

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Monday, October 21, 2019

Present: Christopher Bobbitt, Mayor
Maria Connolly
Ian Dember
Philip Duran
James Kownacki, Councilman
Terrance Leggett, Vice Chairperson
John Ryan
Edward Wiznitzer, Chairperson

Absent: None

Excused Absence: Kevin P. Nerwinski
Kim Y. Taylor
Brian Slauch, Planning Consultant
Edwin Kochenour, Traffic Consultant

Also Present: Andrea Malcolm, Acting Planning Consultant
William Day, Acting Traffic Consultant
James F. Parvesse, Municipal Engineer
Edwin Schmierer, Planning Board Attorney
Susan Snook, Recording Secretary

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Planning 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 Comment:

None

Minutes for Approval:

September 16, 2019 minutes were approved per unanimous vote.

Resolutions:

None

Applications:

Major Site Plan – Preliminary & Final Approval Application No. SP-1/19; **Trustees of Lawrenceville School (Campus Improvements for Dining and Athletics)**; Main Street; Tax Map Page 58.03, Block 5801, Lots 1.02 & 30.01

Thomas Letizia, Esquire represented the applicant and stated the application is for a proposed building with site improvements and will consist of three components in phases. A new dining and athletic complex, a new outdoor athletic facility and re-alignment of the existing north campus driveway at Route 206. The majority of the improvements will occur inside the campus away from public use. The improvement is to replace aging facilities and the creation of additional open space for the students and facility without increasing student population or changing the overall vehicle parking capacity serving the campus. The new dining and athletic complex consists of a combination of building demolition, renovation and new construction. The result net increase in floor area is 18,871 sf. The existing parking in the area has 170 spaces and will be relocated to two new parking lots along the loop drive behind the complex for a total of 162 spaces. The amount of parking on the campus totals 452 spaces.

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The building and grounds complex totals 22,386 sf which will be demolished and replaced with the construction of a new 15,000 sf butler/maintenance building. The second component relates to renovations to the outdoor athletic facilities and the field section will be renovated on the Lewisville Road side of the campus which will include a new synthetic turf field with sports lighting, seating and press box on the south side; a new track and field and softball field facility as well as a new support building for storage, restrooms, concessions on the north side of the track.

The third phase is the realigned entry drive on the north end of the campus along Route 206. The proposal is to shift the entry driveway to align across from Manning Lane. The driveway would be widened to provide a new formal entrance into the campus that will extend along the east side of the property.

There are variances that pertain to the stream buffer, fence height (16') and netting (20'). The design waiver is for five lighting pole heights, one will be 90' and four will be 80'; no proposed lighting along the new running path; 31 parking spaces are being proposed along the access drive; street trees are not proposed along the golf course; however, existing trees will remain along the golf course along the fence; the existing vegetative buffer does not meet the density requirement (50') wide; the paving within the dripline and specimen tree removal.

Witness #1: Steven Murray, Headmaster at Lawrenceville School commented that it will re-center the inner part of the campus around the dining, wellness and athletic center. The reason for doing this is because the buildings are 55 years old and the building will be used to teach the children about sustainability. He spoke about creating more open spaces, no increase in student population and no change in parking; dining facility will be replaced, as well as the basketball and ice hockey, renovating existing spaces for wrestling and squash so 40% existing will be retained/renovated and 60% will be new construction.

There are three existing entry points and a new access to enter the campus once the construction is complete. There is a nine hole golf course existing; however, three holes will be lost to return to a more natural state and improvement will be done to the edge of the creek. Steven Spritzer (public) wanted to know how long the construction period will be. Mr. Murray responded it will take about 36 months beginning in June of 2020. Jackie Manning (public) asked about the new entrance across from Manning Lane. Mr. Murray responded that there are two construction entrances and both will be used. Kim Lavine (public) wanted to know if construction traffic will be using the new entrance. Mr. Murray responded it will be divided between a couple entrances, but that will be the main one during construction.

Witness #2: Pete Devine, Chief Operating Officer at Lawrenceville School spoke about the major areas which is the main entry drive and showed the new construction.

Witness #3: Marta Guerra explained the existing site (pool, basketball and ice hockey) which is close to the water and they will be moved. She continued explaining the overview; the site constraints and the athletic and dining will be in one building. Referring to a sketch, it showed what will remain and the additions. The overview showed the main entrances, east court yard and the building having two floors (lower for athletes (locker rooms) and upper for everyone); the plan also showed the outside material (brick); two colors for contrast and accents of wood. The mechanical room, which is adjacent to the main structure so the current design is for having a slightly larger footprint (1,500 sf). The two squash courts will remain (2,295 sf). The restrooms will be 1,000 sf and will have an outdoor covered patio.

Witness #4: Andrew Gutterman, Architect explained the three goals are to connect walkways to have the students and community go through the building and out to the field so it does not feel like the edge of campus but the center of the campus; to create another series of outdoor spaces that compliment what is happening inside the building and create a variety of scales spaces such as three court yards to create a welcoming entrance way to visitors. He spoke about the new entry drive which will also split for 160 parking spaces; another drop off for buses for teams from and to other locations; loading on the east side of new building for deliveries; and planting along the parking lots will be added with trees at the islands to help with shade.

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There will be modifications and rearranging to the existing outdoor athletic facilities (modifications to Kueffel Stadium), relocating the track to the field to the south where the softballs fields are; softballs field will be relocated to one of the soccer fields to the east. The existing track will be relocated and a new synthetic turf field will be installed; modest repairs to the bleachers and press box which will include lighting that will focus on the field for spring practice and not the surrounding areas, there is also black netting at either end to contain the athletic activities to the field itself and parking will remain the same. There is a gravel driveway proposed for the pump house that is to remain. The track is being relocated to the existing football field, which will be eight lanes with natural grass. A chain link fence is being proposed which is 42" but at the backstop the fences will be taller to be effective.

Given the dimensions required for the track, there will be five specimen trees that will have to be removed and will work with the Township on how to enhance the buffer. There will only be pedestrian lighting but no athletic type lighting.

The Board members questioned the witnesses regarding the contrast of the buildings regarding the brick; artificial turf and a detail of the chemical report should be a condition of the resolution for protection; being additional events at the Campus; visiting teams and parking for buses; the energy plant is near the ice rink and seems not an optimal position for it and lights for the new field being visible off of campus because of the height.

Mr. Murray stated that the fields have been fully tested and this turf field will be the most modern and the best turf field that be done for the safety of the athletes and will have it certified. There will bus parking near the field house. As long as the field is being used the netting will remain up and will be up more than it will not.

Public:

Ed McDonald, Chairman of Historic Preservation Committee: Where the lights are from Main Street (elevation). Main Street is an historic district and do we want that showing. The impervious coverage on the artificial turf with drainage and how is that being handled and will the netting be up all the time or will it be taken up and down.

Mr. Gutterman responded that the poles are 80 and 90' tall and tops of the poles will be above that height. The intent is to light the field.

Chairperson Wiznitzer wanted to know if there is a schedule for lights and make a condition that the lights are off at a certain hour and limit the hours for the lights. Mr. Murray stated he would like to do a further study for visibility. You can see the light poles and does not think the lights from the football field would be seen from the street.

Allan Hendry, 107 Lewisville Road: All the construction material on campus, how will it be moved off campus, used on Lewisville Road or go out other ways.

Mr. Gutterman spoke about the entry drive, which is existing, that goes through the portion of the golf course and the road runs along the extension of the creek, through the golf course. The proposal is to shift it away from the creek, align it across from Manning Lane so that any vehicles entering or existing could do so at a four-way intersection; there is no signal planned; to configure the drive it would be designed to accommodate the vehicles for turning radius, for a truck with a trailer; to have it away from the creek and out of the D&R Canal and floodplain off set area (showed a diagram of existing and proposed of the impacts along the stream corridor).

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This driveway would connect through to the existing driveway that enters further southwest over to the tennis court parking lot (same number of parking spaces would remain). A guard booth is being proposed to control vehicular access. The primary purpose for this drive is to allow for vehicular access to the athletics and dining facility in that portion of campus without bringing all of that traffic through the Town and through the core of the Campus. The traffic is being distributed for the safety of the students and the volume along Main Street.

There is a left turn lane being proposed in both directions as well as a crosswalk. Plantings will be kept out of the sight triangle to meet with the ordinance. There are two driveways at the entry drive that connect to a house that is owned by the school and the other connects to a driveway that goes through the golf course to the farm at the northern end of property. A sketch rendering was presented of the guard booth and the purpose is to be able to monitor and control vehicular access within the Campus similar to the entrance at the west. It is moved away from the road but gives the school the ability to see who is coming and going. Lighting is proposed along the road, with bollard lights 80' apart and the intersections will have post top fixtures.

There is a running trail proposed for the students that could connect to the sidewalk on Route 206 which is informal in nature with no proposed lighting. The Lawrence-Hopewell Trail passes through the Campus and will continue to be the case, it would follow the current alignment along most of the way through the Campus with the exception being that it passes through the parking lots to the east of the existing field house with the reconfigurations of the building, it would be re-routed to follow the drive. The drop off spur and reconnect with its current alignment, south of the field house and signage would be adjusted.

Chairperson Wiznitzer stated the roadway is north of Manning Lane and not sure moving it what would it accomplish; it would have to be paved and wider. Route 206 is a two-lane highway and where would the turning lanes be put and who is going to pay for it. Mr. Gutterman stated it will be paved and the width is 24'. Mr. Ardman worked with the traffic engineer and a New Jersey Department of Transportation application is required, who has jurisdiction. It would be a 24' wide drive and they like to see intersections aligned so there is no offset. There is not a volume of people that would be going from the Campus drive into Manning Lane. There was a survey prepared for the width of the pavement and there is a left turn lane at Cold Soil Road which will be the same width. There is enough room for those turn slots and New Jersey Department of Transportation has claimed it complete and waiting for technical comments.

Public:

Jackie Spritzer, 22 Manning Lane spoke about realigning the driveway with Manning Lane; the impacts on residents turning left from Manning Lane and why use that entrance for construction vehicles. They do not want the traffic, the car and truck pollution from vehicles idling to make the turn, large dump trucks traveling on Route 206 and how will the left turn lane fit; Cold Soil Road has no left turn lane going south on Route 206 to backup because there is a traffic light and what other alternatives did you consider. Why is the new entrance not north of Manning Lane up closer to Cold Soil Road?

Mr. Ardman stated the first alternative was to improve the driveway where it is right now and shift it to the north which had a couple of problems like the impact with the stream corridor. Most of the traffic is when there is activity at the Campus and if shifted south that is too close to the Church property and would be an offset from Manning Lane. A traffic study was prepared that shows there are more trips during the peak hour on Lewisville Road. There will be a standard New Jersey Department of Transportation approved dedicated slot to make a left turn onto Manning Lane.

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Mr. Letizia stated there is no traffic engineer at the meeting tonight because he was double booked but has his data.

Steven Spritzer, Manning Lane asked about the sidewalk where cars would have a mandatory stop or a something less than that; has a speed study be done for Route 206; a dual turn lane without a traffic light and speed study to have it reduced. Mr. Spritzer commented about what happens when there is a backup.

Mr. Ardman stated when a pedestrian is in the sidewalk vehicles have to stop and no signal is proposed. It is a minor application with New Jersey Department of Transportation for the number of trips generated and the number of driveways so a speed study is not required. Mr. Ardman stated it is not uncommon and there are restrictions from New Jersey Department of Transportation on how often you can have a signal when there is not enough traffic.

Mr. Day was asked if he was familiar with left turns lanes not being signalized. Mr. Day stated they are common and would like to see left turn slots more often because it does protect the vehicles and you get less shadowing so your site distances are a lot longer. Mr. Ardman stated that is what New Jersey Department of Transportation will look at turning movements and will make an adjustment if needed.

Kim Lavine, 15 Manning Lane wanted to know if the entrance will be closed at night and will the kiosk be open 24 hours. Mr. Ardmore responded it will be opened 24 hours.

Mr. McDonald asked that all the entrances along Main Street will remain open; all deliveries will be made through this entrance; Church parishioners park on Main Street on Sundays and that will be eliminated when the left turn lanes are proposed and as well as the Temple on their holidays; the lighting at the entry and how bright will it be. He also stated this application needs to appear before the Historic Preservation Committee.

The Board members took a break from 8:50 p.m. to 8:56 p.m.

Witness #5 – F. Mitchell Ardmore referred to the counts from a report dated July 16, 2019 for each driveway on Lewisville Road and Route 206, copy attached. The counts were performed when school was in session on May 19, 2019 and there were no summer activities, which is less traffic. There will be no new utilities because the project is within the campus; however, some of the water and sewer lines will be relocated, which are shown on the plan. Stormwater management will be addressed for the parking lot that is required; there are five basins throughout the site and each area will have stormwater management associated with it. The entrance drive will be pulled out and will be naturalized and will be piped to the new bio-stream detention basin.

Mr. Ardmore referred to Mr. Parvesse's report dated September 24, 2019, copy attached and will fully comply with the comments of 3.00. There will be no treatment works approval, Comment 4.03, because there will be no extension of the main. An application was submitted to New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and are awaiting comments

Mr. Ardmore referred to the reports submitted from staff and committees, copies attached. He made a comment about the new drive where you come in from Route 206, there will be a double yellow line coming in from the property for 50 – 100' and not planning a double yellow strip as a main roadway through the whole campus, Comment 8 of Arora report dated October 11, 2019, copy attached.

Councilman Kownacki suggested to check into Title 39. Mr. Letizia stated Title 39 is not enforced in the campus which is a motor vehicle issue for parking in the roadway. Councilman Kownacki asked about going in front of Ewing-Lawrence Sewerage Authority for their approval and fire hydrants that are being removed are they being replaced. Mr. Ardmore stated there was a preliminary meeting with the Fire Sub-code Official and new hydrants are going in and fire lanes will be installed.

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Mr. Ardmore commented about the stream buffer; the fence variances and design waivers.

Witness #6 – James Harwood-Marshall, Project Manager stated it will be phased over 3 to 3 ½ years; starting off with the relocation of the utilities; construction of the core of the new building which includes the dining, the swimming pool and ice hockey arena between 2020 and 2023. The new access drive to provide temporary construction entrance by 2020; the new turf field will be completed by 2022 and the track and softball field by 2021. There will be temporary construction areas in the vicinity of the build and various other sites.

Mr. Ryan asked if he reached out to any of the trade unions here because we have a lot of residents in the trade unions. Mr. Harwood-Marshall stated they are targeting the project to an open shop basis to accommodate union and non-union labor. They have been in touch with some of the key trade unions in Mercer County and beyond to find the best contractor for the job who can construct this in the best way.

Mr. Harwood-Marshall stated with a project of this size they will look to phase traffic movements at the most appropriate times of day especially to avoid the morning peak rushes and the evening peak rushes especially along Route 206. One of the principal priorities is to have student safety on the campus. The majority of the topsoil removed from the site will be retained on the site and redistributed through the re-grading. Demolition debris will be separated, recycled and disposed of appropriately (metals, concrete and wood) will be all separated.

There will be some trees lost on the golf course and is currently a work in progress to figure out where they will go. Noise will be controlled and work hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and crew will show up at 7:00 a.m.

Public:

Ms. Spritzer asked about testing the air and what precautions are being taken to contain the dust. Mr. Harwood-Marshall stated testing was already performed and asbestos was identified which will be removed in a controlled manner before demolition happens. Mr. McDonald asked about keeping dirt off the roads and cleaned. Soil erosion controls will be handled through the Engineering Department with the soil disturbance permit process.

Paul Larson, Chairman Trails and Open Space stated that the existing road will be taken out between Route 206 and Old Brick House. The relocation of the Lawrence-Hopewell Trail by the two football fields.

Mr. Letizia did a closing statement and Mr. Schmierer summarized the conditions.

Public Hearing:

None

Old Business / New Business / Correspondence:

None

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Closed Session Resolution


None

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: 12/16/19