

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Reorganization and Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 19, 2020

Present: Joseph Blaney
Olga Dember
Joseph Forte, Alternate #2
Sheila Grant
Christina Hultholm, Chairperson
Jeffrey Johnson
Peter F. Kremer
Bruce Kmosko, Alternate #1
Charles Lavine, Vice Chairperson

Absent: None

Excused Absence: James Kochenour, Traffic Consultant

Also Present: Brenda Kraemer, P.E., Assistant Municipal Engineer
Edwin Schmierer, Zoning Board Attorney
Brian Slaugh, Planning Consultant
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.

Oath of Office:

Christina Hultholm, Bruce Kmosko, Olga Dember, Joseph Blaney and Joseph Forte were placed under oath and Mr. Schmierer, Esquire administered the oath.

Elections:

Chairperson:

Charles Lavine made a motion to nominate Christina Hultholm as Chairperson. It was moved by Mr. Kremer and Ms. Dember seconded to appoint Christina Hultholm as Chairperson. Nominations were closed and was unanimously approved.

Vice Chairperson:

Peter Kremer made a motion to nominate Charles Lavine as Vice Chairperson. It was moved by Mr. Kremer and seconded by Chairperson Hultholm to appoint Charles Lavine as Vice-Chairperson. Nominations were closed and was unanimously approved.

Appointments:

Mr. Lavine moved and Ms. Dember seconded to approve the Resolutions of Appointments in a Block (Resolutions 1-20z thru 6-20z) and were unanimously approved.

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Committee Appointments:

Growth and Redevelopment Committee (1): Chairperson Hultholm made a motion to nominate Charles Lavine and seconded by Mr. Kremer for the liaison to the Growth & Redevelopment Committee and it was unanimously approved.

Adoption of Annual Report:

Resolution of Memorialization 7-20z was adopted per unanimous vote.

Public Participation (for items not on agenda):

None

Resolutions:

Resolution of Memorialization 8-20z; Bulk Variance Application No. ZB-2/19; **John Coiro**; 13 Buckingham Drive; Tax Map Page 70.01, Block 7002, Lot 4 was unanimously approved.

Applications:

Bulk Variance Application No. ZB-4/19; **Atrium at Lawrenceville, LLC**; 133 Franklin Corner Road; Tax Map Page 35.04, Block 3507, Lot 69.01

Christopher Costa, Esquire represented the applicant and stated this site is near the intersection of Franklin Corner Road and Princeton Pike. The application is for a façade sign which is proposed on the building; the building currently has a façade sign in the center which states The Atrium and has a diameter of eight-feet (8') and also has a very low three-foot tall free-standing that identifies the address near Franklin Corner Road.

Another façade is being proposed, which is the Capital Health sign (100 sf) and is permitted in the zone as long as they do not exceed five-percent of the area, which is satisfied. However, only one façade is permitted. The Capital Health sign is for their primary care practice and will take up one-quarter of the building. The building is two-stories and the first floor, where the sign will be located will be taken by the practice, a total of 7,400 sf. The purpose of the sign is to identify the practice to the patients, will provide a recognition and branding to the medial practice.

Witness #1: Allen Schectel, PP presented exhibits: A1 Building Exhibit; A2 Sign Detail and A-3 Aerial photograph which shows the site being surrounded by offices and some homes. The applicant will utilize the first floor which is 7,400 sf (entire wing). The office will be used by six physicians and a billing office. Hours of operations will be 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and one evening to 7:00 p.m. There will be 70 patients for the six physicians.

The second façade sign will be mid-way between the upper and lower floors and is needed for visibility to lanes of traffic and speed. The second sign will be more prominent while the current freestanding sign is address only. It will promote public health and safety. The large freestanding sign is permitted (15' high and 35 sf) but would not be as visually appealing. A directory sign could be utilized but would be ineffective due to the number of tenants or the tenants would have to be limited.

Exhibit A4: Example of In-harmonious Sign located at 2999 Princeton Pike, which received Zoning Board approval. The proposed sign is pleasing to the eye, would be proportional and would complement the existing building. The sign would have a muted impact on the neighborhood and faces the adjacent office.

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Mr. Slaugh referred to his February 3, 2020 report, copy attached. Mr. Slaugh referred to Comment 4.1 of his report and agreed with Mr. Schectel's testimony on having the sign on the building. The Board members had questions and comments.

There was no public comment.

Use Variance Application No. ZB-1/20; Princeton Junior School; 3270 Lawrence Road; Tax Map Page 67.01, Block 6703, Lot 2.01

Richard Schatzman, Esquire represented the applicant. This a piece of property next to the Princeton Junior School on the corner of Lawrence Road and Fackler Road. The proposal is to provide Princeton Junior School the use of the main house, which is under contract and will be a temporary residence for the prior owner, Mary Morgan, up to five years. Thereafter, the Head Master of the school, which is a private elementary school up to 5th grade, will be the main residence and future opportunities to hold professional development and meetings, storage and the barn for performances and plays.

Witness #1: Sylvana Clark, Headmaster testified the expansion is to enhance the environment for the children. The main house will be the living quarters for adults, no change in the staff and no change in the number of students. Ms. Morgan will be in the main house for a while and the main interest is the barn which was built within the last five years by Jonathan Morgan, it is not historic and will be the only building to be changed to make sure it is retrofitted properly for the student use to install a dance hall and a run around space.

There are no signs being proposed. Currently the space at the Princeton Junior School is a one-building school house and there is a large room where the children play during inclement weather, but has its limitations. The intent for the barn is to have the children run around, play and a place for the performing arts, with night performances. There will be lighting on the inside and outside for the walkway and from the school to the barn. Mr. Schatzman stated the only construction will be the walkway where all the buildings will remain the same and be compliant with all codes.

Mr. Slaugh asked if there will be an expansion of any pupils, what is the number of students, staff and the relocation of the athletic fields.

Ms. Clark responded there are no changes to the student population or staff; however, the current staff will go to this building and teach. There are currently three staff members that share existing space in the school (arts and physical education) and they will use the new space. There are 100 students and 25 employees.

Mr. Kremer asked about when the building is converted for professional development, would that require additional parking. Ms. Clark responded there has to be consideration for parking, but will have to think about what will happen there. Ms. Kraemer asked if there are performances at night, would the parents park in the main parking lot or would parents come and using the driveway of the residence, the square foot of the barn and how many could fit in the building. Ms. Clark stated the point of the walkway would be for the parents to park in the existing parking lot and walk over to the barn. The barn is 813 sf and the wood garage is 1,163 sf. It is not intended for the entire school and their parents.

Witness #2: James Bash, P.E. referred to Exhibit A1- Variance Plan dated December 15, 2019 that shows the existing lot (2.01) including the school lots (2.02 and 2.03). The school is looking to acquire Lot 2.01 and if the application is approved, they would consolidate all lots into one lot which would consist of 10.103 acres. Currently there is an existing dwelling with several accessory buildings including the garage to transform into a school use. There are a couple of sheds and a smoke house. Eight percent of impervious

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coverage is allowed and looking at the site overall with the 582 sf of sidewalk that is being added, it would be at 13.9% for the 10.103 acres. There will be no impact to the stormwater management from the sidewalk that is being added which is for safety purposes. There will be a handicap route to the new use.

Referring to Ms. Kraemer's report dated February 4, 2020, Comment 5 the sewer and water demand and would be based off of the number of students in the school. Since enrollment is not changing, essentially the demands would remain the same. Ms. Kraemer stated to provide handicap accessibility to the barn/garage you may have to extend the sidewalk paved area to the barn. Mr. Bash stated that can be done and it would not change the impervious coverage.

Mr. Bash mentioned there are setback variances for the existing buildings and nothing is going to change and once the lots are consolidated the accessory building will be in the front yard, which are not permitted, so a relief is required.

Mr. Johnson referred to the comments of the Fire Marshall from a report dated February 4, 2020 regarding the change of the use of the barn requires egress doors and emergency lighting over 50 persons, so is this condition going to be met. Mr. Bash state that the applicant is agreeable and will meet all applicable codes.

Mr. Slaugh stated if the lots are consolidated, the requirements are met for the EGI zone. There was a discussion regarding the EP and EGI zone and the water production that comes out of the ground. Mr. Slaugh asked if the parents would park in the parking lot and some of those events would take place after school hours so how would the access be lite between the parking lot and sidewalk. Mr. Bash responded there would be bollard lights along the sidewalk with all the appropriate light levels.

Witness #3: James Kyle, P.P. referred to Exhibit A2 Aerial Photograph dated February 19, 2020 that shows Lots 2.01, 2.02 and 2.03. Lot 2.03 shows the school with the parking areas, the existing dwelling on Lot 2.01 and the outbuildings. The variances are required because the dwelling will not be utilized by the school and will be maintained by the owner there now until they move out and then utilized for the school.

Mr. Kyle described all the variances required. The site is well suited to the use being proposed as this would be the second principal use and is a temporary situation. The building will become part of the school when the current owners move out. The existing spaceial relationship between that dwelling and the school is uniquely suited because within the next five years it will become part of the school and will be used for school purposes. The modest expansion of curriculum activities for existing students and additional and additional opportunities for the school. This will allow the historic house to remain as part of Township resources.

There is no physical changes so there is no detriment to the surrounding neighborhood. There is public sewer and water to the site. There is no new construction with the exception of the new sidewalk. This is a temporary situation so when the Morgan's move out the house becomes part of the school facility and would be used by the Headmaster. By consolidating the lots the four acre condition was eliminated and there will be buildings within 50' of the lot line. The school use is a beneficial use; the buildings are pre-existing and remains suitable because there is no new construction. Screening is substantial on Fackler Road.

The purpose of the walkway is to allow teachers, parents, students to safely come from the main school building to the accessory structure as well as handicap accessible. The stormwater management on site will not raise the level of being a major improvement and there is a detention basin on site.

Chairperson Hultholm asked if the applicant will be willing to have that variance expire once the current resident and family moves out, so once it returns being an accessory use for the school. Mr. Schatzman responded that is what Mrs. Morgan wanted is five years and if it is one year it would be a condition of approval.

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The Board discussed the two uses after Mrs. Morgan moved out as well as taxes, public sewer, public water and changing the zone to EGI for that site.

Public:

Elizabeth Phillips, 1 Oak Place commented they put trees up on their property and go partway up and over the years the trees are grown and now you can see through them and see the school and a section by the road that is not covered at all, people will be doing more things so the request is to fill in some of the landscaping to block any activity.

Mr. Schatzman agreed they would work with the landscaper to prepare a plan to fill it in and would be a condition approval.

Ms. Dember asked about relocating the athletic field. Mr. Bash stated there is not field being relocated it was not removed from plan.

Mr. Schmierer went over the conditions of approval.

Minutes:

November 20, 2019 minutes were approved per unanimous vote.

Other Business:

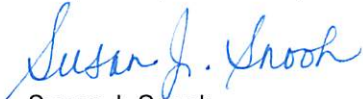
None

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: _____

June 17, 2020