

Lawrence Township Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2013

Present: Christopher Bobbitt
Ian J. Dember
Philip Duran
Richard S. Krawczun, Municipal Manager
Terrence Leggett
Michael Powers, Councilman
James Kownacki, Mayor
Glenn R. Collins
Doris M. Weisberg, Chairperson

Excused Absence: Aaron D. Duff
Kim Y. Taylor, Vice Chairperson

Absent: None

Also Present: James F. Parvesse, Municipal Engineer
Philip B. Caton, Clarke Caton & Hintz, Planning Consultant
Neil Yoskin, Planning Board Attorney
James Kochenour, Traffic Consultant
Susan Snook, Recording Secretary

1. **Statement of Proper Notice**

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Planning Board has been provided by filing the annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk as required by law, and by filing this agenda and notice with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building, and mailing to the Trenton Times, and the Lawrence Ledger newspapers.

2. **Public Participation (for items no on the agenda)**

None

3. **Minutes for Approval**

Monday, October 7, 2013 minutes were unanimously approved.

4. **Resolutions**

- Resolution of Memorialization 21-13 approving Minor Subdivision with Variance Application No. S-3/13; **Ada Longo**, 72 and 80 Northbrook Avenue, Tax Map Page 13.02, Block 1316, Lots 66 & 67 was approved per unanimous vote.

5. **Applications:**

Major Site Plan – Preliminary & Final Approval with Variance Application No. SP-8/13; **Morris Hall Meadows at Lawrenceville**, 2381 Lawrence Road; Tax Map Page 49, Block 4901, Lot 1

Councilman Powers had a conflict and excused himself at 7:02 p.m.

Daniel Haggerty, Stark & Stark, attorney for the applicant introduced all witnesses and gave a brief introduction about Morris Hall which was built in 1904 on 64 ½ acres. In 1971, St. Lawrence Rehabilitation center was building on the Campus which had 166 licensed beds; in 1990 the original Morris Hall was knocked down and built a new building which had 120 skilled nursing beds with 98 assistant living beds which is called St. Mary's.

Exhibit A1 – Existing Morris Hall Facility & Proposed Morris Hall Meadows. St. Mary's Assistant Living is the side closest to I-95; St. Joseph is the other wing with 20 skilled nursing beds. In the early 1990's a retirement facility for priests (Villa Vianney). In 1997 an addition was built to the St. Lawrence Rehabilitation Center which is a larger up-to-date quality outpatient facility (which faces Lawrenceville-Pennington Road). In 2006/2007 a vision was for the 29 acres across the street to develop an independent living active adult community which was to be called Rosecliff. In September 1997 a site plan approval was grant to Rosecliff.

Exhibit A2 - Plans for Rosecliff. It consisted of 143 apartments which were in three 4-story buildings and 42 apartments or cottages. The project was not built because of economic distress.

Mr. Haggerty stated his applicant is seeking site plan approval to construct a skilled nursing long term facility which would be less institutional and smaller in scale with a neighborhood feeling. There are 12 proposed and six would be built in Phase I which would be 7,000 sf. It will consist of 10 residents to a building with a private bedroom with a private bathroom with community facilities.

Witness #1: Darlene Hanley, President & CEO. Ms. Hanley described that Morris Hall takes care of senior elders in care in a nursing home setting to provide for care and safety and to take care of them to their days end and in the St. Mary's assisted living support and nurture them as they transfer to St. Joseph hospital. St. Lawrence is the rehabilitation hospital with acute beds and have one unit dedicated to the long term care of the clergy of Trenton.

Mr. Hanley described why do the project Morris Hall Meadows. The model was developed by Dr. Bill Thomas who was a medical director of a nursing home in New York and in the long term care field and for the different care he put into the nursing care environment which was called the Eaton Alternative. Dr. Thomas asked for a grant and developed a concept to put a greenhouse community with the hope these homes were in every State and the hope that this concept would take off and more nursing homes would go in this direction. Ms. Hanley stated they are trying to de-institutionalize long term care nursing and meeting the needs of the elders as well as the staff.

The homes are very high tech and support the elderly. The staff is highly trained care givers that and they have to do cooking in the home, clearing, physical therapy; they set their own schedules. There will be a back yard a porch in the front and safety controls are built in. Each unit will have a private room with a private bath. The goal is move beds out of Morris Hall and to create additional houses and convert Morris Hall to private rooms.

Mr. Haggerty stated there were three major issues raised and one was about the western side of the tract and nothing will be done; the second issues had to do with noise. Ms. Hanley stated there were no complaints or issues regarding noise and in the summer St. Mary's residents will have the windows open on the first and second floor. Mr. Caton asked if there were any special noise features proposed. Mr. Haggerty stated the units closest to I-95 will have special glass and continued that Rosecliff had a variance relief for 11 of the cottages to have a 150 setback from I-95 and no variances are being requested for this application. Mr. Haggerty stated that Morris Hall will not ask the Township to put up a sound wall.

The last issue was due to pedestrian improvements and Rosecliff development was going to install a sidewalk and part of this proposal there will not be a sidewalk because the elderly will not be walking so a sidewalk is not necessary. Mr. Haggerty stated that Morris Hall is agreeing to install a sidewalk along the entire Franklin Corner Road frontage (about 1,000') per the reports and is also agreeing to install a sidewalk between to where the crosswalk is at Route 206 back to the Morris Hall Meadows development to Mill Road and then will extend the sidewalk in the development and around the road. Mr. Haggerty also stated about extending the paving (Mill Road) up to the emergency access is to the driveway at 1 Mill Road and also the location of the parking lot for 24 cars and if this parking lot could be split so that the parking would be more convenient to the staff. Mr. Krawczun asked Ms. Hanley to describe how many staff members would be assigned to each unit and what the shifts are. Ms. Hanley stated the shifts are three 8 hour shifts (7:30 – 3:30; 3:30 – 11:30 and 11:30 – 7:30 (give or take a half hour). Each house will have two caregivers and one nurse travels among two houses during the day and during the evening it is one nurse for three houses.

Mr. Caton questioned the numbers of nurses and staffing stationed are they going to park at the main facility or go directly to the cottages. Ms. Hanley stated there are arrangements for the staff to be shuttled over. Ms. Hanley stated the western side has issues like stormwater management, connections with water, noise issues and the cost.

Witness #2: Allen Kopelson, Architect, submitted a report dated September 9, 2013, copy attached.

Mr. Kopelson described the greenhouse module; see Exhibit A3 – Site Plan & Photographs (in West Orange) called the Greenhouses at Greenhill (as an example). This was the first project for this type to be built in New Jersey and built from grant money. This is a not a totally new idea how to deal with the senior or aging population and get them out of an institutional module and get them into a community type facility. The greenhouse is to develop houses (cottages) which represent home and when the senior leaves home, and goes to Morris Hall, it is a hospital or institutional setting; and this is to get away from that idea.

Exhibit A1 – Overall Site Plan in relationship to project.

Exhibit A-4 – Blow up of the Site Plan for the Acreage at the eastern end of the site. It represents 12 cottages that are laid out in a similar manner as in West Orange. The idea is to create a neighborhood in a park like setting. The streets are not straight and will have a narrower lane (not a 2-way where you need 24'), but to make it smaller and reduced it to 20' and made it one-way. This roadway meets all the requirements for fire, rescue and police.

The project will be built in two phases. Phase 1 is six houses that are in the center of the project and Phase 2 are six additional units that surround the other side of the lane that goes around the property. Staff parking will be far away to get it away from the intimacy of the neighborhood. There is an area closest to the highway that is out of the way but convenient for the staff to park (at the southern portion of the site) closest to the ramp. It is a distance from the parking lot to the further unit about 450' walking.

The lane will be widened to allow parallel parking in front of the units for visitors and to be able to get the elderly in and out of the car. There is also a rain garden which is a dry area for wild flowers and create a park like setting; the paths throughout meander straight to create a neighborhood setting. The buildings are grouped in groups of two for function for the nurses because they go from one unit to the other. The variance is a requirement of a 50' separation and proposed is 30' and a distance of 10' between the houses. The other variance is for storage shed (10 x 10) which is for storing

equipment used for outside, requirement is 50' and the variance is for 30'. The distance from the ramps to the buildings and there are two buildings that are closest to the ramp which is 150' back from the ramp (Exhibit A5 – Wall Section) which deals with the way the buildings are being built.

Exhibit A6 – Floor Plans – Type A and Exhibit A7 – Floor Plan – Type B: One thing not to happen is to have the house repeated time and time again so there is not cookie cutter. The house would look differently outside as well as inside such as the entrance is 90° to the actual access of the building and the other one the entrance is one access of the building. As you come in directly and the open space is the common areas which house the kitchen, a dining area and the hearth room (common seating area) and surrounded by the residential units.

The size of the units range from 220 sf to 300 sf depending on where it is located in the building. There is a porch on every building which faces the street and a patio in the rear (for privacy). Then the buildings can be flipped and get a variation.

Exhibit A8 – Streetscape of A & B Front and Rear. This shows what the buildings look like from the street. It will be an arts and crafts style building. The trees that are closest to Mill Road will be kept and there will be additional landscaping installed.

Exhibit A9 – Side of the Buildings. There are no front or rears on the buildings.

Exhibit A4 – Generators. There is a shed between four buildings and adjacent to the shed are two generators; every two buildings have one generator. The generators are housed in boxes on pads with anti-vibrating element underneath and will plant eight-foot high evergreens all around it; therefore, the vision will be a green wall. The generators are natural gas and the houses must constantly work because of the equipment needed in the houses.

Exhibit A10 Windows – Mr. Kopleson gave a description on the type of window that is being used for safety and sound.

Exhibit A11 Sound Proof Window Specifications, attached

Exhibit A12 – Spec Sheet on Generator with the Enclosure, attached

Mr. Krawczun stated about the 24 parking places in the rear of the site and as a matter of function, if there is an opportunity to divide the 24 where 12 would remain and 12 could be placed at the intersection on Road B and the new entrance. The parking is deepest into the site and inclement weather might want people to park closer (3 parallel in front of each especially with the 3:30 – 11:30 shift, it is more contusive to visitors coming to the site and people might come after work to visit and there is less opportunity for on street parking and if the 24 spots were deepest into the development, could cause some spouse may not be able to walk the 420', the functionality of the 24 spots to be divided instead of all consolidated.

Mr. Kopleson described the parking from the site in West Orange and there is no parking in the street because the units also have driveways and where you would not want to drive into a neighborhood and not find a parking lot. Mr. Krawczun stated if there was a way to create language for approval that would provide for the parking. Mr. Haggerty stated there are 36 parking spaces in the loop and

30 are required and 60 are required when all the units are built. Phase I 30 spaces are required and there are 36 in the loop so the idea was that that parking lot would be built in Phase II. The 24 spaces are for employees. Mr. Haggerty stated they would like to keep the spaces in front of the units opened for visitors. The overnight shift would be permitted to be parked in front because there would be visitors and this is the only exception. There are three spaces in front of each unit. There may be a parking problem with parking around the holidays.

Mr. Kochenour stated all 60 parking spaces going to be built initially and only 36 spaces will be built, but if the staff starts at 6:00 how will you train them to park in the lot, why not construct all of them. Mr. Haggerty stated they will be built if needed. Mr. Caton you will have 36 parking spaces on street for six buildings, and if there is a parking problem you are suggesting to build the 24 spaces. Mr. Kochenour stated if the narrow street does not work the way it should, would you be better off providing the extra width, change to a two lane operation. Mr. Kopleson stated the narrow roadway is 22' and there will not be a lot of traffic going thru and the visitors do not all come at once, they all at different times, and they can land banked.

The cottages are 30' a part as in the W. Orange site and this is how Morris Hall Meadows will be constructed.

Witness #3: Brian Perry, P.E., Van Note-Harvey Association, Sr. Project Manager. Mr. Perry described the location of the site using Exhibit A-13 "Rendered Version Overall Site Plan", Sheet CE3 and Exhibit A-14 "Grading Plan".

The location of the site for infrastructure reasons for stormwater management and sanitary sewer purposes and other benefits for the position that it is in. The site drains naturally from northwest to southeast so everything flows downhill including sanitary. The access off of Franklin Corner Road and the driveway is 24' wide and the internal loop is 20' wide; the second access which is 18' wide for emergency access only. The first driveway will be expanded, if needed and will post bollards along the access drive because it will not be lighted.

Exhibit A-15 "Vehicle Turning Movement Plan" which shows the geometry for the latter truck which would be able to maneuver around the site. The traffic signage will make the changes per the comments. The sidewalk will be 6' wide concrete along the roadway and between the buildings.

Mr. Perry described the stormwater management design of the basin. The basin is designed, if the remainder of the site, is every developed for storage or increase the volume. There is a mix of shade trees, flowering trees, shrubs and ground cover. The specimen trees have grown to specified size and there are four trees that may have grown to specimen size (2053 (maple); 2060 (hickory); 2067 (triple maple); 2075 (twin maple) and are asking for exception.

Exhibit A-16 "Lighting Plan" – The intersection at Franklin Corner Road and the entrance drive will have two additional light poles. The sign lighting will be blocked by the landscaping and will modify the sign detail. An application was submitted to New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for a new permit. Exhibit A-17 - "Letter from New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, dated November 16, 2011 extending the Letter of Interest until November 11, 2016, copy attached.

Witness #4: Harvey Yesowitz, Consulting Traffic Engineer

Mr. Yesowitz testified regarding the existing conditions especially Franklin Corner Road and Route 206, especially the morning hours. Mr. Yesowitz testified on traffic counts were performed, shift hours, looked at the Trip Generation Hand Book and analyzed the vehicles that enter and exits the site; see report dated September 15, 2013.

There was no public comment for this application.

6. **Old Business / New Business / Correspondence**

The 2014 to 215 meeting scheduled was approved.

7. **Adjournment:**

There being no further to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,


Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved: 
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