

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, August 13, 2019
—MINUTES—

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairwoman Tricia 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 14, 2019 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 – present

Chairwoman Tricia Casamento – present

Councilman Howard Norgalis – present

Beth Powers – absent

Others present: Board Attorney Thomas Molica, Township Engineer David Battaglia, Board Planner Scarlett Doyle, Municipal Services Secretary Jacqueline Pino

Mayor Dan Hayes – present

Evan Lerner – present

Urvin Pandya, Alt. #1 – present

Vacant, Alt. #2 –

5. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

None

6. MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS:

BRIDGEWATER HILLS LLC--Frontier Road & Route 22

Block 711 Lot 7

#18-003-PB-Preminary & Final Major Site Plan w/Variance-2 Hotels, Restaurant, Banquet Hall & Adult Day Care

Motion by Councilman Norgalis, second by Mr. Rodzinak, the foregoing resolution was adopted on the following roll call vote:

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Rodzinak, Councilman Norgalis, Mr. Lerner, Mr. Pandya

ABSENT: Ms. Powers

NOT ELIGIBLE: Councilwoman Casamento, Mr. Franco, Mayor Hayes

7. LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS:

BRIDGEWATER CHOICE/GODDARD-1228 & 1298 Route 22 East & Morgan Lane
Block 222 Lot 6, 7.01,10,11
#19-001-PB-Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan-Choice Hotel & Goddard School

Attorney Henry Kent-Smith was present on behalf of the applicant which is a continuation from the June 24, 2019 & July 22, 2019 meetings.

Mr. Kent-Smith stated Mr. Moschello is here tonight to address the concerns of the Board and the public might have. Mr. Tobia is here to address all of the variance and waiver relief requested.

Mr. Kent-Smith called Robert Moschello who was previously sworn in.

Mr. Moschello submitted exhibits that were marked into evidence as follows:

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|--------------|----------------|--|
| A-9 | 8/13/19 | Site Plan Rendering (dated 6/24/19 Rev 7/22/19) |
| A-10 | 8/13/19 | Goddard Entrance Exhibit |
| A-11 | 8/13/19 | Goggle Earth Street View of Property Frontage |
| A-12 | 8/13/19 | Package consisting of Aerial Views A-D |
| A-12A | 8/13/19 | View 1 View of Property |
| A-12B | 8/13/19 | View 2 View of Existing Driveway & Proposed Hotel |
| A-12C | 8/13/19 | View 3 Proposed Landscaping in Front of Goddard School |
| A-12D | 8/13/19 | View 4 Proposed Goddard School location of additional proposed driveway |
| A-13 | 8/13/19 | Photo location exhibit sheet 1 |
| A-14 | 8/13/19 | Site Photo exhibit sheet 2 of 3 |
| A-15 | 8/13/19 | Site Photo exhibit sheet 3 of 3 |
| A-16 | 8/13/19 | Variance Exhibit |
| A-17 | 8/13/19 | Summary of all Variances |

Mr. Moschello explained the general revisions to the plans such as consolidating the lots, leaving Morgan Lane as is, fencing, site lighting, request for charging stations, landscaping, etc.

Mr. Kent-Smith stated that one of the issues the Board had was the engrass/egrass movements from the main access driveway by the Houlihan's. Mr. Kent-Smith stated that there are three curb cuts that exist but the driveways are not there, but that's how DOT looks at driveways.

Mr. Moschello is proposing to add a 18 foot wide entrance-only driveway off of Route 22 which would bring you in to the entrance of the Goddard school. Mr. Kent Smith stated that Mr. Dean confirmed that this is a reactivation of an existing driveway and all that is required is an occupancy and maintenance permit. He would like feedback from the Board if this is a good

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solution, in which, they would pursue with the DOT. The Board questioned the parking for the Goddard school. Mr. Moschello showed the Board on the plans where the parents would park for the school. The Board stated it was a good idea and appreciated the change. The Board had one suggestion, to angle it so it can't be used as an exit to Route 22. Mr. Kent-Smith stated that they will angle it. The Board questioned where the bus or van flow can use that entrance. Mr. Kent-Smith stated yes they can use that entrance. Mr. Moschello also confirmed that he will adjust the curb so they cannot make a right hand turn out onto Route 22. Mr. Moschello also stated that they will have to adjust the stormwater basin and remove the sign and put it in front of the new entrance. The Board also confirmed the drop off spot. Mr. Moschello confirmed it will be to the left. The Board also confirmed at the last meeting regarding the double stop sign, Mr. Moschello stated that can be added. The Board also questioned the landscaping regarding making sure there will be no shrubs in vision when turning onto Route 22. Mr. Moschello stated that is correct; the landscape is further back and out of the way so you can look down Route 22.

Mr. Moschello described the photo exhibits in detail regarding the landscaping, buffer and fencing around the property. The Board questioned the existing trees stating it looks like it does not provide enough of a buffer due to parking. Mr. Moschello stated that he can work with the Township planner to enhance the buffer. There is also a 4 foot fence and the Board stated it still might not be enough and suggested a higher fence. Mr. Moschello stated that they can make it a higher fence, 8 ft solid brown vinyl as requested by the Board. The Board had a question about where the sign will be placed. Mr. Moschello stated that the sign will be shifted to the West to the proposed driveway. The Board questioned the distance between the driveways. Mr. Moschello stated it's about 300 feet. There was a total of three driveways on the site. As previously testified, they proposed to have only one driveway in & out onto Route 22.

Mr. Moschello reviewed the reports of the Township professionals. Mr. Moschello worked with Mr. Tobia regarding the variances requested. The Board questioned the location of the dumpster. Mr. Moschello will try and see if there is another location to put the dumpster.

Chairwoman Cassamento opened the public portion of the meeting for questions

Tim Veerland of 7 Stanford Drive sworn and stated how deep is the foundation for the hotel going to be. Mr. Moschello stated it is not fully designed. Mr. Veerland stated that along the fence there is a water problem. Mr. Moschello stated that there is no basement with the hotel it's a slab on grade, footings would be below the surface. Mr. Moschello stated that there will be filling since the grade is low and will not dump more water onto the other side with this design. Mr. Veerland also inquired about a shoulder lane to get out of Morgan Lane. Mr. Moschello stated that there are no improvements proposed and the traffic study addressed any concerns. Mr. Kent-Smith stated Mr. Dean analyzed the traffic with the hotel and the school with projected growth for the uses. His determination had no impact on the egrass of the driveways or on Route 22. What is the time table of building the hote?. Mr. Moschello stated it takes about 12 months to build.

John Kulak of 13 Ramsey Street was sworn and stated that the existing driveway cut will be approved from the DOT that this is a separate lot with preexisting conditions and we want you to

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approve it so we can use the driveway. Then you want the Board to approve to consolidating the lots due to the variances requested. How can you justify that to the Board and to the public and to the state. Mr. Kent Smith stated that the application has been filed with the state DOT. There is a principal called time of decision which is what are the facts of the time of decision and that is the situation we are in at this time. This is a 30 day review permit then gets issued and the driveway exists. There is also a request to the Board to consolidate the lots due to the amount of frontage, which is over 500 square ft that is permitted. Mr. Kulak asked how many variances and waivers on that list currently. Mr. Kent Smith stated that Mr. Tobia is going to testify to that. Mr. Molica, Township attorney stated that it is best for Mr. Tobia to testify since he is the professional planner so everyone included the Board can have the full benefit.

Bill Vreeland of 7 Stanford Drive was sworn and asked if they can put up exhibit A-12, confirmed the school is to the left and how far is Houlihan's to the school. Mr. Moschello stated approximately 55 feet. Would you build a school 55 feet from a bar. The total height of the hotel is 50 feet and how far back from the fence. Mr. Moschello stated that is what is proposed and the hotel is 120 feet from the property line/fence. Mr. Moschello stated that they are proposed a 8 foot high fence.

Chairwoman Casamento asked if there were any other questions at this time. There were no questions or comments. The next witness was called.

Mr. Michael Tobia, PP, was sworn in for testimony and accepted by the Board as an expert planning witness. Mr. Tobia reviewed the reports of the Township professionals. Mr. Tobia references exhibit A-16 & A -17, describing a total of 11 variances and 8 waivers being proposed. This is a HIC zone, the uses that are being proposed are permitted, which are the hotel, daycare & restaurant. Mr. Tobia stated that the Maximum coverage is 60 and we are proposing 60.8 due to the extra parking spaces & the driveway off of Route 22. The front yard setback for Goddard school is 200 feet and the proposed is 115 feet. If the 200 square feet was applied you would not be able to build the daycare or have the Houlihan's that is there today, which was approved 20 years ago. The front yard setback off for the Goddard school from Morgan lane is 100 feet required and 96.3 feet is proposed. Mr. Tobia stated there is a waiver for the dumpster, the requirement is 100 feet and proposed is 21.3 feet. The dumpster will be at the rear of the building, fenced in and shielded from public view. Mr. Tobia stated due to consolidating the lots they reduced the number of variances that will be needed. The building itself must be out of the buffer, the requirement is 125 feet and 120 feet is proposed for the southernly property line of the hotel. Mr. Tobia stated as previously testified by Mr. Moschello that they will repair the fence if needed and also provide additional plantings for the buffer along the southernly line.

Chairwoman Casamento stated there will be a 5 Minute break.

The Board took a short break at 8:44 pm and returned at 8:50 pm with all members present.

Mr. Tobia resumed his testimony there is a waiver sought for the sign for the Goddard school, which will be a total of 3 signs. Mr. Moschello previously testified regarding the waivers for the landscaping. Mr. Tobia stated that there was also previous testimony about the fence along

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Goddard school. They are proposing 42 inches high due to code safety issue when they are on top of the building doing maintenance. The Cambria sign at the top of the tower goes above the roof line of the remainder of the building. This sign is the element of the front facade and that is why a waiver is requested since it is 3.58 feet and 3 feet is allowed. Mr. Tobia stated that the land is underutilized and approving this will allow the community to benefit from the property.

Mr. Tobia stated that the bollards will be around the two areas that the Board had been concerned with. The parking lot immediate south of Goddard and approximately four parking spaces to the west of Goddard to match the other bollards that were previously testified too and explained. Mr. Tobia also stated that the Board suggested moving the dumpster for the hotel and we will grant that request. It was previously 51 feet from the property line and now it will be 135 feet from the property line and that variance gets eliminated. Mr. Tobia initialed the change on exhibit A-16 to the plan. The Board questioned which variance was eliminated. Mr. Tobia stated it was variance V-8a. The Board had a question regarding EFIS so Mr. Kent-Smith suggested that Mr. Jhaveri be recalled since he is here tonight.

Mr. Kent-Smith recalled Nehal Jhaveri who was previously sworn in and was accepted by the Board as an expert witness.

Mr. Jhaveri stated that the challenge they had for this project is the form of the building. The Board questioned why do you need the parapet, you can go with a 1 ft parapet and still have the detail. The previous architecture had more detail, brick piers, cornices, etc. The Board stated that in prior testimony EFIS was mentioned as the materials and they are concerned due to the poor quality. Mr. Kent-Smith and Mr. Jhaveri agreed to work with the Board to come up with an architectural design for the hotel as a condition to the preliminary to be approved.

Chairwoman Casamento asked if there were any other questions for this witness from the Board. There were no questions or comments.

The Board still had questions for Mr. Tobia. The Board questioned the three signs that are requested regarding the square feet for each one. The Board also stated the number of parking spaces with an island is maximum amount is 20. Mr. Moschello will provide a color coded plan for landscaping and also provide the sign dimensions. Mr. Tobia stated that the approved parking lot has parking spaces 50 ft from Route 22. Exhibit A-17 will be revised to reflect the correction by Mr. Moschello.

Chairwoman Cassamento opened the public portion of the meeting for questions

John Kulak of 13 Ramsey Street was previously sworn and stated that you stated that you are visually improving the site. The public would like to see what the residents from FINDERENE Heights will see looking at the back of that property. Mr. Kulak also mentioned the number of variances requested along with the drainage issue with the architecture. Mr. Kent-Smith stated that they are in compliance with the state standards of the storm water management regulations.

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Tim Vreeland of 7 Stanford Drive was previously sworn and stated that he was concerned regarding the material of EFIS and the number of variances requested and traffic. Mr. Tobia stated that the traffic was testified to at the last hearing. Mr. Dean stated that traffic is a necessity of development. Mr. Vreeland suggested considering a speed bump on Morgan Lane since there will be more traffic

Bill Vreeland of 7 Stanford Drive was previously sworn and stated that you are applying for 11 variances and 8 waivers and the school is only 55 feet away from the Houlihan's, it doesn't seem to fit in my opinion. Mr. Vreeland also is concerned about the water. Mr. Tobia stated that the detention basin is designed to catch water. Mr. Vreeland is also concerned about having another hotel. Mr. Tobia stated that Bridgewater market was under served for several years and sending them to other towns. Mr. Tobia stated we are playing catch-up with the demand of hotels.

Chairwoman Casamento asked if there were any other questions at this time. There were no questions or comments.

At the applicant's request the application will be carried to August 26, 2019 at 7:00pm with no new notice required.

8. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

No Comments from the public

9. OTHER BOARD BUSINESS:

10. ADJOURNMENT

It was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jacqueline Pino,
Secretary of Municipal Services