

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 25, 2016
—MINUTES—

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Vice Chairwoman Casamento called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Courtroom, 100 Commons Way, Bridgewater, New Jersey.

2. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act N.J.S.A. 10:4-6. On January 13, 2016, proper notice was sent to the Courier Newspaper and the Star-Ledger and filed with the Clerk at the Township of Bridgewater and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building. Please be aware of the Planning Board policy for public hearings: no new applications will be heard after 10:00 pm and no new testimony will be taken after 10:15 pm. Hearing Assistance is available upon request. Accommodation will be made for individuals with a disability, pursuant to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), provided the individual with the disability provides 48 hours advance notice to the Planning Department Secretary before the public meeting.” However, if the individual should require special equipment or services, such as a CART transcriber, seven days advance notice, excluding weekends and holidays, may be necessary.

3. SALUTE TO FLAG:

There was salute to the flag.

4. ROLL CALL:

Stephen Rodzinak – present
James Franco – absent
Chairman Ron Charles – absent
Councilwoman Christine Henderson-Rose – present
Tricia Casamento – present

Mayor Dan Hayes – absent
Evan Lerner – present
Urvin Pandya, Alt. #1 – present
Debra Albanese, Alt. #2 – present

Others present: Attorney Tom Molica for Board Attorney Thomas Collins, Board Engineer David Battaglia, Board Planner Scarlett Doyle, and Planning Division Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

5. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

June 14, 2016, Regular Meeting
June 27, 2016, Regular Meeting

The foregoing minutes will be presented for Board consideration when completed. No action was taken

6. MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS:

No Resolutions were pending for Board action

LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS:

I & L ENTERPRISES – 1940 Route 22 East

Block 382 Lots 4

#16-003-PB, Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan - The Learning Experience

Attorney Francis P. Linnus was present to represent the applicant. Mr. Linnus reviewed the proposed application and noted that there were some revisions to the plans since they were last in front of the Board on May 10th.

Matthew Jarmel, AIA, architect for the applicant was previously sworn in for testimony. Mr. Jarmel stated that he met with the Township's Fire Official to discuss his comments and the concerns that that Board had at the previous meeting. He noted that the Board had expressed concern about where the children and caregivers would be safely taken in the event of an emergency. Mr. Jarmel submitted an Exhibit that was marked into evidence as follows:

A-8 7/25/16 Email from Karl McAleer, Fire Official dated 5/23/16

A-9 7/25/16 Revised Architectural Space Plan

Mr. Jarmel noted that he discussed with the Fire Official the areas that would be used for refuge for the children and care givers in the event of an emergency and provided testimony as follows. The primary area of refuge would be the playground. There is secondary area on the lawn area that is outside of the flood area in the rear of the building that is not wooded that can be used if needed for the children and staff to access. The facility in order to get its license would require approval from the state for all its operational and safety procedures.

The Board also expressed concern on how fire trucks will access the building in the event of an emergency. Mr. Jarmel stated that there is only walk way access to the back of the proposed building however the building would have a full sprinkler system.

The Board expressed concern about traffic backup on Route 22 in the event that all parking spots are being utilized.

Vice Chairwoman Casamento opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

Matthew Clark, PE engineer for the applicant was previously sworn in for testimony. Mr. Clark reviewed the revised the site plan with the Board and provided testimony as follows. The main changes that were made to the plans are as follows:

- Site Plan elements were to the plans as requested by the Fire Official.
- Sidewalk in from of the playground was extended with bollards for added safety
- All the parking stalls except 6 were increased to a width of 9.5 feet. Those 6 spots can be designated as employee only parking.
- Gate was added to the fence in the rear of the building with a ramp to allow access to the proposed refuge area in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Clark reviewed the reports of the Township professionals.

The Board questioned what the proposed buffer would be from the flood hazard line. Mr. Clark stated that it would be approximately 15 feet.

The Board suggested that a gate be added to the fence in between the two play areas and also the sidewalk in the rear be extended with an additional gate so the children could walk around the building in the event of an emergency.

The Board questioned the size of the grass area in the back that would be used for refuge if necessary. Mr. Clark stated that it was 1,000 square feet.

Vice Chairwoman Casamento opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

John McDonough, landscape architect and PP, was previously sworn in for testimony. Mr. McDonough submitted an exhibit that was marked into evidence as follows:

A-10 7/2516 Colored Revised Landscape Plan

Mr. McDonough reviewed the revised landscape and lighting plan and noted the the changes that were made and provided testimony as follows: A triple row of plantings have been provided along the front. The shrub count that is required is 67, 93 will be provided. Two rows will be shrubs and the third row will be a combination of flowering perennials and ornamental grasses. The plan is as lush and green as possible. There are a total of 4 light poles proposed with LED lighting. The lighting plan will be in full compliance with the ordinance.

Vice Chairwoman Casamento opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

Gary Dean, PE, traffic engineer for the applicant, was sworn in for testimony and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Dean provided testimony as follows. An access permit has been obtained from the DOT in 2013, so administrative approval is needed only from the DOT for the use as a Child Care Center. There would be no work or construction in the right of way. The busiest time would expect 55-60 vehicles in the morning rush hour, generally between the hours of 7:45 am and 8:45 am when parents are dropping off students. Based on reviews of other similar facilities, there is adequate parking for the site for its use given the size of the building and projected enrollment.

Mr. Jarmal returned to explain how the employees arrive to the site on a rolling arrival schedule so they are not all arriving at the same time as the parents dropping off children.

Vice Chairwoman Casamento opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

Robert Berlant, real estate broker, was sworn in for testimony and accepted by the Board as a factual witness. Mr. Berlant was the previous owner of the property and provided a brief history of the property. Mr. Berlant stated that he had contacted the Township to see if they were interested in the property. He also approached the owners of the adjoining property to see if he could purchase land to help make this lot more conforming and there was no interest. Mr. Berlant submitted an exhibit that was marked into evidence as follows:

A-11 7/25/16 Application to Bridgewater Township for connection to sanitary sewer and plumbing permit

A-12 7/25/16 Letter sent to adjoining property owner with response

Vice Chairwoman Casamento opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

Michael Tobia PP, the applicant's planner was sworn in for testimony and was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Tobia reviewed the variances requested by the applicant and provided testimony as follows: Child care is permitted in the C-3 zone. The very small triangular pie-shaped property and environmental constraints provide a hardship that makes it impossible to build anything on the property without variance relief. The proposed plan provides a viable alternative for development. Mr. Tobia submitted an exhibit that was marked into evidence as follows:

A-13 8/9/16 Aerial Exhibit dated 5/9/16

Mr. Tobia stated that he feel that the proposal fits in with what is currently on Route 22 in the surrounding area.

Mr. Berlant returned and noted that PSE& G was not interested in offering property or parking spots for use by the applicant. He also noted that he offered both adjoining property owners this property for purchase but there was no interest on their part.

Vice Chairwoman Casamento opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no questions or comments.

Motion by Mr. Rodzinak, second by Mr. Lerner, the foregoing application was approved with conditions on the following roll call vote:

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Rodzinak, Mrs. Casamento, Mr. Lerner, Mr. Pandya, Mrs. Albanese
NEGATIVE: Councilwoman Rose
ABSENT: Mayor Hayes, Chairman Charles, Mr. Franco

7. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Board on any matter not listed on the agenda.

8. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS:

There were no other matters of Board business.

9. ADJOURNMENT

It was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Lehberger
Secretary to the Planning Division