

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Monday, September 20, 2021

Present: Kevin Nerwinski, Manager
James Kownacki, Mayor
Christopher Bobbitt, Councilman
Terrence Leggett, Chairperson
Maria Connolly, Vice Chairperson
Alan DiSciullo
Phillip Duran
Naeem, Akhtar, Alternate #1
Leslye Scipio, Alternate #2 (arrived 7:07 p.m.)

Absent: None

Excused Absence: Ian Dember
Kim Taylor
Elizabeth McManus, Planning Consultant
Jeffrey L'Amoreaux, Traffic Consultant

Also Present: James F. Parvesse, Municipal Engineer
James Kyle, Planning Consultant
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:

None

Oath of Office:

Mr. Schmierer administered the oath to Alan DiSciullo.

Minutes for Approval:

August 16, 2021 minutes were approved per unanimous vote.

Resolutions:

Resolution of Memorialization 14-21; Minor Subdivision with Variance Application No. S-1/18; **Sandy Wang**; 94 Coolidge Avenue; Tax Map Page 20.01, Block 2007, Lots 23.01 & 27.01 was approved per unanimous vote.

Resolution of Memorialization 16-21; Major Site Plan – Amended Preliminary and Final Approval Application No. SP-3/15; **The Bridge Academy**, 1958 Lawrence Road; Tax Map Paged 30.02, Block 3004, Lot 155 was approved per unanimous vote after a brief discussion regarding the change request from five years to three years.

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Applications:

Major Site Plan – Preliminary & Final Approval Application No. SP-3/21; Notre Dame High School (Turf Field), 601 Lawrence Road; Tax Map Page 13, Block 1301, Lot 34.02

Thomas Letizia, attorney for the applicant stated the application is for converting the existing grass athletic field at the north end of the property to an artificial turf field with lighting. There are no changes proposed for parking or circulation. The application also includes light poles at 51' where the zone allows only 30'. Mr. Letizia explained the waivers being requested for this application.

Witness #1: Kenneth Jennings, President of Notre Dame High School stated the school was built in 1957 and is located on a 100 acre campus. The field will be used for soccer and Lacrosse; the proposal is in a cleared area which is the best option; it will be upgraded from a grass field to a synthetic turf field which will be easier on the bodies of the players; there will be no down times for mowing, there will be no mud, no realigning, etc. Mr. Jennings feels that up grading the field will attract more students to the school.

Witness #2: Joseph Perello, PP stated this site is a 92 acre piece of property, referring to Exhibit A1 Synthetic Turf Field, undated shows the property line as well as the area in question; the existing grass area is 312' long and 210' wide. Multi solutions were looked at to meet the goal and objectives, in the middle of the woods, studies showed it was not possible because it is in the flood hazard area which would impede the improvement of the field. Most of this entire site is in the Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission area.

Exhibit A2: Synthetic Turf Field, dated September 20, 2021 is an aerial photograph of the existing conditions. The yellow line, on the plan, shows the field which is 28' wider and 15' longer. Some trees will have to be removed on the western side and to the north to meet the grading. The four poles for sports lighting will be located on the field and are 50' in height with LED. This will help the growing need to be competitive against other schools, retain student body and to recruit new high school students. Mr. Perello agrees with the reports with the exception of the Environmental and Green Advisory Committee regarding the facts/comments of the synthetic field, copies attached.

The light poles need to be 50' to stimulate day light for angle and use, if the lights are too low, the lower the pole, the horizontal lights will be in the players eyes. There will be portable bleachers, scoreboard, no concession stand, team benches, no new buildings and no restrooms. This field will provide for more activities and events.

The Board members had questions regarding injuries on this field vs. natural grass, pooling of water and concerns regarding rubber (tires) infill. Mr. Perello stated that synthetic turf/rubber does not cause carcinogenic diseases; not harmful to the environment or individuals, no band from using this in-fill per the Federal and State levels. Mr. Nerwinski asked a question to Mr. Schmierer regarding the Environmental and Green Advisory Committee report being indictment on synthetic fields and is it in our authority that no synthetic fields allowed when they are legal. Mr. Schmierer stated we can give the report any weight we want and this Board cannot band synthetic fields because you made a determination that synthetic fields are bad or not healthy. The approval of numerous synthetic fields has been made by this Board. Mr. Nerwinski stated this is not a topic that we cannot debate and to stay focused on what we are supposed to be doing.

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Councilman Bobbitt stated he does not necessarily agree with all of what was said and has the applicant on the record talking about the turf field and having a discussion. How much weight you want to put on it as well as the testimony about all the pros and cons.

Mr. Perello referred to Exhibit A3: Colored Renderings which shows topography, tree line and the proposed trees to be removed. There will be a small retaining wall because of the slope and with the removal of the eight trees. Mr. Jennings agreed to put in evergreen trees to supplement this area.

Witness #3: Robert Gregoria, PE spoke about the stormwater management plan and the existing field drainage, there are three inlets along the western area and will be piped into an existing storm system closest to the school building. The flow pattern will go toward the east, underground to a detention system and will go to an existing outlet control structure then to the existing inlet by the parking lot and will discharge by the stream. The applicant will comply with the stormwater management per the Engineer's report and Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission accepted the proposal for the system.

Public:

Emery Coppola: 610 Lawrence Road has no objection to the project; however, his major concern is the detention basin on the west can cause basement flooding, last storm there was 8" of water in his basement. The bridge on Route 206 always floods and for the Board to consider the impact on homes for future projects.

Paul Larson: 170 Darrah Lane stated this is adjacent to the Nature Center; understands the needs for being competitive; there will be no visual impact on the neighborhood but a visual impact on the Nature Center which would affect night time classes.

Joann Fletcher: 514 Lawrence Road stated the water runoff and anytime that something is built and takes up a footprint, it makes water at her house get worse all the time. She looked up the information on the synthetic field and after a few years the water will not drain.

Public Hearing:

None

Old Business / New Business / Correspondence:

Council Bobbitt stated we have a lot of projects with underwater storm detention systems not working overtime. Mr. Parvesse stated we do require a maintenance manual and every year we have to verify they maintain it.

Preliminary Investigation – 40 Enterprise Avenue (Designation as Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment; Block 601, Lots 1- 8)

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Mr. Kyle stated the design plan was approved by Council; a preliminary draft plan will be submitted on September 29, 2021; Planning Board will review at the October 4, 2021 meeting. It will be forwarded to Council for an introduction at the October 19, 2021 meeting; Planning Board will review for consistency with the Maser Plan and Council will consider at a final adoption at the November 4, 2021 meeting.

The redevelopment concept that has been presented is for a warehouse building; the site is constrained and the applicant is not focusing on only one use.

Closed Session Resolution:

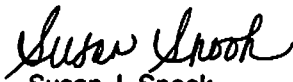
None

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: Oct. 4, 2021