

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Present: Joseph Blaney
Sheila Grant
Christina Hultholm
Jeffrey Johnson
Peter F. Kremer, Chairperson
Charles Lavine
Samuel Pangaldi

Absent: William B. Holmes

Excused Absence: Bruce Kmosko

Also Present: Brenda Kraemer, P.E., Assistant Municipal Engineer
Brian Slaugh, Planning Consultant
James Kochenour, Traffic Consultant
Edwin Schmierer, Zoning Board Attorney
Susan Snook, Recording Secretary

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Zoning Board has been provided by filing the annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk as required by law; by filing the agenda and notice with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building and mailing to the Trenton Times and the Trentonian newspapers.

Public Participation (for items not on agenda): None

Applications:

Use Variance Application No. ZB-6/16 and Major Site Plan – Preliminary & Final Site Plan Application No. SP-10/16; **The Bridge Academy**; 1958 Lawrence Road; Tax Map Page 30, Block 3004, Lot 154.

Eric Goldberg represented the applicant and presented the first witness.

Witness #1: Keith Hone presented Exhibit A12 Revised Site Plan, dated May 22, 2017 and explained the plan shows some minor revisions from the discussions of stacking and drop off as well as some other minor adjustments of the technical information that the Board requested. He presented Exhibit A13 Revised Site Plan, dated May 22, 2017 for the turning radius for the fire truck access. There was previously a large area for a k-turn for the fire truck which has been eliminated.

The other change is the pedestrian access was worked out with the Historical Society and was shifted north ward to follow the Ewing-Lawrence Sewerage Authority easement. The reason is so it make a very natural obvious pedestrian way and pulls it away from the bank of the stream into an area that no additional trees will have to be removed. The egress driveway have been widened slightly which allows for additional stacking. At the last hearing, a stacking lane on the south side of the ingress road, was discussed, subsequent to the submission of the drawing, there was a meeting with the Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission and their

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position was they would prefer that the stacking lane be on the north side of the drive, where it is further removed from the stream and the buffer and they would like it not be an impervious surface, but the grass paver that is being proposed for the fire truck access. Mr. Goldberg stated the applicant is requesting to put the queuing lane on the south side and if a third part agency required it to be on the north side, certainly if the applicant agreed to have the Board's professionals and staff administratively review the location of the stacking lane.

Mr. Slauch asked that there are no changes to the building since the previous change and Mr. Hone stated that is correct. At the last meeting, it was described how the area was reduced by 15% and the intrusion into the setback area by 20% by shifting the building back.

Witness #2 Betsy Dolan, Traffic Engineer went over some of the traffic concerns that were addressed at the last meeting. The last page of her report was not attached and it was for the highway analysis; however, the results were discussed. Thirty parking spaces are being provided, not 90. A modified stacking plan, Exhibit A12, which provides a widened driveway so that cars can be stacked side by side. The overall stacking capacity is about 28 vehicles on site. The Bridge Academy never had to watch, monitor or control and has never been a problem with pickup or drop off but the dialogue from the last meeting, the depth of this property from Route 206 to the property is shorter than next door. So they want to make sure they can keep all the cars on the property.

The capacity has been added by widening the driveway and whether it is on the north or south side it would be the ability to get more cars on the property; 28 cars will be in the que and that does exceed the maximum que that was seen on Adath. That que lasts for five minutes from 2:42 to 2:47, there was 26 on site; then the que starts to move and there seems to be a lot of vehicles that come early because they can. When they move to this new site, they can stagger the departure dismissal time and to instruct and coordinate with the drivers from the various districts that are bringing the children that they will have an assigned time and they can't come early and spend 15 minutes on the site.

The school is ready for this type of operation and to have a test run on Adath's site when school starts up again in the fall to look at how a staggered dismissal actually does reduce the que and then show that would work on the new site with capacity being looked at and that 28 still being more than the maximum que that was seen. Mr. Kockenour commented that he agrees with Ms. Dolan's testimony and has provided the two pieces of information. The school is going to implement that and they do have time before they are ready to open their new site, so this fall they are going to do a trial and see how it works. He recommends that this final provision be a condition of any approval and he will be given the opportunity to monitor it.

Ms. Kraemer stated she met with the applicant to discuss the traffic and there are a few other things the Board might want to consider. The main drive isle should be remained opened at all times; the school should coordinate the stacking area when cars move up in the que in case someone needs to get in in case of an emergency; five spaces along the front should be visitor spaces; the traffic control plan should be implemented in the fall for a two week period and then a report be provided for Mr. Kockenour to review; and a supplemental report after full occupancy of the site. Ms. Dolan stated we are all in agreement.

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Chairperson Kramer stated there was a discussion of a left turn. Ms. Dolan stated that the application has to be submitted to New Jersey Department of Transportation for the driveway and in Mr. Kockenour's letter there was a comment about the left turn would be required for the entrance into the school property. The Board had a discussion further about the turn lane and the New Jersey Department of Transportation approval. Mr. Slauch stated the issue with driveway widening is that Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission is looking for grass pavers, if it could be asphalt then there could be a way to split width and if you put in just pavers it would have to be on one side or the other.

Chairperson Kremer asked if the width is three cars wide. Ms. Dolan stated the width of the driveway would be for two cars side by side and that extra section would accommodate about six passenger vehicles. Chairperson Kremer stated then it would be a left lane in and out; Ms. Dolan stated because the radii is being widened to better accommodate the improvements, New Jersey Department of Transportation has to approve it and would be contingent on the approval.

Witness #3 James Miller, Planner testified that none of the changes that have been incorporated in the plans since he testified on the positive and negative criteria for the various variances would affect any of the factors that he felt justified by the positive criteria. Basically that dealt with the building setbacks and the parking edges and none of that has changed. These revisions to have an impact on the negative criteria and in his opinion that impact is all positive. He sees all the revisions as enhancements and they strengthen the applicant's position on the negative criteria. Mr. Slauch asked about the buffering at the end of the parking lot adjacent to Route 206. The setback is less than what is required and the plan continues to show plants that don't equal the ordinance standards and would it be the opinion of Mr. Miller that it should be equal to the ordinance standard. Mr. Miller stated it was agreed to make the plants comply.

Mr. Schmierer stated that the Board started with the application on January 18th and that was mostly a preliminary introduction. On April 19th the hearing continued and at that time the applicant went through the profession reports and agreed to the conditions as set forth in those reports. Those conditions will be put into the resolution if the Board approved the application. He continued with the conditions.

Public Comment:

Paul Larson, Chairperson Trails, Open Space and Stewardship Advisory Committee and Trustee for the Lawrenceville Historical Society. He stated he has been to every hearing for this application since January and he reached out to the Bridge Academy in January to talk to them about two issues. One is for the historical significance of the property, which they were not aware of and his first opportunity to meeting with the Bridge Academy was meeting with Eric, Sue and Dennis Waters, Township Historian. So they have come a long way since then and the other one was talking about putting in a trail easement, which is on Exhibit A12 to connect to Turtle Back Park because it is a beautiful area and believes that they met at the property about looking closer to the creek. A proposal through the Township was to put it in the other side but this is a very natural area, it is behind a line of trees and wide open. It goes across a concrete pad which is the site where the one of the Wenczel's used to keep their hunting dogs in a kennel. So the plan is to remove the concrete pad and move some of the impervious surface, but it is a straight shot and there are no trees there. It moves it away from the creek and helps mitigate some terms with one of the adjacent property owners at the back end.

He walked the property numerous times with Bridge Academy and considered ideas along with the signage. One concerned item is about the left turn lanes and from the south entrance into Rider, there are two left turn lanes southbound, one going into Adath Israel and one into Darrah Lane; going northbound there is a left turn lane into Shelmet, Lombard, Skillman and the south entrance to Rider. It looks like there is enough room to put in a left turn lane going into the site.

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Resolutions:

Resolution of Memorialization 13-17z; Bulk Variance Application ZB-5/17; **Robert Sargent & Cheryl Tarby**; 10 Laurel Wood Drive; Tax Map Page 65.01, Block 6506, Lot 4 was approved per unanimous vote.

Minutes:

May 17, 2017 minutes were approved per unanimous vote.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: Sept. 20, 2017