

Sussex County Planning Board

Minutes

February 7, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Francis at approximately 4:00 p.m. The meeting is held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-2 of 1975, as amended. Present were:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Francis, Chairman
Gail Phoebus, Vice Chairman
Michael Cecchini
Andy Borisuk
John Risko
Joseph Maikisch
Dr. John Ford
Richard Vohden, Freeholder

STAFF PRESENT:

Eric Snyder, Planning Director
Bill Koppenaar, Chief Engineer
Alice Brees, Principal Planner
Neal Leitner, Senior Planner

ALSO PRESENT:

Debra Nicholson, Esq., attorney for ABJC
Michael Kolody, engineer for ABJC
Anthony Berardi, ABJC Investments

MINUTES

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Phoebus to approve the minutes of January 3, 2011. It was seconded by Mr. Cecchini. After an abstention from Freeholder Vohden, all were in favor.

SITE PLAN/SUBDIVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORTS

A motion was made by Mr. Cecchini to accept the report of 12/20/2010. It was seconded by Freeholder Vohden. All were in favor.

APPEALS AND WAIVER REQUESTS

A. ABJC Investments LLC, File 44(CS)10, County Route 517, Sparta

At this time, Vice Chairperson Phoebus recused herself from the discussion.

Debra Nicholson, attorney representing the applicant, said this location is the site of the original Sparta Township Public Works garage and is a joint venture project with Lake Mohawk Country Club. She said the applicant is here for a waiver request on the sight triangle easement.

Mr. Snyder swore in Mr. Berardi, applicant and Mr. Kolody, project engineer. Mr. Kolody presented an exhibit of the site location, representing both the existing and proposed conditions. He said this application was the site of the Sparta Township garage prior to Lake Mohawk Country Club leasing it about 10 years ago. At that time, access to the property was through an entrance/exit located on Memory Lane right at the intersection with CR 517. Mr. Kolody said there is an exit only on the west side of the property - a right turn onto Sparta Avenue, and there is an entrance/exit in the rear that has never been used.

Pointing to the exhibit, Mr. Kolody showed the existing pavement (in gray) - the entire frontage of the property was paved and served as a driveway. He said Lake Mohawk Country Club acquired the property from the township and plans to subdivide it in half. One half will be retained by Lake Mohawk Country Club and continue to be used for their maintenance facility, and the other half will be a commercial development. Access to the commercial development and the country club property will be off of Memory Lane which will eliminate all ingress and egress from the county road. Mr. Kolody said development plans for CR 517 have been taken into consideration, and they will be granting a road easement along the entire front of the property to the County for its future use. He said access to the country club building will be through the rear (ingress and egress), and entrance to the commercial property will be approximately 120' down Memory Lane, away from the intersection.

A meeting was held with County staff and the Development Review Committee prior to completion of plans. Mr. Kolody said at that time, the entrance to the commercial facility was approximately half way down the street from where it is now and concerns were raised regarding this access as well as the sight triangle issue. He agreed to look at those issues and the possible relocation or elimination of some parking spaces. Mr. Kolody said there is a relatively severe grade from the right side to the left side, there is a lot of rock in

the front, and the location of the septic system are all constraints which do not leave many options to relocate the parking. He said they do, however, meet the township standards for parking on both properties. To minimize the effect of parking within what would be the County standard easement, Mr. Kolody said the parking lot in the sight triangle area has been lowered approximately 2 ½ feet. He said right now the topography at the site is such that one can barely see over it; the existing grade intrudes into the line of sight. By lowering the pavement by approximately 2 ½ feet you gain a better chance of seeing over anything that may park in that place. Also, it is a controlled intersection. Mr. Cecchini asked about box trucks that might park in the sight triangle with advertising on them, that could obstruct visibility. Ms. Nicholson said that Sparta zoning ordinance prohibits that, and the property owner will also enforce that restriction.

In conclusion, Mr. Kolody stated that due to site constraints and wanting to maintain the parking in the sight triangle area, they are asking for a sight triangle of 50' x 300'. He also noted that the smaller sight triangle does not encroach on any parking areas.

Chairman Francis asked if there were any comments from the public. Hearing none, he closed it to the public.

Mr. Borisuk made a motion to move the application. Mr. Cecchini seconded it. A roll call vote was taken. Results are as follows: A. Borisuk – yes; M. Cecchini – yes; J. Risko – no; J. Ford – yes; J. Maikisch – yes; M. Francis – yes. R. Vohden – yes.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Regarding a 2010 Census report distributed by Ms. Brees, Chairman Francis said there's only one word to describe it – interesting. Ms. Brees said there was a 3.5% growth in the county population from 2000 to 2010, compared to a 10% growth in the prior decade.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

None were present.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to be discussed at this time, and a motion was made by Mr. Borisuk to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairperson Phoebus and carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.