

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP LAND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

RE- ORGANIZATION MEETING

JANUARY 7, 2015 7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Westampton Township Land Development Board was held at the Municipal Building on Rancocas Road on January 7, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was called to order by Secretary Marion Karp and the opening statement required by Sunshine Law was read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times on January 3, 2014 and posted in the Municipal Building. All guests were welcomed.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. New Board members Mr. Blair, Ms. Chang, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Maybury, Mr. Williams, Mr. Attaway and Ms. Haas were sworn in by Solicitor Jesse Debrosse.

**Roll Call:** Present: Mr. Applegate, Mr. Blair, Mr. Borger, Mr. Carugno, Ms. Chang, Ms. Coe, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Maybury, Mr. Williams, Mr. Attaway, Ms. Haas

Motions are needed for the following appointments:

	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Motion</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Chairman	Applegate	Carugno	Chang	All yes
Vice Chairman	Coe	Carugno	Chang	All yes
Secretary	Karp	Blair	Chang	All yes
Solicitor				
Engineer	CME	Chang	Carugno	All yes

No action was taken this evening on appointing a Solicitor.

Chairman Applegate asked that all member of the public limit their comments to 3 minutes each. The meeting would be limited until 11 PM this evening.

The minutes of the December 4, 2013 meeting were approved as written.

**Resolutions:**

24-2014 Malcolm Whitley, Block 1304, Lot 6 – variance (setback and exceeding square footage allowable, 2 sheds) – was memorialized

25-2014 2367 Kuser Road, LLC, Block 1411, Lot 21 – use variance (church & associated uses) – continuance from 12/3/14 meeting – was memorialized

## Old Business:

**2367 Kuser Road, LLC, Block 1411, Lot 21.** The applicant's attorney, Lionel Frank was present. It shall be noted that Mr. Freeman recused himself from the application.

Traffic engineer James Vena was sworn in before the Board. The traffic study had been supplemented by Mr. Vena. It was dated Dec. 15, 2014 and was done to address comments and concerns from the Board. Specifically there was concern regarding the nearby church in the shopping center. Counts were conducted on peak times on Sunday mornings for both churches. They were done at Rancocas Rd and Holly Lane as well as the entrance to the shopping center. The church that had occupied the shopping center was no longer there, there were two small vacant spaces according to Mr. Vena. They estimated that a church of that size would have generated approximately 13 trips. Another church has since now re occupied that space; a congregant went out on two separate weekends to conduct counts; the numbers are pretty consistent.

Driveways would operate at very good levels of service on Sunday. Typical of most churches, for about 15 minutes there are high volumes of cars that exit along with higher levels of delay; not failing conditions, but higher levels of delay. This occurs when services let out. This is about level of service C, with A being the best and F being the worst. It is a short duration whereas other uses would experience longer delays. It is their opinion that the church would have a minimal impact and that the driveways will operate at good levels of service.

Board Engineer Greg Valesi thinks the study is responsive to the Board concerns; he concurs with the conclusions that were reached. Ultimately, the County will be reviewing this and they could look at other intersections that are close and modify their signal timing.

Gene Blair stated that County review will be required prior to occupancy as well as any other prior approvals.

Pastor Daniels was present to answer any questions from the Board regarding the activities that were detailed and presented to the Board. Solicitor Jesse DeBrosse asked if the applicants would agree to adhere to this list of current and proposed estimate of activities. Mr. Frank agreed but they need a bit of leeway. If 35 people were referenced and 40 showed up, he wanted assurance that this would be permissible. Planner Harry McVey thinks it is important to use this as a framework; however if a major service is added during the week that happens to fall during peak traffic times, the Board would like to reserve the right to have the church come back before the Board for an amendment to their use variance. Gene Blair stated that this type of thing would be complaint-driven.

Gene remarked that the site is extremely dark; he questioned whether lighting was

adequate for the site. The engineer's report does address these types of maintenance issues. The parking lot is in need of repair, landscaping is overgrown, etc. They should be required to maintain the previous site improvements.

Susanne Cloyd, 7 Meadowbrook Drive was sworn in before the Board. She has had an opportunity to attend churches all over, being raised by parents in the service. She just recently moved into the Township; she has been attending church services with Kingdom Church for about two years. They are welcoming, organized and a wonderful place for her to worship. She has seen this church give back to the community they are located in, why not in Westampton. Ron Applegate asked her if she thought this was the proper building for the church and she answered yes.

Aisha Anderson, 26 Sherwood Lane was sworn in before the Board. She has been a member of the church since 2007 as well as a Westampton resident since 2007. There are a lot of things that go on that the residents of Westampton can take advantage of; it will offer fellowship. The children can also take advantage of it since there aren't many things for children to do around here. The church is an asset to her life and she feels it will be an asset to others as well as serving the community.

Mayor Chang asked if it was Ms. Anderson's position that there are no recreational opportunities offered in Westampton Township; Ms. Anderson stated that there wasn't much for the children to do. The Mayor stated that Westampton has one of the best recreation departments available in the County and that she should check into it.

Mr. Frank summed up by stating that he felt they have presented sufficient evidence for the Board to grant the use variance.

Harry McVey stated that there are some areas that need improvements; for example, buffering behind the building since it is close to the homes. There is only a chain link fence and minimal landscaping. He asked if there are any exterior changes to be made to the building; it is Mr. Frank's understanding that the exterior colors and design will not change. Only repairs will be performed. Gene stated that ADA standards still need to be addressed which will result in minor exterior features to be changed.

Chairman Applegate asked if the sidewalk along Rancocas Road was addressed. Greg Valesi stated that if the Board decides it wants sidewalks that the County will defer and approve the sidewalk. This is not something that the County will dictate but rather something that the Board decides. Gene explained that in the past, the Board never addressed sidewalks, however, now the Board will require a sidewalk to be installed in order to facilitate circulation. It would also connect to Holly Lane. The Board is looking to accomplish sidewalk access on all plans that come before them. The applicant agrees to install the sidewalk and they would coordinate this with the engineer.

If the use variance is approved, as a condition, Mr. Frank stated that all conditions in the report would have to be addressed with Township professionals. Greg Valesi recommends that the applicant relies on the use variance; then come back and apply

for a site plan approval; it doesn't have to be anything complicated. Mr. Frank asked if they could meet and go over the site plan that was submitted and make revisions instead of coming back to the Board again, albeit for a very short meeting. It was decided that they would ask for a site plan waiver as well. They would be working out the minor issues with the engineer.

At this point, the meeting was opened to the public for comment. Steve Boonstra, 613 David Street, was sworn in. He lives three blocks from the site. He asked the Board how many cars are expected on a typical Sunday. Gene explained that the totals have been reviewed and accepted by our engineer. He has concerns about the parking, specifically street parking. Greg Valesi stated that the parking provided meets the appropriate standard for churches which is one space for every three seats.

Janet Curran, 123 Main Street was sworn in. She stated that she thought Christmas and Easter would be the times when parking problems would occur.

There being no further comments from the public, the meeting was closed. Mr. Blair made a motion to approve the use variance and site plan waiver; the motion was seconded by Mr. Carugno. All Board members voted yes, with the exception of Mr. Freeman and the members of Committee, who did not vote.

Gene asked if the applicant was considering asking for an at risk authorization; the applicants stated that they wished to. Mr. Frank respectfully made the request of the Board; the Board agrees to grant this request.

### **New Business:**

**Edgewood Partners, LLC, Block 906.07, Lot 8.** John Gillespie, attorney was present on behalf of an application for a minor subdivision and a FAR variance. The lot will be divided in two; the purpose is for financing. It will allow for better marketing opportunities for the office building and bank that had received preliminary approvals years ago when the site was first developed. The variance is only necessary due to the minor subdivision.

The FAR variance is a D variance, thus the Mayor and member of Committee would not be voting. There will be no change to how the site has been operating. The only issues concern appropriate easements that will need to be detailed. Hilton Garden Inn would continue to maintain the driveway and it would be made a condition that the dominant tenant would have responsibility to do so. The access easement exists but the language would be changed so that the new lot would have access; it would be recorded.

This was opened to the public for comment. Bill Rafuse of 34 Fernbrooke Drive was sworn in. He asked how high the office building is that was approved years ago (preliminary approval only). It is two stories high.

There being no further comment from the public, the meeting was closed.

Gene stated that the applicant will be responsible for paying for the changes to the Westampton Township Tax Map.

Mr. Carugno made a motion to approve the application; Ms. Coe seconded the motion. All Board members voted yes, with the exception of Mr. Williams who abstained, and the members of Committee, who do not vote on D variances.

**Medical Campus District Zone (Draft Ordinance).** Harry McVey would be working on this until his replacement is appointed. He is trying to tie this into the Township's Vision Plan. The Board was in receipt of a draft ordinance that Harry had been working on. The Board will only have the power to recommend an ordinance and the Township Committee will be the body to approve it. Residential character can still be accomplished even with a taller building; Virtua is asking to construct a 5 story building; therefore a design element will be a crucial part of the plan and how these design elements will relate to pedestrian views. Harry doesn't have a concern with them building up to 150 feet as long as the building is pushed towards the back or center of the site. He wants to see some perspectives from the nearby homes to see how it will relate to them.

The parking standards that they are proposing are very close; Harry's concern is the dimension of the parking spaces they are proposing. They want 9 foot spaces; he is recommending that we don't approve that; he isn't in favor of it. He would rather see 10 feet but would accept 9.5 feet. He doesn't have a problem with an 18 foot depth.

Pedestrian circulation – he recommends the paths at 8 feet wide even though Virtua wants to reduce the width.

Changeable copy signs – our ordinance doesn't permit them at this point, the Board needs to be careful of these.

The site needs to be rezoned and the way to do this is through a Master Plan review process; then the ordinance can follow at any time. The design element is critical but they aren't close to submitting anything. He is recommending that the Master Plan be submitted next month; he is mostly finished with it. The ordinance can be done as a two step process; the bulk standards can go first. This is the Board's chance to have a destination in Westampton; it will be a regional destination and the Board needs to do it right.

### **Correspondence:**

**Letter from Hancocks regarding rezoning:** the Board received a letter from Beverly Hancock asking that their land be considered for rezoning when the current Master Plan

review is undertaken. The Office Research zones seem to be particularly restricting for development of their property.

The meeting was opened for public comment.

Janet Curran asked if there was a way to make the hospital blend in with the Township. She doesn't like the changes that are taking place in the Township. She wishes it would go away but it won't.

Wilbur Williams – was the extension of Burrs Road mentioned at the last meeting. It may happen, according to Harry McVey.

Mr. Applegate – welcomed new Board members, it is important for residents to come out to meetings and express their opinions.

Gene Blair – asked the professionals to comment on the changes proposed by Hampton Behavioral Health. Harry doesn't have a concern with the change from outpatient to inpatient.

Mayor Chang – welcomed the new board members, we will have a challenging year ahead of us. All will take their roles quite seriously. She also congratulated the existing members.

Mr. Maybury – welcome to the new members; congratulations to returning members. Thanks to all for volunteering their time.

Jesse DeBrosse – thanks for a great two years serving as Solicitor. Not all of his boards are as interested and ask such pertinent questions as this board; we listen to feedback from the public and make difficult decisions in trying to balance the historical nature of the Township with impending development. It is a pleasure working with such dedicated people. He has learned a lot about development; it certainly impacts your everyday life.

Greg Valesi – thanked the board for the appointment; there are some challenging issues ahead. They will work hard to help the board realize their vision for the town.

Harry McVey – wished a healthy and happy New Year to the board. Thanks for the ability to serve.

Mr. Applegate – thanked Jesse, it was an absolute pleasure, he would be missed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Karp, Secretary

Westampton Township Land Development Board