



Township of Northampton
55 Township Road
Richboro, PA 18954

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF
SEPTEMBER 8, 2020
MINUTES**

Members Present

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

Others Present

Amanda Fuller, PE, Township Engineer
Craig Bryson, PLA, Township Planner
Mike Solomon, Director of Planning & Zoning

Mr. Gannon 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. The meeting was held via Zoom per the Governor's Declaration given the coronavirus pandemic.

Minutes

A motion (Friedman/Ingle) was made to approve the minutes from the March 10, 2020 meeting.

Approved - 7-0

Consideration of Preliminary/Final Plan of Land Development, Hillcrest Elementary School, SLD 20-3, 420 East Holland Road

Located southwest of the intersection of East Holland and Buck Roads, Council Rock School District is proposing to construct two building additions totaling 3,435 square feet to the Hillcrest Elementary School on a 68-acre site. A new 46-space parking lot is also proposed on the north side of the building. The site is served by public water and sewer and is located in the IP - Institutional/Public District.

Terry DeGroot, PE and his team were present on behalf of Council Rock School District. David Schrader, architect, gave an overview of the project. He stated that the proposed project will be a complete renovation of the building envelope. He stated that the project will be LEED Gold and will create new parking spaces as well. Overall, the school will consist of approximately 62,000 square feet and include new mechanical, electric, and plumbing. He stated that there are currently 20 existing classrooms and the same number will exist when the renovations are complete. He presented an interior layout of the proposed school, which includes a vestibule for security.

At this point, Mr. Schrader presented elevations of the exterior of the building. He stated that the proposed architecture will look like Holland Middle School.

Mr. DeGroot presented an overview of the land development aspects of the project, which includes new canopies and stormwater management under the parking lot. There will be a new soft play area, landscaping, and lighting.

With respect to the review comments, Mr. DeGroot stated that the applicant will comply. Mr. Bryson stated that he has no concerns with any of the items. Ms. Fuller stated that she will check with the traffic engineer with respect to the waiver related to 90-degree parking, but she has no major concerns.

The bus drop-off location was confirmed. Mr. McGuigan inquired about the sidewalks. Mr. Solomon stated that the sidewalks are existing as part of the Holland Middle School project and will connect to the Waverly subdivision across Buck Road. Mr. Shapiro inquired about the soft play area and it was verified that stormwater management will not be impacting that area.

Mr. Saddlemire inquired about the parking. It was clarified that parking is being added so it is closer to the school. In addition, the basketball courts will be replaced. Mr. Gannon clarified the playground locations for students of different ages. Mr. Ingle inquired about the square footages of the play areas, which will be a significant increase. Mr. Constantini inquired about the proximity of this area to Buck Road and it was clarified that it is currently existing.

In response to Mr. McGuigan, Doug Taylor from Council Rock discussed the time line for the projects.

Mr. Saddlemire inquired about circulation and Mr. DeGroot stated that it is adequate. Mr. McGuigan inquired about adding classrooms and Mr. DeGroot explained that they are not necessary now that Rolling Hills Elementary will not be closing.

In response to Dr. Friedman, Ms. Fuller stated that she will need more detail on the ADA plans. Mr. Ingle inquired about landscaping and trees as well. With respect to cost, Mr. Taylor explained the cost of construction for the proposed project.

In response to Mr. McGuigan, there was discussion about the Bucks County Planning Commission comment and a potential trail along East Holland Road.

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

I move that we recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Hillcrest Elementary School Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, SLD 20-3, subject to compliance with the Gilmore Associates review letter dated July 22, 2020, the Pennoni Associates review letter dated July 15, 2020, and the McMahan Associates review letter dated July 30,2020. It is also recommended that the requested waivers be granted.

Approved - 7-0

Motion - Friedman Second - Ingle

Consideration of Preliminary/Final Plan of Land Development, Richboro Elementary School, SLD 20-4, 125 Upper Holland Road

Located at 125 Upper Holland Road, Council Rock School District is proposing to construct a 2,685 square foot building addition for mechanical equipment and a 986 square foot building addition for entrance improvements. Also proposed are improvements to the entrance drive and internal driveway circulation, added parking areas, dumpster area, walkway paths/sidewalks, fencing, lighting, signage, paving, and stormwater improvements.

David Schrader, architect, stated that the circulation will be separate for buses and parents. He showed a rendering of the canopy and the existing playground and equipment. He stated that the architecture will match Hillcrest Elementary School.

Mr. DeGroot discussed the stormwater management system and there was discussion regarding the circulation for buses within the site. Field improvements were also shown as well. In response to Mr. Ingle and Mr. Gannon, the traffic control gate was explained. Mr. DeGroot stated that cars will be on the left and buses on the right. Mr. Gannon discussed issues with respect to drop-off and Mr. Bryson stated that it is significantly better with this plan. In response to Mr. Carr, Mr. DeGroot also explained student capacity at the school.

Mr. Saddle mire inquired about the Village Overlay District and Mr. DeGroot stated that this is an existing school. As a result, architecture cannot match the Star School across the street and there is currently parking in front of the building. He stated that they will utilize similar materials, however. Mr. Ingle stated that other schools have an industrial look. In response to this comment, it was added that the proposed architecture will look more like Holland Middle School and the project will be LEED certified as well.

Mr. Gannon discussed the grass island on the site and Mr. DeGroot clarified the location. In response to Mr. Bryson, the gate to control traffic was further explained.

Mr. Constantini inquired about grading on the site and Mr. DeGroot noted that it will not be a significant impact as they are not cutting into the hill. Mr. Bryson inquired about parking and potential impacts when the soccer fields are utilized on weekends.

Mr. Bryson and Ms. Fuller stated that they have no concerns with the waiver requests. Ms. Fuller added that she would like to see revisions on the stormwater management system. In response to the comment regarding the sidewalk, it was clarified that Ms. Fuller will follow up with McMahon.

Mr. DeGroot added that a small variance is necessary for impervious surface. In response to Mr. Ingle, Mr. DeGroot and Doug Taylor explained the cost of the project and the timing.

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

I move that we recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Richboro Elementary School Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, SLD 20-4, subject to compliance with the Gilmore Associates review letter dated August 26, 2020, the Pennoni Associates review letter dated August 19, 2020, and the McMahon Associates review letter dated August 28, 2020. In addition, recommendation for approval is subject to obtaining a variance for impervious surface and it is also recommended that the requested waivers be granted. It also subject to the Township engineer and traffic engineer following up with respect to a resolution on the sidewalk and crosswalk.

Approved - 7-0

Motion - McGuigan Second - Constantini

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael T. Solomon
Director of Planning and Zoning