

PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Meeting Minutes
August 31, 2016
DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: Boland, Lazzaro, Masi, Prommel, Richardson, Rome, Haff

MEMBERS ABSENT: Palombi, Green

ALSO PRESENT: Lyn Aaroe, Esq.
Eileen Banyra, P.P.
David Simmons, P. E.

Chairman Haff called the meeting to order at 7:05 P. M. with the statement that this meeting is in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, Sections 4 and 13, as advertised by Annual Notice. If the applicant is a partnership or corporation, an attorney must represent it. No new applications will be heard after 10:00 P. M. No new testimony will be heard after 11:00 P. M.

Mr. Haff invited all present to participate in the salute to the flag.

MINUTES

Mr. Masi moved acceptance if the minutes for the June 20, 2016 meeting as posted and waived reading. Mr. Boland second. Roll call vote: In favor, Rome, Richardson, Boland, Masi, Lazzaro and Haff. Opposed, none. So moved.

CORRESPONDENCE

As shown on the attached agenda.

RESOLUTIONS

None

ADJOURNED CASES

23 Players Blvd, LLC, Block 1802, Lot 8.02, Preliminary Major Site Plan, App. # 710-2016

Mr. Aaroe spoke of the ground work that had been done and spoke of the usual procedure. Rather than Mr. Simmons reading his report into the record it was felt that the applicant should present their case first and perhaps their testimony would address completeness issues.

Mr. Steven Schepis, attorney for the applicant introduced himself, along with David Egarian, P.E., Matt Smetana, R. A., Doug Fullerton, project landscaper, Jill Hartman, P. P., and Perry Bonadies, property owner of 23 Players Blvd. and the applicant.

Mr. Egarian was sworn in for testimony at this time. The Board accepted his qualifications as an expert witness. Mr. Egarian referred to drawing two, plan dated May 9, 2016, in their plan set, which was marked into evidence as A-1. He gave an overview of the existing buildings and driveways.

Mr. Egarian then referred to drawing five of the plan set which showed the proposed 9656 square foot two-story addition with a proposed deck of 1453 square feet. He explained that the existing building was shown in white and the proposed addition is shown in grey. The drawing was marked into evidence as A-2.

Mr. Egarian explained that ingress to the property will remain the same, but they have moved the handicapped spaces to the front of the building, and handicapped persons will enter the building through a ramp walkway and if they need to go downstairs there is an elevator. There

is parallel parking in the front. The main ingress is going to be through the driveway and traffic will be coming by car and by buses. People will disembark at that location. Referring to drawing number three, marking it into evidence as Exhibit A-3, Mr. Egarian noted that individuals can exit the building at grade and walk up the walkway

to the trellis where there will be outdoor ceremonies. The main parking will remain the back. Mr. Egarian stated that the existing buildings in the back remain unchanged, which will serve as storage and the existing parking lot will remain unchanged. Mr. Egarian explained that the x'd out area in front of the building indicated a porte cochere, which will afford covered access. People can pull beneath the porte cochere and disembark and go into the building. He added that all parking in this facility will be by valet parking. There will be no self-parking. The height of the porte cochere will be 14-feet, which will be high enough for a both buses and fire engines to go under.

Mr. Egarian referred to the lighting and utility plan, revised through August 26, 2016, gave an overview of the plan, stating some existing lighting would continue to be used, with some additional lighting planned. He stated that the only security lighting that will be on through the night would be the carriage lights in the front and the soffit lights in the back on the deck. The main lights will go off when the facility shuts down at night. Ms. Banyra asked if there would be lighting under the car port. Mr. Egarian stated that there would be recessed lighting located there.

Mr. Egarian gave an overview of the utility plan which consist of water electric and sewer, adding that the building will retain the existing utility connections. The 45K emergency generator will run on propane. It will be located at the northwest corner of the building. There will be two sets of 1,000 tanks, a total of four tanks that will be located underground within the island.

Mr. Egarian spoke of the parking at the site, stating that they are proposing 119 spaces on the site, which includes the handicapped parking and the parallel parking in the front of the building. He added that Mr. Bonadies will comment on the adequacy of the parking spaces.

Mr. Egarian referred back to drawing number three and the large sign that is going to be on Route 94, which exists on the large stone wall. The wall will stay the same size; just the wording will change to "Bear Brook Valley". Additional signage will be changed on the large piece of ledge rock as you make the left off of Players Boulevard. An additional sign will be placed in the center of the landscaped circular area near the waterfall. The sign will say "Bear Brook Valley". Some discussion was held regarding the needed for additional signage to alert a visitor of the upcoming left turn off of Player Boulevard. Mr. Shepis suggested that they could come up with a directional sign with the assistance of the homeowner's association.

Mr. Perry Bonadies, owner of Bear Brook Valley was sworn in for testimony at this time. Mr. Bonadies was asked to clarify the location of the stand pipe for the fire department. Mr. Bonadies indicated that the stand pipe was located at the front left side of the building near where the offices are located. Mr. Shepis asked if cars were parked there would fire trucks still get by them. Mr. Bonadies stated yes. Mr. Richardson asked where the closest fire hydrant was. Mr. Egarian stated that there is a hydrant on the left of the parking lot.

Douglas Fullerton, landscape architect was sworn in for testimony. Mr. Fullerton reviewed the landscaping plan, entered in as Exhibit A-4. He reviewed the parking layout, circulation for wedding events. Ms. Banyra asked what types of trees were proposed for planting. Mr. Fullerton stated that they were ornamental shade trees. Mr. Fullerton explained the water features that were planned, including the waterfall for circular area.

Mr. Smetana, Licensed Professional Architect was sworn in for testimony at this time. Referring to Exhibit A-5, he gave an overview of the existing facility, and explained where the addition to the facility would take place. Mr. Smetana stated that the existing facility is 10,409 square feet and the finished square footage would be 20,307 square feet.

Mr. Smetana explained that the circular area would be the main entrance and the second floor of that area would be the bridal suite. This rendering was marked as Exhibit A-6.

He explained that they were hoping to achieve a barn-like feeling, using natural stone, hardie board, board and batten siding and the silo appearance. The exterior rendering was marked into evidence as Exhibit A-7.

Marked into evidence was Exhibit A-8, the Ballroom rendering, which was an interior view of the upper banquet room coming in from the porte cochere. The cocktail hour will be held at the lower level of the building. Once the cocktail hour is done the guests will proceed up the staircase or use the existing elevator to the banquet area. The banquet hall is all wide open, with a bar located in the existing area. Off the right side there is a deck which is partially covered. Off of the banquets area in the round room is the bridal suite. Some office space will be added under the existing deck.

Marked into evidence was Exhibit A-9, last revised 8/31/2016. Discussion was held regarding the height of the turret. Mr. Smetana stated that his calculations indicated that the average grade was 35 feet. The cupola is five feet above the highest point of the structure. According to the ordinance the cupola can be four feet above height of the roof, per his calculations it is eight inches above the highest point of the turret. The height complies with the current zoning ordinance.

Exhibit A-10, the porte cochere, was marked into evidence. The porte cochere was created to have a way for guests to drive under for drop off and pick-up and be protected from the weather. The porte cochere will be a timber structure, with the columns being manufactured stone. The roof will be shingles. Some discussion was held regarding the need for a height variance, but the calculations demonstrate that there is no need for a height variance.

Mr. Perry Bonadies, owner, stepped forward at this time. Mr. Bonadies stated that they currently own the Rock Island Lake Club, a facility similar to this one. Mr. Bonadies has been in this business for twenty seven years. Mr. Bonadies gave an overview of the operational aspect of the facility. He stated that the maximum capacity of the facility is 350-400, seated. For cocktail parties they would accommodate more as they are standing. Mr. Bonadies stated that there would be no more than two functions per day, with there only ever being one wedding per day. Mr. Bonadies stated that the wedding party will come in through the front entrance and go to the bridal suite. The trellis exhibit was marked into evidence as exhibit A-10. The trellis would be used for the outside ceremony venue.

Mr. Bonadies discussed the use of shuttle buses in conjunction with the local hotels. He feels that the parking is more than adequate due to the use of the shuttle buses. Mr. Bonadies stated that there would be no parking on any of the other streets in the area.

Wedding parking will be done by valets. Ms. Banyra asked if the valets will be stacking cars. Mr. Bonadies stated that they will not be stacking the parking. Mr. Bonadies stated that there would not be a la cart dining, it will be all private parties.

Mr. Bonadies commented that weddings will take place on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, with Saturdays being the busiest. He stated that 80-90% of the ceremonies take place on site. He anticipated that there could be company outings or meetings, a women's brunch. Mr. Bonadies has worked with the Homeowner's Association and has a signed agreement with them. Additionally, he has worked with Aqua NJ regarding the water and sewer utilities.

Mr. Rome asked if there would be fireworks on site. Mr. Bonadies stated that this would not be an issue he would push.

Mr. Richardson asked that Bear Brook Valley be advertised as "Fredon". Mr. Bonadies agreed.

Ms. Banyra asked if there was going to be any amplification of sound outside, also asking if there were going to be live bands or DJs. Mr. Bonadies stated that 80-90% of the music would be provided by DJs. Music will be primarily contained within the building, some music during the ceremony or during the cocktail hour may be heard outside, but it will be projected across the lake.

Ms. Banyra asked what the two out buildings will be used for. Mr. Bonadies stated that at this time he just planned to use them for parking and storage.

Attorney Elnardo Webster of the firm Inglesino, Webster, Wyciskala, Taylor, LLC stepped forward with questions at this time. Mr. Webster questioned why they did not receive a copy of the stormwater management report per their OPRA request that was made last week. Mr. Aaroe asked for clarification as to who Mr. Webster was representing. Mr. Webster stated that he represented 1 Players' Blvd., Empire Tax Bonds, LLC, tax sale certificate buyers. They own Block 1802, Lot 71, but are in the process of foreclosing on other lots.

Mr. Webster noted that revised plans had been submitted that they had not had an opportunity to review as they had been submitted less than the ten days prior to a meeting as required by the MLUL. He also noted that he had arrived for the meeting this evening at 7:20 P. M. and the meeting was already in progress. Mr. Aaroe stated that our meetings begin at 7:00 P.M. and have been at that time for quite some time. Mr. Webster indicated that the applicant had noticed for a 7:30 P. M. meeting.

Mr. Webster, questioning Mr. Egarian regarding the Environmental Impact Statement prepared August 29, 2016 which indicates that the maximum capacity could be up to 500 people. He noted that Mr. Egarian used 354 seats for all of the calculations. Mr. Webster asked where the parking assumptions were derived. Mr. Egarian stated that it was from information from the applicant. Mr. Webster suggested that the calculations that should have been used should have been what applied to restaurants. Mr. Egarian stated that the 119 spaces is more than adequate for the facility as it is proposed.

Mr. Wester questioned how many employees would be there, and where they would be parking. Mr. Bonadies stated that the amount of employees would vary, with some being there during the day, prior to the event.

Mr. Webster asked to be shown where deferred parking was originally proposed. Deferred parking was approved along either side of the back driveway. Mr. Webster asked why the deferred parking had been eliminated. Mr. Egarian stated that the deferred parking fell within the riparian buffer. Mr. Webster asked if it was taken into account that public transportation would be available. Mr. Egarian stated no, that it was assumed that most guests would arrive by car or shuttle bus.

Mr. Schepis addressed the notice issue that Mr. Webster raised and with the incorrect time that was advertised. He suggested that the Board revisit the first part of the meeting and the testimony that was given. Mr. Aaroe stated that there is no way that this application can be acted upon this evening, and we do not have a completeness hearing, generally. He suggested that Mr. Schepis have a transcript prepared for the period of time that Mr. Webster was absent for. Mr. Schepis felt this was acceptable and would order a copy of the CD and have the first half hour transcribed. Mr. Aaroe recommended that we discontinue the administration of this application until the interested party's attorney has an opportunity to review the late filings. Mr. Webster was satisfied with these suggestions. He would also like revised plans and a

copy of the stormwater management plan.

At this time the meeting was opened to the public.

Jeff Potocki of Pine Valley Road questioned what changes in lighting could affect his back yard. Mr. Aaroe stated that had already been reviewed. Mr. Potocki noted that the notice of public hearing he received indicated that the meeting started at 7:30 P. M. so he had missed that part of the meeting. Mr. Aaroe stated that lighting would be reviewed again at the September 19th meeting.

Mr. William Kochis of 16 Fredonia Road voiced concern about the noise level and the lights.

There being no further comment from the public the meeting was closed to the public at this time.

Ms. Jill Hartmann, P. P. was sworn in for testimony at this time. Ms. Hartmann's qualifications were accepted by the Board. Ms. Hartmann spoke of the signs that are proposed for the property, noting that they are all unobtrusive and in scale, most are integrated into the architecture of the neighborhood. In most cases they are using existing signage. Directional signs will need to be addressed with the Homeowners Association.

Mr. Haff asked if there were any questions at this time. No response.

Mr. Lazzaro made a motion to carry the application to the September 19, 2016 meeting at 7:00 P. M., with no further notice. Mr. Masi second. Roll call vote: In favor, Rome, Richardson, Prommel, Boland, Masi, Lazzaro and Haff. Opposed, none. So moved.

Mr. Schepsis offered a copy of the transcript of the first half hour of the meeting to anyone who wanted one.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

LIAISON REPORTS

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Discussion was held regarding the trailer located at the Moose Lodge. It had been removed for their Clam Bake, but have since replaced it. It was the Board's understanding that they had been asked by the Code Enforcement to remove the trailer by August 1, 2016.

Township Committee

Mr. Richardson mentioned that the Township Committee was approached by Sussex County Community College regarding land they own in Fredon Township. They would like to have that parcel annexed to the Town of Newton.

Mr. Richardson also spoke of the brick home across the highway from the municipal building, adding that the homeowner has offered to sell the property to the Township. The property is contiguous to Lodestar Park and to the Civic Center property.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Richardson made a motion to adjourn at 9:16 P. M. Mr. Masi second. All in favor. So moved.

Respectfully submitted,

**Debra Prommel
Acting Planning Board Secretary**

