



**Township of Northampton**  
**55 Township Road**  
**Richboro, PA 18954**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF  
DECEMBER 10, 2019  
MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Dr. Arthur Friedman  
Andrew Gannon  
Edward Ingle  
Patrick McGuigan  
Steve Saddlemire  
Mark Shapiro

**Excused**

Michelle Druding

**Others Present**

Frank O'Donnell, Board of Supervisors  
Joe Pizzo, Esq., Township Solicitor  
Amanda Fuller, PE, Township Engineer  
Craig Bryson, PLA, Township Planner  
Mike Solomon, Director of Planning & Zoning

Mr. Saddlemire called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. There was also a moment of silence for those in our armed forces.

### **Minutes**

A motion (Shapiro/McGuigan) was made to approve the minutes from the September 10, 2019 and October 1, 2019 meetings.

### **Approved - 6-0 (Druding absent)**

Dr. Friedman stated that he watched the replay of the previous presentation on the agenda items that are scheduled for tonight. He felt that it was too fast and that more notice should have been given by the School District, including placement of a larger sign.

Mr. Ingle noted that the posted notice for the turf field was small. He added that he would have rather seen a larger sign as well.

### **Consideration of Conditional Use Application - Council Rock School District, STAR/Sloan School, CU 19-6, 98 Upper Holland Road** **Consideration of Preliminary/Final Plan of Land Development, STAR/Sloan School, SLD 19-3, 98 Upper Holland Road**

Mike Carr, Esq., was present on behalf of the School District. He was present along with representatives of the district and well as the design team.

He began his presentation by noting that it is still his opinion that no conditional use is required. Mr. Pizzo stated that he should proceed at this point as the matter is currently identified on the agenda.

At this point, Mr. Carr provided an overview of the December 3, 2019 correspondence by Township Engineer, Gilmore and Associates. He noted that variances were granted relating to impervious surface, to not require additional landscaping in the buffer yard, to allow a flagpole height of 43 feet, and to allow the proposed building location to exceed the 40-foot maximum front yard setback, which is required for the Village Overlay District. He added that the Village Overlay design criteria are subjective and the Zoning Hearing Board gave flexibility to the Supervisors to make this determination.

Requested waivers were identified which include the following:

1. A waiver to allow the features as currently shown on the plan;
2. A waiver to not show all existing storm, sanitary, and water facilities;
3. A waiver to allow the use of island separators that are smaller than the standard requirement;
4. A waiver from maximum driveway width;
5. A waiver to not require additional landscaping;
6. A partial waiver to allow the improvements as proposed as being in compliance with the requirements of the Village Overlay District;
7. A waiver to allow a standard concrete sidewalk detail as opposed to the Village Overlay detail;
8. A waiver to allow the proposed off-street parking lot to be located in the front yard in lieu of the required side or rear yard; and,
9. A waiver to not require screening for the proposed off-street parking lot located in the front yard.

In addition, Mr. Carr stated that a waiver is requested with respect to parking lot lights.

Mr. Saddlemire began a discussion about the Village Overlay criteria. Mike Bell, architect, presented a rendering of the proposed building and the architecture was discussed. Mr. Saddlemire also discussed the decorative sidewalk and there was no objection to the waiver to allow a standard concrete detail.

Mr. Carr discussed the review letter in length and noted the items of compliance. There was a brief discussion regarding the PennDOT right-of-way.

There was extensive discussion regarding traffic circulation and drop-off at the proposed school.

In response to Mr. Saddlemire, the School District agreed to look into the possibility of connecting the existing and proposed parking lots.

At this point, the McMahan Associates review letter was discussed. There was extensive discussion regarding the traffic study requirement to determine whether a signal is warranted at the new access drive. Mr. Carr noted that a draft letter was received by the School District by their traffic consultant, which states that a signal is not warranted. The Township traffic engineer has not reviewed this correspondence, however. It will be submitted to the Township.

There was further discussion regarding a potential signal requirement at a later date in response to Dr. Friedman. Mr. DeGroot discussed this matter as it relates to the existing Richboro Middle School. Mr. Bryson added that the school at full capacity is a factor in this equation. There was further discussion about looking at this issue at a later date when capacity is reached.

Mr. DeGroot added that Township Road produces the bulk of the traffic based on their consultant's review. Mr. Carr agreed to a note on the plan that a traffic study could be required at a later date if the capacity at Richboro Middle School has grown.

Mr. Gannon inquired about the signal flasher being on and its impact on traffic. Mr. DeGroot noted that this is already being discussed with McMahon Associates. Mr. Bryson noted that these are requirements that must be addressed with PennDOT.

Mr. Carr noted that the School District will comply with the remainder of the comments, including the Pennoni Associates and the Bucks County Planning Commission review letters. Mr. Carr did note that a variance was granted regarding the buffer. He noted that any additional landscaping would impact the fields. He added that the police department review ties into the traffic signal evaluation as discussed with the McMahon Associates review letter.

Dr. Friedman stated that there is an impact with respect to losing fields. As a result, there should be an effort to looking at potential options for additional field locations.

There being no comment from the public, the following motion was made:

**I move that we recommend conditional use approval for Council Rock School District for the STAR/Sloan School, CU 19-6, subject to compliance with the Gilmore Associates review letters dated September 23, 2019 and December 3, 2019, the Pennoni Associates review letter dated November 26, 2019, and the McMahon Associates review letter dated December 2, 2019. I further move that we recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval for Council Rock School District for the STAR/Sloan School, SLD 19-3, subject to compliance with the Township Engineer's review letter dated December 3, 2019, the Township Planner's review letter dated November 26, 2019, and the Township Traffic Engineer's review letter dated December 2, 2019. It is also recommended that the requested waivers be granted. In addition, it is recommended that a path between the existing and proposed parking lots be considered.**

**Approved - 6-0**

**Motion - Saddle mire Second – Gannon (Druding absent)**

**Consideration of Conditional Use Application - Council Rock School District, Turf Field, CU 19-7, Rock Way/Holland Road**  
**Consideration of Preliminary/Final Plan of Land Development, Turf Field, SLD 19-2, Rock Way/Holland Road**

As discussed at the last meeting, the district is proposing to construct a new synthetic sports turf field and associated improvements at the Council Rock High School South property.

Mr. Carr noted that the following waivers are being requested:

1. A waiver to accept the details as shown on the plan;
2. A waiver to allow the existing 1,279 parking spaces, which are currently used by the school and other sports facilities, to be utilized for the required 750 stadium parking spaces;
3. A waiver to not require monuments at the property corners;
4. A waiver to not require street trees along Holland Road;
5. A waiver to not require additional landscaping in the proposed buffer yard area along Holland Road;
6. A waiver to allow a minimum storm pipe size of 15 inches in lieu of the required 18 inches; and,
7. A waiver to allow a minimum depth of cover of 9 inches over storm pipe located under the bleachers in lieu of the required 3 feet.

Mr. Carr noted that variances were also received from the Zoning Hearing Board with respect to not adding additional landscaping in the buffer, to allow the existing parking spaces to be utilized, and allowing the stadium lighting to be 90 feet in height instead of 70 feet. Mr. Carr stated that the height of the lighting is necessary so there is no spillover on adjacent properties.

At this point, Mr. Carr discussed the Gilmore and Associates correspondence dated December 3, 2019.

There was extensive discussion regarding the sidewalk and ADA guidelines. In addition, there was discussion about a possible pedestrian connection from Holland Road to the proposed field. Mr. DeGroot noted that the School District does not want to encourage pedestrian traffic to that location as people will park along Holland Road, which is not permitted.

Mr. DeGroot explained the parking layout at this point. Specifically, the location of the field and location of existing parking spaces was discussed. He added that a waiver is further requested to not require street lighting along Holland Road.

Mr. Carr explained the technology of the lighting system and many of its features, which will allow the lighting to not impact neighboring properties.

There was extensive discussion regarding accessible parking spaces and how it relates to the initial scope of the project and full build-out. In response to Mr. Gannon, Mr. Taylor discussed the use of the field and stated that football games will continue to be held at North at this point. He added that smaller events will be held at this location.

Mr. Carr noted that the School District will comply with the technical matters of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Neshaminy Creek Watershed Stormwater Management Ordinance identified in the Township engineer's letter.

The Pennoni Associates review letter of November 26, 2019 was discussed at this point. Mr. Bryson noted that the School District will comply with all of the items as they were discussed previously. Regarding ADA parking, Mr. Pizzo noted that it could be a condition that the District must comply at all stages of the project, including full build-out.

Ms. Fuller noted that the School District and her office will look at the possible pedestrian connection to Holland Road.

Mr. Carr added that the District will comply with the correspondence from the Bucks County Planning Commission and McMahon Associates.

There being no comment from the public, the following motion was made:

**I move that we recommend conditional use approval for Council Rock School District for the Turf Field, CU 19-7, subject to compliance with the Gilmore Associates review letters dated September 23, 2019 and December 3, 2019, the Pennoni Associates review letter dated November 26, 2019, and the McMahon Associates review letter dated December 2, 2019. I further move that we recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval for Council Rock School District for the Turf Field, SLD 19-2, subject to compliance with the Township Engineer's review letter dated December 3, 2019, the Township Planner's review letter dated November 26, 2019, and the Township Traffic Engineer's review letter dated December 2, 2019. It is also recommended that the requested waivers be granted. In addition, it is recommended as follows:**

- **An additional waiver is granted to not require street lighting along Holland Road.**
- **All seating (including future seating) must be in accordance with ADA and accessibility parking requirements.**

**Approved - 6-0**

**Motion - Saddlemire Second - Gannon**

**(Druding absent)**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael T. Solomon  
Director of Planning and Zoning