for locating the parking lot primarily where
23 it is. The concept in this kind of housing
24 is to put parking facilities in the most
25 exposed public viewpoint as possible as a

1 basic means of providing security. There is
2 no way the property can be so fenced as to
3 completely preclude anyone from entering in
4 on the property so that the security which
5 may be there outside of the building is
6 going to be one which involves exposure
7 to the public activities on adjoining
8 properties and on the street and properties
9 across the street.

10 MR. RYNO: If there's one thing that
11 old people are susceptible to, it's muggings
12 and attacks.

13 MR. STRONG: Without a doubt.

14 MR. RYNO: Is there any way that this
15 can be made safer on the outside for them?

16 MR. STRONG: I don't know, other than
17 fencing the entire property and even though
18 I suppose someone would figure a way to get
19 over it.

20 MR. RYNO: Some of them are --

21 MR. STRONG: I don't think fencing the
22 side and rear property lines would serve any
23 useful function at all as far as security is
24 concerned. I think it would be of much
25 greater concern if the parking facilities, for

1 example, were located in the rear of the
2 building where this one little open lawn
3 area is going to be because that wouldn't
4 be invisible from the street and from most
5 other properties in the surrounding area and
6 would be a situation in which someone intent
7 on mugging might find good for working. But
8 I think, the exposure of this parking facility --

9 I frankly expect this front parking area
10 to the north of the building to accommodate
11 most of the demand of that building, to be
12 one in which someone loitering on the area
13 is going to become obvious very quickly to
14 passersby on the street, traffic on the
15 street, police passing by, police visually
16 checking that area without great difficulty,
17 or even just passing by on Hamilton Boulevard.
18 I think that will be the major aspect of
19 security that could be provided.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Carl.

21 MR. ABBRUZZESE: Yes. I'd wonder if
22 Mr. Strong in reference to vehicles and
23 parking -- I'd like to get back to the age.
24 You mentioned the ages 55 to 65. What
25 percentage do you anticipate that would be

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buying into this project?

MR. STRONG: They will all be buying.

MR. ABBRUZZESE: In that age group?

MR. STRONG: Excuse me. 55 to 65.

Again, it's speculation, but I would probably not say more than 20 percent and probably the bulk of those being single females.

MR. ABBRUZZESE: Now, are these single females. Would they have an automobile, to your knowledge?

MR. STRONG: Most of them would not.

MR. ABBRUZZESE: Fifty-five to sixty-five. Do I understand also that the two-story building which is the old Hamilton building, is that going to be removed out of that area entirely or demolished?

MR. STRONG: One or the other.

MR. ABBRUZZESE: It is not going to be relocated?

MR. STRONG: No. What's shown, I guess on the engineer's site plan would leave it right where the parking lot is and that's going to be the parking lot.

MR. ABBRUZZESE: It's shown on the site plan?

1 MR. DALTO: That site plan really
2 isn't applicable. That was submitted purely
3 for the area map. The site plan on the left
4 is the site plan, page two of the architect's
5 drawing.

6 MR. ABERUZZESE: Thank you.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Anybody else?
8 Any further questions of the Board?

9 MR. HORNE: Just one. When we were
10 discussing the main entrance, will that be
11 the only entrance as far as people when they
12 are parking to get into the building?

13 MR. STRONG: Yes.

14 MR. HORNE: I question why then the
15 main entrance is so far away from all of the
16 parking? It seems like it's at the wrong end
17 of the building.

18 MR. STRONG: We talked about older
19 people being a little more immobile than our
20 youngsters. Bear in mind that you are
21 talking about a distance from the main entrance
22 to the parking lot of approximately 106 or
23 107 feet. It really is not that great a
24 distance. The main entry location is dictated
25 more in terms of a proper interior arrangement

1 for the building and is relative to standards
2 that the New Jersey Division of Aging has
3 established for senior citizens as well as
4 HUD standards. This puts the entry hall and
5 the elevator shaft midway in the building with
6 relatively short walks down hallways, up
7 stairs or within the building.

8 They considered a much more important
9 consideration not to have extreme hallways
10 inside the building.

11 MR. HORNE: I guess then the other
12 thing is, you say that you don't expect the
13 rear parking lot to be used, but if I was
14 55 or 56 years old, driving my own automobile
15 in inclement weather, I'd be parked right in
16 front of Buy-Rite or someplace else. There
17 might be limited access to the entrance from
18 the rear or the side or both to get from those
19 parking places. In my mind, I can't see
20 anyone parking back there and walking all the
21 way around the front to get in.

22 MR. STRONG: I can see your concern.
23 We don't want to have parking overflow to the
24 businesses that are there now. Parking for
25 them is limited as it is. I think the

1 immobile-type person or simply the invalid-
2 type that might be a resident here, one,
3 is not going to be driving their own vehicle.
4 They are going to be brought to the main
5 entry either by a friend, a vehicle, a taxi
6 or something of that nature. So we are
7 talking about someone who has initially the
8 physical capacity to drive a vehicle to begin
9 with.

10 The distances, I think, are reasonable
11 and, you know, are worked out in terms of
12 this site and are the best suited overall
13 design of the site and the building.

14 MR. HORNE: I just have one more
15 question. The way this traffic flow is laid
16 out, if I was to come in that entrance and
17 drive to the main entrance to allow someone
18 else to exit my car and go into the building
19 and then have to go get a parking place, I
20 would have to exit back on Hamilton Boulevard
21 and come back in again.

22 MR. STRONG: You make a left-hand turn
23 back in.

24 MR. HORNE: If I was one of those
25 older senior ladies -- I guess on the plan

1 the driveway on the southerly side of the
2 building can be widened sufficiently to make
3 both an entrance and exit so that the area
4 to the front would be reversed and, therefore,
5 when the person was dropped off, they could
6 go right on and park without having to enter
7 and exit again on Hamilton Boulevard.

8 MR. STRONG: I think it could be.

9 MR. HORNE: If that kind of thing can
10 be addressed during the site plan, you may
11 want to take a look at it before you bring
12 it back.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: We can raise the point
14 not dwell on it.

15 MR. LAFERRARA: I feel the same way.
16 I feel that the front should be enough for
17 two cars, one going in either direction.

18 MR. STRONG: There is no question
19 there is enough room to make the driveway
20 across in front of the building two
21 directional. For that to work, however, the
22 southerly driveway would also have to be
23 two directional. Now, if that two directional
24 driveway is to stop at that point, that might
25 cause some confusion, but probably it could

1 be satisfactorily controlled by signs, Do
2 Not Enter signs, that kind of thing to keep
3 the balance of that driveway a one way exit.
4 I think, perhaps, when Mr. Ney testifies,
5 he probably will discuss that.

6 MR. GRAF: We're talking to the wrong
7 man.

8 MR. DALTO: Mr. Ney is going to be
9 on next.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Anything other than --

11 MR. ABERUZZESE: Mr. Strong, you have
12 indicated that this would be basically a
13 moderate-income housing project. What income
14 would an individual need in order to buy one
15 of these apartments?

16 MR. STRONG: Well, the general
17 proposition is that most people that buy into
18 this type unit buy the unit outright and as
19 a result, will not have any carrying costs of
20 the unit itself. They will buy it out of the
21 equity that they will gain from the sale of
22 their existing dwelling. They will have
23 sufficient equity to purchase the unit and,
24 hopefully, have something in the neighborhood
25 of \$10,000 to \$20,000 residual equity out of

1 that fund for investment purposes. So that
2 the income required to carry this would be a
3 product, really of carrying costs of the unit
4 itself which will be the maintenance cut on
5 the building, taxes on their individual unit,
6 their share of utility costs of it. Our
7 architect is refining those figures at the
8 moment. I can't give you a figure, but off
9 the top of my head, something in the order
10 of a few thousand dollars a year I think will
11 be the maximum that's required to carry the
12 unit once it is purchased.

13 MR. ABBRUZZESE: I have one other
14 question. From what I understand, what you
15 are saying then, if a senior citizen does
16 not have the financial means he cannot apply
17 here?

18 MR. STRONG: That's true of anything
19 that anyone wants to buy. It's not a
20 subsidized project.

21 MR. ABBRUZZESE: What percentage of
22 those individuals in this community that are
23 in this category that do not have the
24 financial outlay?

25 MR. STRONG: The vast minority of

1 senior citizens would fall into that category
2 of not being able to move into the structure.
3 We have basically a moderate income
4 community in South Plainfield, one that's
5 consistent moderate income. We have a home
6 ownership pattern at the moment and among
7 senior citizens it is something like 95
8 percent. Home ownership, for the most part,
9 is in excess of 20 to 30 percent and most
10 of these people are free and clear of mortgages
11 unless there are additional problems along
12 the line. At least substantial quantities
13 of these are going to be free and clear and
14 we have an average house value in the community
15 today which is approximately \$20,000 in excess
16 of what the purchase price will be for these
17 units.

18 The combination of those circumstances
19 should mean that the vast majority of senior
20 citizens in South Plainfield will be able to
21 afford, to move into a project such as this.

22 MR. RYNO: Mr. Dalto, will someone be
23 testifying as to how these homes are to be
24 sold and the financing involved with the
25 actual sale of the units, what they're going

1 to be sold for, whether they're going to be
2 rented, only sold, whether they're going to
3 be sold to one person or whether they can be
4 sold to two or three people or --

5 MR. DALTO: I thought I said in my
6 introductory remarks that these will be
7 marketed --

8 MR. RYNO: That was a long time ago.

9 MR. DALTO: These will be marketed on
10 the condominium concept which means they
11 will be sold fee-simple. The units will be
12 owned individually by whomever single persons,
13 couples, anyone over 55 years old. The unit
14 owner will, in conjunction with the unit,
15 have a percentage interest in the overall,
16 what we call the common elements. The common
17 elements being the land, the exterior
18 structure of the building, the parking
19 facilities, and throughout the entire structure.

20 MS. GANUN: Mr. Dalto, once these
21 residences have been sold the first time and
22 the first owner dies, what becomes of that
23 residence? Does it become part of his estate
24 to be sold by the people?

25 MR. DALTO: Just as any home, as any

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other piece of real estate would be.

MS. GANUN: Do we have a guarantee that this residence would be sold to another senior citizen?

MR. DALTO: That will be in the Master Deed. The Master Deed will restrict it. The entire theory of the complex is the fact that they cannot be sold if any individual is under 55 years of age.

MS. GANUN: It is then up to the estate to deal with the residence?

MR. DALTO: That's right.

MR. RYNO: I would ask the obvious question. What happens if the units aren't sold? Are you going to go to a different form of financing?

MR. DALTO: No.

MR. RYNO: Will you rent instead of selling?

MR. DALTO: Each property owner could rent, if they are not sold or the unit owner wishes to rent it to someone else.

MR. RYNO: What in the restriction would say if the occasion should come up, that a person 55 --

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MR. DALTO: The restriction will be that it must be sold to someone over 55.

MR. ABBRUZZESE: How about renting?

MR. DALTO: That would be a similar restriction.

MR. RYNO: That's what I am asking and that's the problem. I mean the Town of South Plainfield would rent them or someone else to put in there --

MR. DALTO: No.

MR. RYNO: Okay.

MR. DALTO: That restriction would carry with whomever uses the facility.

MR. RYNO: It is a concern by a lot of people.

MR. DALTO: I understand. I really hadn't thought about it before, but I can understand it being a concern.

MR. RYNO: It would be a concern as to who has the final control.

MR. DALTO: I think it would violate the concept. The reason they're going there is to get away from or to be in conjunction with harmonious elements and, I think the reason we established the restriction of 55 is

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to try to give that harmony.

MR. LAFERRARA: Could it be conceivable that an individual can own it and pass away and in his Will will that to someone else in that family over 55 or 60? Could it conceivably be done not under 55, but --

MR. LANE: Mr. Dalto, isn't it possible under these situations that a person under age 55 could own it, but he could not be a tenant?

MR. DALTO: He can't use it and the estate will own it at least temporarily. The residents cannot be less than 55 or if it is husband and wife, one of them has to be over 55.

MR. LAFERRARA: But the reason --

MR. LANE: You can have an owner that leases and you can have one that owns four units, resides in one and leases the other three, but each resident of each one of those four units has to be over 55.

MR. HAGER: Is there going to be any restriction on visitors, visitation? Is it possible that someone can come and stay for a month?

1 MR. DALTO: I dont' know that that has
2 been detailed at the moment.

3 MR. HAGER: I know that in some
4 retirement communities there are such
5 restrictions placed upon family visitors,
6 especially young children. There is nothing
7 like that here thus far?

8 MR. DALTO: We have not drawn the
9 Master Deed. I would assume we would do that
10 at the time the site plan was considered if
11 it is considered in the Master Deed. It is
12 premature at this stage of the application.

13 MR. HAGER: I could envision having
14 someone come and stay for a year. I take it
15 the Board's interested.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: We will take them into
17 consideration and obviously we will address
18 them at the proper time.

19 MR. HAGER: Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any questions
21 from the audience?

22 MR. ABBRUZZESE: I have one more
23 question. In the purchase of this unit, what
24 guarantees or warranties does the buyer have
25 as far as faulty equipment or heating or

1 electrical problems?

2 MR. DALTO: Well, there is currently
3 in the State of New Jersey a requirement
4 that each property owner of a new dwelling
5 receive a ten-year warranty which at various
6 stages is guaranteed by different elements.
7 The first year and second year you are pretty
8 much restricted to the structural elements
9 and the integrity of the building is backed
10 by a performance guarantee. It is a declining
11 warranty so that during the remainder of
12 the ten-year period, it declines gradually,
13 but it is always available and it is paid
14 for by the builder.

15 MR. ABRUZZESE: Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Any more questions?

17 MR. LAFERRARA: One more. I don't
18 see it, but on the engineer's plan what
19 happened to the refuse dumpster?

20 MR. STRONG: I don't think that's
21 really on the architect's plan.

22 MR. GRAF: That's covered by the
23 ordinance.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: There does not seem to
25 be any other questions.

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MR. ABBRUZZESE: Approximately how high will this building be?

MR. STRONG: 56 feet, roughly.

MR. DALTO: I would like to present Mr. Ney to the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

H E N R Y J . N E Y, sworn.

MR. NEY: Henry J. Ney, 20 Gibson Place, Freehold, New Jersey, traffic engineer.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Board will accept his qualifications. He has been before us before.

DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. DALTO:

Q Mr. Ney, have you studied this particular project?

A Yes.

Q For what purpose?

A To review, basically, the proposed access, the impact of the project on the surrounding street system and the adequacy of the off-street parking.

Q Can you describe, briefly, those elements of the site and the area which are pertinent to your testimony?

A The surrounding area, in terms of land use, has been very adequately described by Mr. Strong. The property is

1 in a mixed residential and commercial area. From my
2 viewpoint, the commercial aspects are important because
3 every analysis of senior citizen high-rise projects and
4 projects of similar dimensions have shown that pedestrian
5 activity is an important consideration. In terms of the
6 street system, Hamilton Boulevard is a two lane, 30 foot
7 roadway. Immediately adjacent to the frontage of the side,
8 parking is prohibited. There is a bus stop immediately
9 adjacent to the frontage of the site. It intersects
10 Hamilton Boulevard from the east, approximately opposite
11 the exit driveway is South Plainfield Avenue which is a 36
12 foot wide roadway and has parking prohibited along the north
13 site. Traffic is controlled at that point by a stop sign
14 facing South Plainfield Avenue. Church Street is a
15 street connecting Hamilton Boulevard with Lakeview which
16 is the -- which is basically the interconnection to the
17 extension of Hamilton Boulevard with the construction of
18 the overpass over the Lehigh Valley Railroad. The speed
19 limit on these roadways is all 25 miles per hour. There
20 is an adjacent traffic signal on Front Street off of South
21 Plainfield approximately one block from the site. The site
22 is in the downtown area, the Central Business area that was
23 described by Mr. Strong. In terms of traffic volume, a
24 series of counts that we have done on Hamilton Boulevard in
25 this area is between five to six thousand vehicles per day.

1 Lakeview Avenue carries somewhere between 13,000 and 15,000
2 vehicles per day depending on if the traffic count is taken
3 north or south of Church Street. Obviously, there will be
4 a substantial drop in traffic on Hamilton Boulevard with the
5 construction of Lakeview Avenue and the overpass over the
6 Lehigh Valley Railroad. In terms of the impact of this site,
7 in terms of traffic, our firm has done studies of a
8 considerable number of senior citizens complexes. I will
9 name some of them because they involve a range of units.
10 We've done studies of Leisure Village; Leisure Knolls;
11 Leisure Village, which is in Manchester; Crestwood Village,
12 which is in Manchester Township; Greenbriar, which is
13 located in Bricktown; Shadow Lake Village, which is a fairly
14 exclusive senior citizen retirement community; and, Covered
15 Bridge, which is in Monmouth County. In addition, those
16 are all isolated, basically, duplex or single-family-type
17 units, located in relatively suburban areas which provide
18 bus service.

19 In addition, we have studied the classic subsidized
20 senior citizen high-rise complex in terms of traffic demands,
21 and those have been located throughout this State, principally,
22 in Monmouth and Middlesex and Ocean Counties.

23 Finally, we have looked at three facilities that are
24 non-subsidized mid-rise and high-rise facilities for senior
25 citizens. All age restrictions are generally between 55 and

1 62 years old. One facility was, in Pitman, New Jersey, that
2 has over 200 units. One facility was in Pennsylvania, just
3 outside of Philadelphia and it had over 300 units, and
4 another facility was in Hightstown which is actually a
5 two-story garden apartment-type complex and that has, I
6 believe, just under 200 units. In all of the facilities
7 that are the high-rise or that are the non-subsidized units,
8 we have also done in addition to traffic counting programs
9 parking analysis. As a matter of fact, the one in
10 Pennsylvania, we ran parking analysis for a full week.
11 So that we've looked at both the traffic impacts as well
12 as the parking requirements for developments of this type.
13 In terms of the traffic impact, I have a report which I am
14 sure Mr. Dalto will make available to you, but we detailed
15 on an hour-by-hour basis the activity from a 100 unit
16 senior citizen mid-rise structure. In terms of traffic
17 impact, senior citizens have, basically, a discretionary
18 ability to leave a project when they so desire. We find
19 that the traffic peak hours when most activity occurs is
20 generally between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. In terms of
21 vehicular activity, the maximum projected for this site
22 based on the studies we have done is 41 trips. That's 21
23 vehicles that would enter the site and 20 that would leave
24 it and that would occur between 11:00 and 12:00 p.m. In
25 terms of traffic activity, the activity is relatively light

1 varying from a low of three trips between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m.
2 to a high of 41 that I just indicated.

3 Basically, we're talking of a total of 150 trips in
4 and 150 trips out and one and a half trips per unit. These
5 trips would include service vehicles and employees because
6 when counting vehicles entering and leaving a site, you
7 can't tell whether it is a senior citizen or someone who
8 resides there or someone that's coming to the site for
9 maintenance purposes. On Saturday, the volume of traffic
10 would actually drop, somewhere around 135 inbound trips
11 and 135 outbound trips. On Sunday it is somewhat lower,
12 127 inbound trips and 127 outbound trips.

13 One of the other things that we have done is looked
14 at the facilities on holidays where you would anticipate
15 having more parking activity and traffic activity than you
16 would have during a typical weekday or weekend. We have
17 looked at Mother's Day. We have looked at Easter and we have
18 looked at Christmas. Basically, I would concur just based
19 on my observations because I am the only one in the firm
20 who's going out on those days. The predominance of people
21 that reside in these developments are women, older women,
22 obviously in their 70's and above and we find that in
23 facilities during holidays that you don't have particularly
24 a heavier traffic volume, you don't have heavy parking
25 demands. What happens is any visitor that comes to pick up

1 his mother or father, takes them home to their house for
2 one of the holidays, either Christmas or Easter, and they
3 celebrate the holiday that way. The units, as was mentioned
4 by one of the Board members, are not really designed for
5 entertainment. You don't generate, even on those particular
6 periods, a significant amount of parking demand and traffic
7 activity as you would anticipate. It is somewhat of a
8 disappointment when you go to look at it and expect to see
9 a lot of activity on say, Mother's Day, but you really
10 don't have it.

11 In terms of the overall site plan, I recognize that
12 this proceeding is really to address the variance issues
13 and whether the traffic impact and overall parking is
14 adequate enough to satisfy what is termed a negative
15 criteria, but I looked at the site plan and I think it is,
16 basically, well laid out. The one-way system I think --
17 obviously, adjustments can be made to provide a pick up
18 area. I don't think a two way aisle might be possible
19 to the rear of the building because of the way it is laid
20 out without significantly altering the structure of the
21 front yard setback, but modifications can be made and,
22 again, in my observations, I have not seen a lot of drop
23 off of people with a lot of bundles and a lot of bags
24 because people of this age group, basically, don't shop
25 the same way somebody who has four kids at home shops.

1 They don't come in with 16 bags and that type of thing. As
2 a matter of fact, in better weather, one of the things we
3 noticed is a significant increase of pedestrian traffic.
4 One of the sites we studied was right off a four lane divided
5 state highway and it was kind of frightening watching older
6 people walking on the shoulder. Fortunately, in this area
7 we have sidewalks and we have areas that pedestrians can
8 shop without walking in the street. In terms of the parking
9 supply, the studies that I have done show for similar
10 facilities high-rise buildings with an age restrictions and
11 non-subsidized, parking density, actual accumulation is
12 between .33 and .42 spaces per unit. For a facility like
13 this, that would be 33 to 42. I am giving maximum numbers,
14 obviously, the numbers are during the course of the day.

15 In addition, one of the things that I looked at was
16 the number of health care facilities that we studied. These
17 are called life care centers where you actually have a
18 high-rise or mid-rise residence area and associated with
19 that complex is a nursing facility and more like almost a
20 hospital facility. There are a number of them in this State
21 as well as Pennsylvania. These are all non-subsidized and,
22 as a matter of fact, of the ones we worked on are quite
23 expensive to the tune of annual maintenance of some 10 to
24 15 thousand dollars. This is really not the aim for lower
25 or moderate income persons and we found in those facilities,

1 even with the medical care where you have for 102 beds,
2 for example, upwards of about 35 employees, sometimes as
3 many as 37 employees, on-site parking ratios and the
4 maximum we found was .6. That was a full week's study.
5 So that if you were to make the same analogy on this it
6 would have to be a requirement of 60 spaces, but we don't
7 obviously have the same analogy. We don't have a medical
8 facility, but a combination used that we looked at, where
9 it was impossible to differentiate medical and permanent,
10 but, again, it gives a feel for the parking demands. You
11 know, I think some of this can be more appropriately
12 addressed by Mr. Strong and they have been, but obviously,
13 the vehicle ownership drops considerably for persons who
14 are looking for the type of housing in a high-rise area
15 where there is an environment of persons of the similar age
16 as compared to communities such as Leisure Village or
17 Leisure Knolls where every family generally does have a car
18 if not a car and a half. So that in terms of the parking,
19 applying the studies that we looked at, the mid-rise
20 apartment and the high-rise apartment, the .42 would indicate
21 42 spaces as a maximum demand or some 50 to the site. If
22 you look at the worst situation that we can and it would be
23 the medical facility associated with it, even that is only
24 .6 which is 60 spaces. That design is well within the
25 parameters of being able to contain the amount of parking

1 that's needed on the site. One thing again that might be
2 considered in the site plan is the possibility of looking
3 at the nine foot stall. I don't know if that is a variance.
4 I haven't looked at your ordinance.

5 MR. GRAF: No, it isn't.

6 MR. NEY: The stalls on the site are
7 ten feet wide and twenty foot deep. A nine
8 foot stall would give you somewhere between
9 55 and 60 spaces without making any
10 significant modifications to the plan, without
11 eliminating any significant amount of green
12 area. So that that is one way to approach
13 the parking situation. If it does concern
14 the Board, at site plan time, in terms of
15 the traffic count that we did, I looked at
16 the intersection, the area, and it can very
17 easily sustain the additional traffic that
18 would be generated by this development
19 because it is, in fact, so light. When you
20 are talking about 21 outbound vehicles in a
21 period of one hour, that's relatively
22 insignificant compared to the traffic volumes
23 that are there. We are at an intersection,
24 we are at an area where speeds are low and
25 vehicles can be accommodated. I've made some

1 recommendations with regard to signs within
2 the site, it's paved area, and again, it
3 would be addressed more appropriate at site
4 plan time and more importantly, I feel is
5 the placing of a painted crosswalk between
6 the areas to the west side of Hamilton
7 Boulevard and the Senior Citizen Center
8 which is located on the northwest corner of
9 Hamilton Boulevard and Plainfield Avenue.
10 A crosswalk would be warranted there to begin
11 with because it is an area of pedestrian
12 activity, but if this project is approved,
13 certainly a crosswalk should be painted in
14 that area.

15 Q Specifically, with respect to internal
16 circulation, have you made a study of the plan for that
17 purpose and the results of that study?

18 A Yes, I did. The plan envisions a one-way
19 circulation pattern. I believe the one-way is well
20 conceived because to introduce two-way traffic opposite
21 the intersection of Hamilton Boulevard I think would be
22 potentially a problem. The inbound driveways at that point
23 especially with the location of the building at the
24 northwest corner could potentially create on-site problems.
25 With the one way outbound movement, a motorist exiting

1 from the building has excellent sight distance both of
2 traffic on Plainfield Avenue as well as Hamilton Boulevard.
3 The widths are well reviewed within the plan. It is for a
4 45 degree angle and a parking minimum width of 12 feet is
5 recommended. The site plan has a minimum width of 15 feet
6 and in most cases is greater than that. The 15 feet is
7 to the rear of the site and again that is to be considered
8 at site plan time. I suggest that the radius could be
9 improved to aid in turning vehicles circulating to the
10 rear of the building, but, basically, the site plan provides,
11 I think, an appropriate one way circulation. I personally
12 don't see a problem with the parking and unparking of
13 vehicles relative to deliveries of persons to the front door
14 or picking up someone at the front door. That can be
15 handled simply by putting in an area where someone can pull
16 off the site and wait for somebody else to pick someone up
17 or drop them off.

18 Q Based upon your traffic counts and your
19 analysis of the site, have you reached any conclusions
20 concerning traffic with respect to this particular project?

21 A Yes.

22 Q And what are those conclusions?

23 A With regard to the traffic generation from the
24 facilities, I have concluded: Impact from the proposed
25 development is minimal and will not raise what is termed the

1 levels of service. What that basically means is the traffic
2 conditions would basically be the same. The volume of
3 traffic would not be such to change the conditions of the
4 intersection. With regard to the site plan, it is, I
5 believe, the site plan provides for adequate internal
6 circulation, obviously, it is a prime site plan. Specific
7 adjustments can be made at site plan time relative to
8 details, but the basic concept I think is a good one. I
9 think the building is well suited in relationship to the
10 shape of the property itself. I think the parking is
11 sufficient to insure that you will not have a demand on any
12 of the adjacent lots mentioned by Mr. Strong. I think an
13 important consideration from a traffic standpoint is the
14 fact that the facility is within walking distance to
15 commercial areas which would minimize vehicular activity
16 and, finally, I think another important consideration, at
17 least from the traffic and the negative aspects of this
18 application, is that commercial development of a property,
19 a portion of which is zoned commercial, would certainly
20 result in equal if not greater traffic activity at this
21 location. It will obviously create demand for off-street
22 parking as well.

23 Q Mr. Ney, have you prepared a written report
24 comprising your testimony here this evening?

25 A Yes, I have.

1 Q Does that written report contain also some
2 of the recommendations you indicated you had with respect
3 to the site plan details for this project?

4 A Yes, it does.

5 Q Is this a copy of the report that you have
6 prepared?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 Q I would like to submit four copies to the
9 Board.

10 (Traffic study received and marked
11 Applicant's Exhibit A-2 for Identification.)

12 Q During your testimony, Mr. Ney, you indicated
13 that the parking stalls that have been provided are ten
14 by twenty?

15 A Yes.

16 Q The ordinance does provide for nine by
17 twenty by reallocating the parking. Would there be an
18 increase in the number of stalls that could be obtained?

19 A Yes, I looked at the provisions for the nine foot
20 stalls and changes without changing basically any of the
21 schematics until then. The width of the land and the length
22 of the areas for parking changes the number from 50 to 56.

23 Q Did you evaluate the plan with respect to
24 access for emergency vehicles?

25 A Yes, I did.

1 Q Could you tell us the results of your evaluation?

2 A Basically, the plan provides for initial circulation
3 from emergency vehicles with the one exception on I mentioned
4 the radius in the rear of the building which would be, I
5 guess, the northwest corner of the parking area. That
6 should be increased. This can be done by simply cutting
7 back the island. With that exception, the plan does provide
8 for emergency vehicles being able to circulate within the
9 site itself.

10 MR. DALTO: I have no further questions
11 of Mr. Ney.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Have you any comments on
13 a one way design basically in the opposite
14 direction?

15 MR. NEY: Basically the whole world moves
16 counterclockwise. You would have a hard time
17 orienting people to a reversal of the traffic
18 flow. You would find basically people would
19 flow in a counterclockwise direction. I think
20 the other concern I had mostly was the fact
21 that the predominant flow of traffic will not
22 make a right turn from Plainfield Avenue onto
23 Hamilton. It will be a left turn. I am a
24 little concerned that anybody just going
25 straight across has to cross the major flow of

1 traffic. I also considered the possibility
2 of shifting the building slightly to provide
3 a two way flow and didn't like the way it
4 would line up with the existing South
5 Plainfield Avenue.

6 MR. RYNO: I visited the high-rise
7 senior citizens over on Park Avenue one day,
8 and I noticed there that they have numbers
9 in their parking areas. Now, is it customary
10 to assign the residents a number?

11 MR. NEY: I have seen it done both
12 ways. For example, there is a high-rise
13 in Keyport, the name escapes me, it is right
14 off of Route 36, which has numbered spaces.
15 They actually correspond to people who have
16 vehicles within the facility itself. They're
17 numbered there. Their ratio is about a half
18 per unit in that particular facility, but
19 you still have the spaces numbered.

20 MR. RYNO: In our parking lot at one
21 time we had problems because the City had
22 so many cars. We didn't have spaces and
23 someone came up with a suggestion that a car
24 like a Volkswagen really didn't need nine
25 feet. So, they reduced that and, by assigning

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people numbers, they were able to pick up a substantial number of parking spaces.

MR. NEY: Well, compact car spaces are only seven and a half feet and right now compact cars are about 40 to 60 percent, depending on where you look, of the total number of vehicles on the road. The parking standards haven't caught up to that change. So you would get a lot more assigned spaces if you put compacts in.

MR. RYNO: You could assign the people numbers.

MR. NEY: To people who have units, yes, you could do that, to people who have vehicles.

MR. RYNO: Would that be in violation, John?

MR. GRAF: We have some already where we put compact cars, but in my personal opinion, most senior citizens are going to have big cars.

MR. NEY: And probably older ones too.

MR. GRAF: That's right.

MR. LANE: Mr. Ney, the units -- non-subsidized units in Pitman, New Jersey and

1 Philadelphia, or outside of Philadelphia,
2 Pennsylvania, and in Hightstown, are they
3 all condominium-type units, do you know that?

4 MR. NEY: I don't know. I know the
5 one, I believe, the one in Pennsylvania is
6 a condominium unit. We worked on it, and
7 the reason we studied that one, we are putting
8 a similar one in Voorhees Township, down in
9 South Jersey. Those were sold. They were
10 condominium units. There was a very high
11 maintenance fee. That, besides the high
12 maintenance fee, is almost like high-rise
13 New York living but I am not sure about
14 Hightstown and Pitman.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you know how many
16 parking units with regard --

17 MR. DALTO: I believe Mr. Strong has
18 an answer to your specific question.

19 MR. STRONG: The Meadow Lakes project
20 in Hightstown is condominium units.

21 MR. LANE: So the only one we don't
22 know is the one in Pitman. Do you know how
23 many units, parking units, were provided in
24 Pitman?

25 MR. NEY: Yes, Pitman had in the range

1 of, approximately, a third, .33, and it wasn't
2 enough. It wasn't enough because, again, the
3 Pitman facility, that really needed about .5.
4 People were parked partially on the street
5 there, so the lot was never full. I noticed
6 vehicles parked when the study was done on
7 Pitman.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you know of any units
9 in Philadelphia that were .6, .65 to be exact?

10 MR. LANE: In other words, --

11 MR. NEY: That was the medical facility
12 associated with it.

13 MR. LANE: Is that the one you testified
14 to in Hightstown? How many parking --

15 MR. NEY: I don't know. I have it in
16 the files, but I don't know offhand.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Any more questions?
18 Any questions from the audience?

19 Looking at the time --

20 MR. DALTO: Would you like me to
21 defer my witness until the 23rd? In the
22 interim there will be revisions to the plan
23 based on some of the comments we have heard
24 this evening. We will submit them to the
25 Board in the interim.

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Does the Board want Mr. Strong to return?

THE CHAIRMAN: If it is not too inconvenient, I would like to go through his testimony again, but I think it was quite detailed.

MR. LANE: We might even attempt to make the provision to questions that the Board has so that they can get them done first. Then you can proceed with your next witness. We would also like to see Mr. Cariste here.

THE CHAIRMAN: This meeting is adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, THOMAS CICCARELLI, a Shorthand Reporter, certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes, taken on the date and place hereinbefore set forth.



THOMAS CICCARELLI
Shorthand Reporter