

October 5, 2012
Curtis Hall

A regular meeting of the **BUILDING AND ZONING COMMITTEE** was held tonight, Chairman Morton J. Simon, Jr. presiding. Members present were Commissioners Hampton, McKeown, Portner, Simon and Sharkey. Also present was Ex-Officio Member Haywood.

Staff present were Patrick Duffy, Director of Engineering, Zoning and Inspections and Bryan T. Havir, Acting Township Manager.

Also present was Joseph Bagley, Esq., Solicitor. A Public Attendance List is attached.

Mr. Simon called the meeting to order.

1. Review of Zoning Hearing Board Agenda for October 29, 2012.

APPEAL NO. 3450 - Appeal of the School District of Cheltenham Township, 2000 Ashbourne Road, Elkins Park, PA owner of premises known as 333 Rices Mill Rd., Wyncote, PA (a/k/a Wyncote Elementary School), from the Decision of the Zoning Officer in order to demolish/ remove the existing school and build a new Elementary School:

The following Zoning Relief is required for the proposed school building within the R-3 Residential District:

1. From CCS 295-23. (Building area) for relief to construct a 51,252 SF school building with 22.96% building coverage that exceeds the allowable 15%. The existing nonconforming building coverage is 19.22%.
2. From CCS 295-220A. (Front yard projections) for relief to construct a portion of the play area in the front yard setback along Church Road and to allow the proposed driveway widths along Rices Mill and Barker Roads to exceed 18 feet.
3. From CCS 295-221.B(5).(a) (Location of surface parking) to allow surface parking between the school building and Rices Mill and Barker Roads.

Glenn Harris of Renew Design Group and Danielle Hoffer of Gilbert Architects, were present. The following aspects of the appeal were reviewed: lot size; building size; position of the building on the site; height of the building; percentage of the site the building will occupy; landscaping; neighborhood streets that abut the school; play areas; student and parent drop off areas; bus loop for loading/unloading students; parking, i.e. staff, visitor and handicap; dumpster, shed and cooling system locations; design and layout of the building, i.e. east/west lighting, student bus and parent drop-off areas, separation of vehicular traffic, location of gym, cafeteria and library, corridor movement through the building, and the number of classrooms per grade, energy efficiency, façade materials.

There was extensive discussion regarding traffic and school bus ingress/egress along Rices Mill Road ("RMR"). Ms. Hampton questioned off-street parking on RMR and sidewalk access along Barker Road. Mr. Harris stated that students will not have to cross driveways.

Mr. Sharkey was concerned about ingress/egress on RMR. Mr. McKeown suggested a 'right turn only' onto RMR. Mr. Haywood questioned the number of school buses that will use the loop at any given time. Mr. Harris responded that there is a total of nine (9) buses that will be staggered. The loop can accommodate seven (7) buses if one (1) of them is a short bus. Mr. Haywood thought turning left onto RMR could be problematic.

Mr. Simon asked about steep slope issues on Church Road. Mr. Harris advised of planned fencing and shrubbery. Mr. Haywood noted that the gym is interiorly located, and since it is used for public events, questioned the practicality of its access.

In response to a question from Mr. Sharkey, Mr. Harris indicated that a traffic study should be completed in November, and that said study might affect the location of the drop-off area. Mr. Sharkey suggested that the Police Department's Highway Safety Unit review the RMR ingress/egress.

Public Comments:

Jim Custer was concerned about the loss of a green space and the ingress/egress on RMR; felt it was a site issue and not a building issue.

David Cohen had concerns: that a traffic study was not performed before the application was made; a bus drop-off on RMR; and in his opinion, the appeal was based on hearsay and ideas; students navigating curb-cuts; he wanted the size of the building reduced.

Ms. Amy Blum, with Mr. Hemaka Rajapakse, stated that the plans were not voted on by the School Board; parents and neighbors feel they are being bamboozled; the parking lot in front of the building is too large; parents and neighbors do not want this design; safety issues on RMR; supported a 3-storey building; insufficient green area; she had opinions on cost-saving measures;

Philip Washington, a neighbor and firefighter, stated that the plans were conceptual; had concerns about the turning radius of fire apparatus and school buses and their inability to turn the intersections; lack of sidewalks on RMR; and supported a 3-storey building.

Mr. Bagley responded that the Department of Education has approved the application thus far. The School District is waiting to see if they receive zoning relief for the dimensional variances they are seeking, and that is why the plans are conceptual.

Mr. Sharkey felt that a School District representative should have been present to clarify community misconceptions. He was concerned about being asked to consider a plan that is not fully approved by the School District.

The Committee recommended that the applicant ask for a Continuance. Mr. Harris and Ms. Hoffer agreed.

Motion: Upon motion of Mr. Simon, the Committee unanimously directed the Township Engineer to advise the Zoning Hearing Board that it recommends the grant of a Continuance, and if a Continuance is not granted, the Committee recommended denial of the appeal based on a lack of sufficient information.

APPEAL NO 3451 – Appeal of Patricia Fiedler, owner of premises known as 1309 Ashbourne Road, Elkins Park, PA, from the Decision of the Zoning Officer to allow the apartment over the garage to be rented to someone other than the owner of the property.

The property is zoned R-5 Residence District and contains a 2-1/2 story residential structure that houses three rental units (existing legal nonconformity) and a 1-1/2 story structure with a garage and an apartment unit over the garage. The previous zoning relief from appeals #661 and #243 required that only the property owner may occupy the garage apartment during the summer months, without improvements or heat and without any intention of renting the property.

The following Zoning Relief is required for the proposed garage apartment within the R-5 Residential District:

1. To modify the conditions of previous zoning appeals #661 and #243 to eliminate the imposed conditions and allow the apartment over the garage to be rented to someone other than the owner of the property.

Harold Lichtman, Architect, was present and reviewed a previous zoning application; the history of the property improvements; and parking.

Mr. Duffy stated that his department needs to review the work that was done without permits and the layout of the parking spaces.

Motion: Upon motion of Mr. Simon, the Committee unanimously directed the Township Engineer to advise the Zoning Hearing Board that it takes no action on this appeal but if relief is granted, it be granted contingent upon the recommendations of the Planning Commission.

APPEAL NO 3452 – Appeal of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, owner of premises known as 734 Willow Grove Ave., Glenside, PA, from the Decision of the Zoning Officer to construct two (2) 24' x 20' additions and expand the existing parking lot.

The following Zoning Relief is required for the proposed site improvements within the R-4 Residential District:

1. From CCS 295-39.A for relief to construct a two story 24' x 20' addition within the 40' front yard setback area. The proposed setback is 26.92'. The existing church building's front yard setback is 33.47' which is legal nonconforming as a result of PennDOT acquiring additional right-of-way along Willow Grove Ave.
2. From CCS 295-166.B for relief to allow the disturbance of 7,250 SF of steep slopes ($\geq 15\%$ slopes) to construct a building addition and for the expansion of the parking lot. Approximately 60.86% of the steep slopes on the site will be disturbed.

3. From CCS 295-221.H for relief from the parking requirement of 83 parking spaces based on 1 space per 100 SF gross floor area. The existing number of 48 parking spaces is an existing nonconformity.
4. In addition, a special exception is requested from CCS 295-227.B to allow for the expansion of the existing nonconforming building.

Scot Semich, Esq. and Richard Knudsen, Engineer, were present to represent the applicant. Mr. Semich reviewed the plan, including modernization of the building, upgrades to the current Code, parking, new additions, and entrance expansion. Mr. Knudsen reviewed location of the elevator for handicap and church offices, façade, nursery, and mechanical area, front yard setback, expansion of the parking lot, and the increase of parking spaces from 48 to 64.

Mr. Sharkey stated that neighbors are concerned about the aesthetics of the retaining wall at the rear of the property. Mr. Semich responded that the applicant has met with neighbors on the matter, and there is agreed to have a tiered wall. He explained the style, façade, fencing to be placed on top of the wall to buffer headlights, and landscaping.

Motion: Upon motion of Mr. Sharkey the Committee unanimously directed the Township Engineer to advise the Zoning Hearing Board that it recommends no action on this appeal. If relief is granted, the Committee recommended that it be contingent upon a landscape plan approved by the Shade Tree Advisory Committee, and that the 10-foot buffer area at the bottom of the wall be landscaped.

2. Upon motion of Mr. Haywood, the Committee unanimously received the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes dated September 24, 2012.
3. Upon motion of Mr. Haywood, the Committee unanimously received the Report of the Building Inspector for September, 2012.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Portner, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.



Bryan T. Havir
Acting Township Manager

as per Anna Marie Felix



PUBLIC ATTENDANCE LIST
Public Safety Committee, 7:30 p.m.
Public Affairs Committee, 7:45 p.m.
Building and Zoning Committee, 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 3, 2012
Curtis Hall

NAME (Please Print Clearly)	ADDRESS	E-MAIL and/or TELEPHONE
Jim Crestler	209 West Rd Limerick	
Joyce Werkman	1618 Willow Ave La Mett 19027	
Jim Sch / Jim Sch	401 N 2 ND PHICA 19127	
Ken Krelschner Justin Sresl EPFC		
DAVID C. (COK)	321 GARWOOD AVE E.P 19027	
Gkum Ferris	Renew Design Group - School	
Bonita Washington	327 Rices Mill Rd Wyneste	
Amy Blum	8301 Cedar Rd EP 19027	



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NAME (Please Print Clearly)	ADDRESS	E-MAIL and/or TELEPHONE
HEMAKA RAJAPAKSE	403 RICES MILL RD WYNCOTE	hemaka-rajapakse@yahoo
Margaret Griffin	419 Ladys Ln EP	griffens@verizon.net