



Bernards Township Environmental Commission



BERNARDS TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES – July 27, 2020 – 7pm

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Debra DeWitt called the meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Warren Craft Meeting Room in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act of 1975.

FLAG SALUTE

All those assembled saluted the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Debra DeWitt, Jane Conklin, Nancy Cook, Joan Harris (Phone), Ann Parsekian (Phone), John Crane (Phone), Mahwish Mustafa (Phone)

Absent: James LaMaire, Alice Smyk

Also Present: Todd Edelstein – Resident, Kaitlin Cartoccio – Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve EC regular meeting minutes – June 22, 2020 by Ann Parsekian, second by Jane Conklin. All in favor, motion carried.

REPORTS & MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

a. Application for Freshwater Wetlands LOI-111 Cherry Lane

No comments

OLD BUSINESS

a. MOYE-PB-17-001-B1140, L11-11 Mountain Rd – Minor Subdivision (Revised Plans)

John Crane recused himself at 7:06 pm. Unable to review without looking at the revised plans. Tabled until the next meeting. John Crane returned at 7:08 pm.

Motion by Debra DeWitt, seconded by Ann Parsekian.

All in favor, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. LINCOLN AVENUE GOSPEL HALL-ZB 20-006-3265 Valley Rd – Perl/Final Site Plan, Conditional Use (d-3) variance, bulk variance to use existing dwelling as a house of worship.

Comments to be prepared based on tree replacement. The Commission would like to see a tree removal and replacement plan with the goal of using native hardwood species where practical and that trees do not intrude on the property line. The Commission agrees with David Shley's memo to put them on the east side of the driveway as they may be more useful



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against the eastern edge of the parking lot to help shield car headlights. The Commission notes the lack of details regarding the recharge of stormwater as part of the proposed development and note the soil type should be checked for pervious/impervious surfaces.

Motion by Jane Conklin, seconded by Nancy Cook.

All in favor, motion carried.

b. McCRONE-ZB 20-011-55 DECKER ST – Widen driveway.

John Crane recused himself at 7:23 pm. Comments to be prepared based on the proposed lot coverage is it exceeds the required amount. Increased impervious coverage increases the volume (quantity) of stormwater runoff, which can contribute to local and potentially area wide flooding. Site drainage is the concern with this application, therefore site features to promote stormwater infiltration should be considered.

Motion by Debra Dewitt, seconded by Mahwish Mustafa.

All in favor, motion carried.

c. KEARNS-PB 20-002-174 SOUTH FINLEY AVE- Pre/Final major subdivision bulk variances.

Comments to be prepared to remind applicants that they are virtually at capacity on lot coverage and that any future additions would put them over the limit of impervious surface coverage. Occupant may want to consider impervious surface coverage. Should the lots be sold separately, it may impact the driveway since they are already at capacity. The Commission would also like to note if any tree permits have been taken out and will be replaced, and if there is a tree replacement plan. The Commission recommends a discussion of the environmental impacts and mitigation or reduction strategies since the applicant asked for a waiver of an environmental impact plan. The Commission suggests to review the architecture of the building in accordance with #12 of Master Plan part of the Basking Ridge village streetscape. The Commission requests a review of the proposed architecture.

Motion by Debra DeWitt , seconded by Nancy Cook.

All in favor, motion carried.

John Crane returned at 7:42 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Todd Edelstein mentioned he could not get ahold of the Zoom meeting in June and did not care for the current format in person due to the many phones and not being able to see the documents during the board members discussions. He asked if any of the bags or water bottles were purchased for Charter Day. Asked question to clarify the location of the Valley Road



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property.

COMMENTS BY MEMBERS

Ann Parsekian made comments praising the digital plans. She will pursue the Zoom capability for future meetings. The Zoom meeting made hearing others much easier. Several members commented they were uncomfortable in person with the face coverings. Debra DeWitt mentioned that they would have to make sure the public was looped in. Todd Edelstein commented that he was unable to view any of the plans. A virtual meeting would have to have the plans available for the public to view and a way for them to make comments.

Trex Challenge an plastic bag status at the DPW. Jorge Casecuberta says nothing has proceeded assuming the A&P would be unable to process the bags. The Commission knows that DPW is working very hard to catch up with other matters but is wondering how to proceed.

Regarding the reusable bag challenge, all members agreed it would be great to do, but the logistics may not work given the pandemic.

John Crane commented that the next meeting should be able to accommodate more than 2 people and that Zoom should be an option and have members of the public email in questions. He also thanked the members of the Commission who were present.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm. Motion by Debra DeWitt , seconded by Nancy Cook All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Kaitlin Cartoccio, Meeting Secretary
Edited 9/13/20



Bernards Township Environmental Commission

TO: Planning Board Chairperson and Members

FROM: Debra DeWitt, Vice Chair
Bernards Township Environmental Commission

DATE: July 27, 2020

RE: Application Reviews

1. MOYE – PB17-001-B1140, L11-11 Mountain Road

The Environmental Commission has no additional comments at this time.

2. KEARNS – PB20-002, 174 South Finley Avenue

The Environmental Commission has reviewed this application and offers the following comments:

- a. With the planned subdivision of the property, both lots will be at close to maximum lot coverage. The Commission would ask the Board to remind the applicants that any future additions such as patios, sheds, pools, or another other impervious surface coverage items would put them over the limit. The applicant may want to consider reducing the amount of impervious coverage to allow for the possibility.
- b. Along the same lines, the driveway will be shared between the 2 lots. Should the lots be sold separately in the future, the Commission recommends discussion about whether the shared driveway will need to remain shared so as not to exceed coverage on either lot.
- c. The applicant should demonstrate how storm water control will be addressed.
- d. The Commission notes the absence of information regarding any tree removal permits as well as a tree removal and replacement plan. Regarding this application, the Environmental Commission feels that long-term tree survivability should be the goal of any tree replacement plan and that native hardwood species should be selected whenever practicable.
- e. The applicant is requesting a waiver for producing an Environmental Impacts Assessment Report. However, the Commission suggests discussion by the Applicant regarding the impact to the environment of this application and what mitigating actions will be implemented to minimize the impact.
- f. The Commission urges discussion of the architecture of the proposed building and the visual impact of the new building to the downtown streetscape pursuant to Master Plan Goal #12 and Historic Preservation Objective #1.



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TO: Zoning Board Chairperson and Members

FROM: Debra DeWitt, Vice Chair
Bernards Township Environmental Commission

DATE: July 28, 2020

RE: **Application Reviews**

The Environmental Commission has reviewed the applications listed below at its July 27, 2020 meeting and submits the following comments for consideration.

1. LINCOLN AVENUE GOSPEL HALL – ZB20-006, 3265 Valley Road

The landscape plan indicates the planting of a line of trees along the easternmost border of the neighboring lot.

- a. Kindly remind the applicant that long-term tree survivability should be the goal of any plan and native hardwood and deer-resistant trees and plantings should be selected whenever practical.
- b. Consideration should be given for the future growth of the trees that are planted not impede/intrude across the property line into the neighbor's lot. Please allow sufficient space for canopy growth.
- c. The Commission would like to echo David Schley's comments advising that a better idea is to move the trees and plantings away from the property line and put them along the east side of the parking lot as a more effective solution to light and noise impacts.

The applicant is adding 6,222 feet of additional impervious surface, exceeding lot coverage allowed in that zone. Increased impervious coverage increases the volume (quantity) of stormwater runoff, which can contribute to local and potentially area wide flooding. Site drainage is the concern with this application.

- a. The Commission recommends discussion regarding recharge as it is not clear how stormwater will be addressed.
- b. The Commission recommends the applicant to provide soil testing results to indicate soil type to determine if there is a concern regarding site drainage/stormwater runoff.
- c. The Commission recommends the applicant discuss the feasibility of pervious surface solutions for parking to reduce impervious lot coverage.



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2. McCRONE – ZB20-011, 55 Decker Street

The Environmental Commission notes the proposed lot coverage exceeds the required amount. Increased impervious coverage increases the volume (quantity) of stormwater runoff, which can contribute to local and potentially area wide flooding. Site drainage is the concern with this application, therefore site features to promote stormwater infiltration should be considered. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Infrastructure website is a good reference for “green” stormwater management practices for homeowners (<http://www.nj.gov/dep/gi/>)