

**Upper Merion Township Planning Commission  
Regularly Scheduled Meeting for February 8th, 2023**

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled meeting on February 8th, 2023, in-person in the Henderson Room, located in the Township Building, and via Zoom. The meeting information was fully advertised and a meeting agenda placed on the township website. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Matt Popek, Chair  
Mark McKee, Vice-Chair  
Martin Trumpler, Secretary  
Jaquelin Camp  
Kenneth Brown  
William Jenaway, Board Liaison  
Patrick Foley, on behalf of Leanna Colubriale, Township Engineer (Remington & Vernick)  
Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager

**ABSENT:**

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Minutes for October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting had previously been distributed. Mr. McKee made a motion to adopt the minutes with minor adjustments that need to be made, with Mr. Brown seconding. The motion carried 5-0.

**631 and 650 Park Avenue – Preliminary/ Final Land Development**

*Construction of a proposed 4 story research & development building at 650 Park Ave and a structured parking garage at 631 Park Ave as well as associated site improvements on the two parcels.*

Mr. Hamaday introduced the applicant, Mr. Fazio, and his team. The applicant went to last week's work session of the township Board of Supervisors and received approval for conditional use. The applicant is also on the BOS agenda for February 9<sup>th</sup> to receive approval for their preliminary/final plan. The applicant has a total of 5 waivers being requested and is prepared to go over everything today.

Mr. Fazio, counsel for Brandywine Real Estate, introduced his team and gave a brief description of the project. In 2019 Brandywine received approval to construct a 100,000 sq. ft. office building. However, the project was suspended due to the pandemic. Now they are back and want to incorporate the property at 631 Park Ave into the office project application as a parking structure. With the addition of the 100,000 sq. ft office building that was approved but never constructed, the new total square footage of the proposal would come to 211,060. Mr. Fazio stated they received Zoning Hearing Board approval for a variance and received conditional use approval for the height of 60 feet for both buildings.

Mr. McKee asked if there will be a raised walkway connecting the parking garage to the new building. Mr. Fazio stated that the original proposal was to have a raised walkway, but after talking with staff they decided not to do a raised walkway. Mr. Popek asked if it will be heavily painted, since it's not going to be raised. Mr. Fazio answered that it will be heavily painted and identifiable to traffic approaching. Mr. Fazio confirmed that there will be signs for the pedestrian walkway.

Mr. Fazio stated that the proposed garage is not for public use but only for the employees of the office building. Mr. McKee stated that they have already started to demolish the old buildings that are currently at the site and asked if they plan on regrading when they are finished. Mr. Fazio stated they will be regarding

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the area where the old building was but plan on keeping the old parking spots and repainting them. Mr. McKee asked if there are any concerns about asbestos when demolishing the old building. Mr. Fazio stated they aren't concerned about any asbestos. Mr. Jenaway stated that 631 Park Ave was completely renovated in the early 90s so there won't be an asbestos issue.

Ms. Camp asked about how accessible parking would be accommodated. Mr. Fazio explained that the code requires 13 spaces, and they have 17. They spoke with the township zoning officer and township solicitor, and they confirmed that the placement of parking spaces complies.

Mr. Trumpler asked if they would have any charging stations for vehicles. Mr. Fazio explained they plan on having 50 charging stations, mostly in the parking garage, and they also plan on having a rooftop solar station. Mr. Jenaway commented on an article about not allowing charging stations to be inside parking garages. Ms. Camp asked if they planned on having Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations in the garage. Ms. Hilinski, from Brandywine, stated that Brandywine has charging stations at another office structure, and she will have to look to see what charging stations are there, but they have not had a discussion yet about their preferences.

Mr. Popek asked if they will have bike parking available. Ms. Hilinski explained that they plan on having a bike rack in the garage itself as well as some storage at 650 Park Avenue closest to the southern entrance. Mr. McKee asked if they have an estimate for the number of employees they will have coming in. Ms. Hilinski stated that currently it is approximately 450, but that this building is the company's second headquarters and more of an expansion from the first headquarters located in California.

Mr. Foley asked if they could explain how they address stormwater management. He also asked if they could show the pedestrian movement from the garage to the building and what entrance in the building they plan on using. The project engineer explained that they plan on maintaining and slightly reconfiguring the trees along First Ave. They are going to preserve the existing trees and vegetation along the corner. They will have a sidewalk that runs in between the corner and side of the building. They plan on putting a patio area in between the sidewalk and building. They will have sidewalks along the building that will connect to doors and sidewalks crossing over to the parking garage.

Mr. Popek asked if this patio area will be private or open to the public. Mr. Brown, the project engineer, explained that it will be private, and there will be a fence that runs along the outside perimeter of the sidewalk. Ms. Hilinski explained that they think most people will enter the building through the southern-most part, because it is closest to the garage. They plan on having employee amenities in that area like a training room and dining area.

Mr. Brown, the project engineer described the waivers being requested, starting with 650 Park Ave:

- Waiver from section 145-24 B. (1), to allow parking stall for physical handicap to be less than the minimum required width by 19 ½ depth, but will comply with the ADA requirements with respect to the ADA stalls.
- Waiver for 145-20 C. (1) not to construct the concrete curb and sidewalk.
- Waiver from section 145-20 C. (2) not to provide a sidewalk along deciduous trees.
- Waiver for 145-24.1 H, not to provide required building plantings adjacent to the proposed structure.
- Waiver for section 140B-17 A. (2) to allow grading within 5 feet of the property line.

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Mr. Popek asked if the parking stalls waiver was for 650 Park Ave. and not 631 Park Ave. The applicant stated that to be true. They have a variance from the zoning board for the parking stalls on 631 Park Ave. Mr. Popek asked if the reason they are asking for the waiver for the parking stalls was because if they were the normal required size in the ordinance, they wouldn't be able to fit in all the required number. Mr. Fazio answered no, that all the required parking at 650 would be accessible and there were no constraints. They size ADA stalls in accordance with ADA regulations. Instead of having 9 ½ ft. x 19 ft. stalls, they have 8 ft. stalls with an adjacent 8 ft. stripe area. This complies with ADA requirements but does not comply with the township ordinance.

Mr. McKee asked if they received zoning relief for the fence they are installing. Mr. Fazio stated that they did get relief for the fence in the front yard: it will be a 6 ft fence. The fence around the dumpster will be 10 feet tall.

Mr. Brown reviewed the waivers for 631 Park Avenue:

- Waiver from section 145-24 A. (1) to allow parking stall dimensions to be less than the minimum requirement of 9 ½ ft. x 19ft.
- A waiver for 145-24.1 H, not to provide required building plantings adjacent to the parking garage.
- A waiver from section 145-20 C. (1) not to construct the concrete curb and sidewalk. There will be sidewalk halfway down the frontage, but there are no other properties adjacent that need a sidewalk.

Ms. Camp wanted to make sure that if a future development came in for the property next door, they would be able to connect their sidewalks with the sidewalks this project is proposing. Mr. Brown confirmed that future development could connect at the point where the sidewalks end. There was an open discussion about pedestrian traffic and sidewalk connection to the road.

Mr. McKee asked if the 5-story parking garage will have elevators and stairs. Ms. Hilinski confirmed there will be one elevator bank along with stairs. Mr. Hamaday updated the planning commission on the township traffic engineer review, stating that there were two issues: one being that the applicant used existing data for the traffic, and second, that as a condition of recommending approval, if something happens in the future with traffic from this development, they need to provide a traffic impact fee for future improvements, if necessary.

Ms. Camp made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors. The motion was seconded by Mr. Trumpler, and all were in favor.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no other business to discuss, Mr. Trumpler moved to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Brown seconding and all in favor at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Martin Trumpler, Secretary