

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
MAY 11, 2011**

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act was announced.

Board Members Present: Jeanne Donlon, Eileen Heinzl, Joshua Levy (arrived 8:00 p.m.), William B. Meytrott, Thomas Ogren, Mayor's Designee, James Reilly, Winn Thompson.

Chairman. Absent: Mark Blackwell, Katherine O'Neill, Anthony Persichilli, Mayor.

Alternates 1 & 2 vacant.

Also Present: Cindy Coppola, Coppola & Coppola Associates, Borough Planner; Edwin W. Schmierer, Mason, Griffin & Pierson, Board Attorney; Mary W. Mistretta, Planning Board Secretary. Absent: John Flemming, Zoning Officer.

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC ADDRESS.

James John Puzio, BSA Troop 44, Pennington, NJ made a presentation to the Board regarding his proposed Eagle Scout project at Cambridge School located in the Straube Center. Mr. Puzio stated that he is a student at The Pennington School and former student at the Cambridge School. Mr. Puzio described the background work that he has done for the project and stated that he contacted representatives from the Cambridge School regarding a project and they indicated that they would like to have an outdoor classroom with an amphitheatre. He stated that the project would consist of a stage, benches and a drainage system and presented plans showing the layout of his project. The stage would be a triangle shape because of the trees and the dimensions would be 15 ft. x 20 ft. x 25 ft.

Mr. Drew Schoenholtz, owner of Green Team, a local landscape contractor, stated that he was helping James with the drainage for the project. Mr. Schoenholtz explained that drain boxes were necessary to keep water from ponding in the area. The amphitheatre is being built into a bermed area and is higher than an adjoining culvert. They are proposing to place one or two drain boxes in the ground and connect them to the existing culvert with a four inch pipe to help drain the rainwater to the culvert. The area would only be used by the Cambridge School and there is a fence between the property and the Post Office property. In response to an inquiry from Ms. Heinzl, Mr. Schoenholtz described the site and the culvert and explained that the benches will be built into the berm. Mr. Ogren stated that he was not clear regarding the terracing of the benches. Mr. Puzio explained that they will dig out stairs and areas for the logs in the berm. Mr. Schoenholtz stated that they had talked about bench supports, but they have not yet resolved this issue. He feels that if the bench is elevated and off the ground it will last a lot longer and will not impede water flow. Mr. Schoenholtz described the supports and stated that they would be strong and would not fall over. Ms. Donlon commended Mr. Puzio on the project and Mr. Schoenholtz for volunteering to help with the project. Ms. Heinzl agreed and felt that it was beyond the typical Eagle Scout project. Mr. Schoenholtz explained that Mr. Flemming had suggested that they give a presentation to the Board. Mr. Thompson felt that it was a great solution for that spot. Ms. Coppola suggested that Mr. Puzio also meet with the Borough Engineer because of the proximity to the Post Office lot to make sure that the improvements will work and not create on-site or off-site problems. Mr. Schoenholtz stated that they were trying to keep costs at a minimum and were hoping not to incur any additional costs. Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Puzio to leave a copy of the plan with the Board Secretary and he would look closer at it and deal with it appropriately. There being no further comments, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The Pennington School, Block 502, Lot 4 and Block 205, Lot 1

Present: Graeme McWhirter, Herbert Seeburger, Van Cleef Engineering Associates

Mr. McWhirter explained that last year they requested refunds of escrow and Performance Guarantee and there was a condition to relocate the bleachers by the turf field to the location on the site plan. Mr. McWhirter stated that at this time the school does not have the resources to complete the approved traffic and parking plan, but they can go ahead with the bleachers, but this will create a couple of issues. They are proposing to put in bleachers that are slightly thinner and longer than those shown on the approved plan to reduce the amount of parking area that will be taken. The existing trash compactor and dumpsters will have to be moved to the area shown on the sketch plan, dated April 5, 2011, distributed to the Board. If these changes are made the driveway to the new dumpster area would have to be changed from the approved one-way driveway to a two-way driveway that would be needed for the trash trucks which would enter and exit from the same entrance. There are three different types of trash pick-ups by Waste Management and they indicated that they could make the pick-ups before 7:00 a.m. Mr. McWhirter stated that they would also like to reconfigure the entrance way as noted on the sketch plan. They are also proposing to move the approved position of the press box to the opposite side of the field and would need a setback variance.

Mr. Seeburger displayed and described three plans: the existing area, the approved plan and the proposed plan. The approved bleachers would eliminate some of the parking area by the field and they are proposing to change the size and location of the bleachers and add a handicapped ramp. This will provide the needed seating and will only eliminate approximately five parking spaces. The dumpsters will be relocated to the approved area and a little expansion of the gravel turn-around area is proposed to provide access to them. This will allow the trucks to come in off W. Delaware Avenue during the early morning hours, make a k-turn and use the same driveway to exit.

Mr. Seeburger stated that when The Pennington School last came to the Board they had 208 existing parking spaces on the site, eleven more spaces have been picked-up in the temporary parking behind Stainton Hall, five spaces may be lost in the proposed reconfiguration and there would be a total of 214. Mr. McWhirter stated that the approval of the turf field required that the sound systems would face the Pennington Market and they will keep it that way. Mr. Seeburger stated that they received administrative approval from the Borough Engineer, Van Note Harvey, to construct the eleven spaces with temporary stone which was a great addition since parking was an issue. Mr. Thompson stated that he still sees students parking on Academy and Green Streets and asked if the school had ever put a parking decal program into place which was discussed with Mr. Cifelli. Mr. McWhirter stated that they did not have a decal program. Mr. McWhirter explained that they have enough parking for their seniors on campus, but not enough for juniors who are not allowed to park on campus. Mr. McWhirter stated that once the approved plan is completed they will have 238 spaces which should accommodate most of the juniors. Mr. McWhirter stated that four or five years ago they informed the boarding students that they were not allowed to have cars on campus or in the Borough and this has helped with the parking. Mr. Reilly stated that he had concerns regarding two-way traffic in the parking area and whether there was enough room. Mr. Seeburger stated that the access road was twenty feet wide and a car and truck could pass. He also pointed out that trucks would be coming early in the morning and not that frequent with one pick-up once a week and the other two pick-ups are

once every two weeks. Ms. Heinzl asked if the school was at full enrollment and Mr. McWhirter stated that they were at full enrollment. Ms. Coppola asked who usually parks in the five spaces that will be lost and Mr. McWhirter responded that it was students. Mr. Levy asked if some of the buses could be moved over to the gravel area to allow students to park there. Ms. Coppola suggested that school vehicles may be able to use the gravel area by the dumpsters if the k-turn area was enlarged. Mr. McWhirter agreed that a few buses may be able to park there, but he would have to discuss it with other staff.

Ms. Coppola stated that she will go out again to check the lighting from the turf field and how it affects Burd and Hale Streets and explained the difficulty of planting more trees for buffering. Mr. Seeburger stated that the lights are 70 ft. high and Ms. Coppola agreed that they conform to what was approved. Mr. McWhirter stated that he had not received any complaints regarding the lights and Ms. Mistretta confirmed that the Borough Office had not received any complaints. Ms. Coppola asked if the handicapped ramp will be put in and Mr. Seeburger stated that they will be putting the ramps in along with the sidewalk and curb returns and other improvements that were approved regarding the entrance. Ms. Coppola noted that the conceptual plan did not show the pedestrian sign being moved and asked that all the changes be included on the amended site plan. Mr. Thompson asked if the baseball field on Green Street had been completed and approved. Ms. Coppola stated that the engineer should have approved the field and Mr. Seeburger stated that the Borough Engineer had approved the baseball field. The application for a variance regarding the press box and an amended site plan will be submitted to the Board. The conceptual hearing ended at 8:30 p.m.

MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Julia Crislip, Block 505, Lot 10, 104 & 106 S. Main Street, R-80 Zone.
Ms. Donlon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Meytrott to adopt the resolution.
Voting yes: Donlon, Heinzl, Levy, Meytrott, Ogren, Reilly, Thompson.
Absent: Blackwell, O'Neill, Persichilli

Richard & Kelly Dec, Block 701, Lot 17, 324 Hale Street, R-80 Zone.
Mr. Meytrott made a motion seconded by Mr. Reilly to adopt the resolution.
Voting yes: Donlon, Heinzl, Levy, Meytrott, Ogren, Reilly, Thompson.
Absent: Blackwell, O'Neill, Persichilli

John & Karen Cappello, Block 101, Lot 3, 145 W. Franklin Avenue, R-100 Zone.
Ms. Donlon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Meytrott to adopt the resolution with modification. Voting yes: Donlon, Heinzl, Levy, Meytrott, Ogren, Reilly, Thompson.
Absent: Blackwell, O'Neill, Persichilli

ZONING OFFICER

Mr. Thompson stated that Mr. Flemming had an application for a deck to be added to the rear of the house and had asked him to check with the Board to see if he could use "Chapter 215-50 Permitted yard area modifications. B. Side yards." The Board agreed that they had previously discussed this and had agreed that it would remain in the Code book and residents may use it as a right. The Zoning Officer may use it in approving zoning permits without going to the Board. Mr. Schmierer stated that Ms. Coppola pointed out that you do the math in the formula and you do not need a variance, but you cannot go beyond the setbacks of the existing house. Ms. Coppola stated that there is another provision 215-57

which states “...no restoration, repair, reconstruction or alteration shall in any way enlarge or extend any nonconforming structure or nonconforming use.” and must be applied. The nonconformity cannot be increased.

WORK SESSION, CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Mistretta announced that she had not received any applications for the June Planning Board meeting. It was agreed that the Application Review Committee scheduled for May 18th and the June 8th Planning Board meeting be cancelled.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary W. Mistretta
Planning Board Secretary