

**BERNARDS TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MINUTES**<sub>v2</sub>  
Regular Meeting  
May 2, 2017

Vice Chairman Piedici called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

**FLAG SALUTE**

**OPEN MEETING STATEMENT**

Vice Chairman Piedici read the following open meeting and procedural statement:

"In accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law of 1975, notice of this regular meeting of the Planning Board of the Township of Bernards was posted on the bulletin board in the reception hall of the Municipal Building, Collyer Lane, Basking Ridge, NJ, was mailed to the Bernardsville News, Bernardsville, NJ, and to the Courier News, Bridgewater, NJ, and was mailed to all those people who have requested individual notice and paid the required fee."

"The following procedure has been adopted by the Bernards Township Planning Board. There will be no new cases heard after 10:00 PM. and no new witnesses or testimony heard after 10:30 PM."

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Axt, Baldassare, Gaziano, Harris, Moschello, Piedici, Ross  
Members Absent: Malay, Kleinert, Plaza and Zaidel were announced as "recused" during Roll Call  
Also Present: Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Esq; Township Planner David Schley, PP, AICP; Board Planner David Banisch, PP, AICP; Board Engineer Thomas J. Quinn, PE; Board Secretary Cyndi Kiefer

**Committee Selection**

Vice Chairman Piedici asked for volunteers to serve on the Landscaping Committee for Bishop Janes United Methodist Church (#PB10-001). Mr. Baldassare, Mr. Moschello and Mr. Ross volunteered.

**Public Hearing**

- Somerset County YMCA; Block 2401, Lots 6 & 7.01; 140 Mount Airy Road; #PB17-002, Preliminary/Final Site Plan Phase 1, Preliminary Site Plan Phase 2

Counselor Drill asked all those board members who had recused themselves from hearing this application to leave the room. Mr. Baldassare and Mayor Gaziano left.

Present: Michael Osterman, Esq., counsel for the applicant  
David Carcieri, President and CEO of the Somerset County YMCA  
Gary W. Dean, PP, PE, traffic consultant for the applicant  
John Peel, PP, environmental consultant for the applicant  
Robert C. Moschello, PE, engineer for the applicant  
George Marks, AIA, architect for the applicant

Michael Osterman, attorney with *Carroll, McNulty & Kull LLC*, Basking Ridge, NJ, advised the board members that he represented the applicant, Somerset County YMCA (SCYMCA) and noted that he was also a member of their Board of Trustees. He added that this was a nonprofit association with facilities in Hillsborough, Somerville, Bridgewater and on Mount Airy Road. The latter facility was the subject of this application.

Counselor Osterman advised the board members that in 2013 the SCYMCA had presented an application (#PB13-002) which had been memorialized in March of 2014. That application contained two (2) phases. Phase 1 had received approval for Preliminary and Final Site Plan for expansion of the recreational use of the back yard of Lot 7.01. Phase 2 received Preliminary Site Plan approval for a gym addition of 7,049 sq. ft. along with bulk variances on the same lot.

Counselor Osterman stated that the current application (#PB17-002) was seeking an amended approval so that the two (2) phases could be "flip-flopped." Phase 1 would now be the addition for which the applicant was seeking Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval (along with associated bulk variances). Phase 2 would now be the expansion of the use of the back yard and the applicant was seeking Preliminary approval only for that project.

Counselor Osterman noted that the addition would be approximately the same size as the one approved in the previous application (#PB13-002) however it was the Wellness Center that was being expanded. The back yard projects remained unchanged.

Counselor Drill clarified by stating that originally the applicant had received Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval for Phase 1 (back yard) and Preliminary Site Plan approval for Phase 2 which was the gym addition (#PB13-002). The *current* application (#PB17-002) requested *amended* Preliminary and Final for Phase 1 (Wellness Center addition) and only *amended* Preliminary Site Plan approval for Phase 2 (backyard).

Counselor Drill swore in all the applicant's professionals listed above as well as the Board's professionals.

David Carcieri, President and CEO of the Somerset County YMCA, explained the reasons for the proposed changes. The Somerset Hills YMCA had merged with the Somerset County YMCA effective January 1, 2015. Because of that merger, they had undertaken a comprehensive community facilities development analysis which identified critical shortcomings in the Somerset Hills facility (140 Mount Airy Road). Special needs programs were growing and the facility did not have the appropriate space. There were multiple physical barriers for seniors and special needs individuals in the fitness area. Compared to the national standards, there was not enough open space per member for group exercise and fitness. Mr. Carcieri added that the projects scheduled in Phase 2 (back yard) were being postponed since projects in other facilities in the county had taken on a higher priority status.

A discussion ensued about the demographics of the SCYMCA membership. Mr. Carcieri stated that he did not expect the membership to grow since the region's population was stable. The expansion was meant to provide a better experience for the existing members. Currently air ventilation was not good and there was not enough room to bring in up-to-date machines. The need for more space for floor exercising and stretching was a reoccurring theme that was voiced when the members were polled. Difficulty in navigating the current floor plan of the building was also mentioned regularly.

In response to a question from Board Member Moschello, Mr. Carcieri said that none of the neighbors had any complaints however in an effort to be pro-active, the applicant had installed fencing to shield the neighbors from headlights in the winter.

Mr. Banisch asked if there would be an expansion in the amount of exercise equipment. Mr. Carcieri responded that they had not developed a floor plan for the equipment pieces but that the biggest concern was to provide more open space.

A discussion about the adequacy of parking during peak usage times ensued. Mr. Carcieri stated that since the parking lot had been expanded in 2013, there had been no issues. Only during swim meets (3 Saturdays per year) did they approach full capacity.

The demographics of the existing membership were then questioned and Mr. Carcieri reiterated that the goal of the project was not to attract additional members but to better serve the existing membership base.

Hearing no further questions from either the board members or the public, Vice Chairman Piedici closed this portion of the meeting to the public.

George Marks, AIA, architect with *Kramer & Marks Architects*, Ambler, PA, was introduced by Counselor Osterman as the architect for the applicant. Mr. Marks stated that he had been an architect since 1990 and that his license in New Jersey was in good standing. He added that his firm specialized in designing YMCA facilities. They had designed over 50 such facilities on the east coast and were considered one of the top 7 in this field.

Vice Chairman Piedici accepted Mr. Marks as an expert in architecture.

Mr. Marks introduced a paper copy of the power point presentation as **Exhibit A-1**. He then gave a brief overview of the three (3) main components of the facility: aquatics, gymnasium and wellness/fitness center. He noted that in the past, one piece of equipment would serve three (3) functions however the current trend was towards one piece for each individual function along with more open space as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The existing Wellness Fitness Center was 8,200 to 8,500 square feet when it should be 14-15,000 square feet. Adding a second story would increase program space. Each floor would be approximately 7,200 square feet and this increase in space would accommodate the two main components of a wellness center: cardio/fitness and programs. The footprint would remain the same as that approved in the last application with the exception of an added stairwell.

In response to a question from Mr. Ross, Mr. Marks stated that the existing elevator would accommodate the proposed facility. He added that the existing façade would be continued.

Mr. Marks addressed a comment in Mr. Schley's April 27, 2017 memo relating to the Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element of the 2010 Master Plan by stating that the YMCA had a policy of being as green as possible.

Counselor Osterman referred to Item #6 in the same memo concerning architectural elevations and agreed to show any roof mounted utility equipment with means of screening. He noted that there would be new HVAC equipment but it would not be seen.

Hearing no further questions from either the board members or the public, Vice Chairman Piedici closed this portion of the meeting to the public.

Robert Moschello, PE, engineer with *Gladstone Design Inc.*, Gladstone, NJ, was introduced as the next witness. He summarized his qualifications and advised Vice Chairman Piedici that he had been accepted many times in the Township of Bernards as an expert in engineering.

Vice Chairman Piedici accepted Engineer Moschello as an expert in engineering.

Engineer Moschello showed an aerial view of the Mount Airy Road facility and described the facility and grounds. He noted that behind was a large area of environmentally constrained land with two (2) stream corridors. There had been a Letter of Interpretation (LOI) which was valid through 2016. Modified buffers had been placed in easements with the Township and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Under this new application, the addition was still in the same location as it was in the previous 2014 approval: 14,534 square feet in two stories. The only proposed change was a stair tower outside of the building. The Floor-Area-Ratio (FAR) was in compliance. The existing shed along with the existing staircase would be removed. The proposed 2017 Phase 2 was the same as was approved in 2014 as Phase 1. He proposed to place 2/3 of the approved open air basin underground so that a small turf field, volleyball court and multipurpose amphitheater could be built along with some sidewalks and pathways. In addition, the applicant would enhance the remaining 1/3 with more plantings which would result in better water quality runoff. The emergency access area requested by the fire department was illustrated on the plans with cross-hatching.

In response to a memo from Mr. Quinn, Engineer Moschello stated that there would be no need for additional stormwater management until Phase 2 began. He added that there would be no additional lighting proposed other than those lights that were required on the building itself.

Counselor Drill asked for verification that all the conditions stipulated in the March 27, 2014 resolution of approval would be carried over to this application, should it be approved.

Engineer Moschello and Counselor Osterman agreed.

Engineer Moschello stipulated to Item #9 in Mr. Schley's memo of April 27, 2017 which referred to the amendment of the existing Stormwater Detention Facility Maintenance Agreement and said that it would be completed after Phase 2.

Counselor Drill outlined the timetable for approvals and asked Counselor Osterman if he wanted to request an extension of time. Counselor Osterman asked to confer with the applicant and Vice Chairman Piedici called for a recess at 9:09 PM.

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The hearing was reconvened at 9:23 PM.

After conferring with the applicant, Counselor Osterman asked for three (3) years to obtain a construction permit and two (2) years to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy for Phase 1 and five (5) years to obtain Final Site Plan approval for Phase 2. Counselor Drill advised the board members that the Municipal Land Use Laws allowed the applicant to ask for an extension ahead of time.

Hearing no further questions from either the board members or the public, Vice Chairman Piedici closed this portion of the meeting to the public.

Gary W. Dean, PE, PP, traffic engineer with *Dolan & Dean Consulting Engineers LLC*, Martinsville, NJ, advised the board members that he had appeared on many occasions before this Board as an expert in traffic engineering and that his license was in good standing. He added that he had been associated with this applicant since 2001. Vice Chairman Piedici acknowledged Mr. Dean as an expert in traffic engineering.

Mr. Dean had prepared a report updating the traffic study which was originally done in 2012. He had reevaluated the traffic conditions to and from the site along with parking trends and concluded that very little had changed between the study done in June of 2012 and that of November 2016. He stated that because the population in the community and surrounding areas had reached full build out, the membership had stagnated and no significant increase was to be expected. He added that if there was a 17% increase in membership bringing it to 20,000, the level of service would be maintained at its current level. Even during swim meets, the increase in parking could support up to 21,000 therefore, in his opinion, there was abundant parking for this expansion. There would be no detrimental traffic impact even with a conservative 17% increase in membership.

Mr. Dean then addressed concerns about egress and ingress congestion by stating that there had been improvements made over the years namely by creating a separate egress and ingress off Mt. Airy Road.

Further discussion ensued about the adequacy of the parking.

Vice Chairman Piedici asked the board members if they had any further questions for Mr. Dean. Hearing none, she asked if there were any questions from the public. Hearing none, she closed this portion of the meeting to the public. Since Counselor Osterman did not want to deliver a summation, Vice Chairman Piedici opened the hearing to deliberations.

Mr. Ross motioned to approve the application with conditions. Board Member Moschello seconded.

**Roll Call**

Aye:	Axt, Harris, Piedici, Moschello, Ross
Nay:	NONE
Abstain:	NONE

Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cyndi Kiefer, Secretary  
Bernards Township  
Planning Board