

A meeting of the Township of Hamilton Planning Board was held on the above date with Chairman David Wigglesworth presiding. Other members present were Harry Bilicki, Charles Cain, Aline Dix, Wayne Choyce, John Kurtz, John Percy and Heather Tomasello. Alternate members present were Dave Adams and Harry Rogers. Also present were Steven Filippone, Engineer Consultant; Arnold Garonzik, substituting for Alexander Litwornia, Traffic Consultant; John Rosenberger, Solicitor; and Philip Sartorio, P.P., AICP, Community Development Director.

Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law was acknowledged.

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Cain moved, seconded by Mr. Kurtz, to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 3, 2013, as published. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH SIX MEMBERS VOTING “AYE”, NO “NAY”, TWO “ABSTAIN”.

Township of Hamilton (Minor Subdivision) – Raymond Went, Attorney, and Philip Sartorio, P.P., AICP, Community Development Director, were present.

Mrs. Dix and Mr. Cain recused themselves.

Mr. Went informed those present that the Township of Hamilton was proposing to subdivide an approximately 154 acre tract of land, owned by the County of Atlantic, into two conforming lots, one of which would be deeded to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust for inclusion in the adjacent Hamilton Preserve, with the other to be deeded to the Township of Hamilton for open space and recreation purposes, and would not be developed at this point in time.

Mr. Sartorio advised of the history of the tract and described the site location, existing conditions and surrounding land uses.

Mr. Sartorio stated that the purpose of the acquisition by the Township was to have the land available for recreation purposes in conjunction with the Hess School. Pointing to a concept plan, he explained that future expansion of the School would require relocation of the athletic fields so expansion could take place where the fields are now located.

Mr. Went advised that the Contract of Sale with The County provided for the land to be used for open space, recreation or conservation.

Mr. Sartorio testified that the proposal was in no way detrimental to the zoning or the Master Plan and that recreation facilities are a permitted use.

Mr. Filippone stated that he had no objection to granting the waivers requested by the Applicant since no development was being proposed at this point. He noted that no variances were needed for the proposal, and that the plan met all the required technical review requirements.

Mr. Percy moved, seconded by Mr. Choyce, to deem complete for review Application No. 2013-008, submitted by the Township of Hamilton. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS VOTING “AYE”, NO “NAY”, NO “ABSTAIN”.

Mr. Sartorio advised that Pinelands Commission Public Development approval had been granted, and that the project was unanimously approved by the County Planning Advisory Board.

Mr. Wigglesworth opened the hearing to public comment.

Charles Cain commented that the application was a good example of what happens when municipal officials, school officials and county officials get together to create a plan that benefits all.

Diane Caucci asked questions and commented with regard to the sale of the property to the County and the sale of the property from the County to the Township. Mr. Rosenberger advised that the questions asked by Ms. Caucci were not within the purview of the Board.

Mr. Percy moved, seconded by Mr. Kurtz, to close the public portion of the hearing. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING "AYE", NO "NAY", NO "ABSTAIN".

Mr. Percy moved, seconded by Mr. Kurtz, to grant minor subdivision approval to the Township of Hamilton, Application No. 2013-008, Block 1127, Lots 2, 3, 10, 22, 24, with waivers granted from checklist items 1c, 2, 5, 15, 16, 17 and 21, conditioned upon compliance with all of the representations made to the Board during the course of the hearing and within the documents submitted as part of the application.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE ABOVE MOTION:

Mr. Adams – Aye  
Mr. Bilicki – Aye  
Mr. Cain – Recused  
Mr. Cheek – Not present  
Mrs. Dix – Recused  
Mr. Choyce – Aye  
Mr. Kurtz – Aye  
Mr. Percy – Aye  
Mr. Rogers – Aye  
Mrs. Tomasello – Aye  
Mr. Wigglesworth = Aye

SAID MOTION CARRIED.

Hamilton Township Municipal Utilities Authority – Rebecca Lafferty, Attorney, and Ronald Curcio, P.E., were present.

Ms. Tomasello recused herself.

Mr. Curcio described the Applicant's proposal to update an existing sanitary sewerage pump station located within the Hamilton Pointe subdivision in order to better serve the surrounding area, both functionally and aesthetically. He stated that the new structure would need to be located where proposed, due to the location of the existing underground pipes, pumps and valves, and that variances would be necessary for front yard setback and rear yard setback.

Mr. Curcio testified that the proposed building would be more residential in nature; that the proposed fencing would be open and ornamental, with the exception of the privacy fence to be located on the common property line with Lot 34; that any landscaping disturbed during construction would be replaced, whether within the property confines or within the property owned by the Homeowners Association; and that the site needed to be visible due to Homeland Security requirements.

Board members asked questions with regard to existing conditions; landscaping; fencing; building design and materials; structure location; contact with the Homeowners Association; access; parking; site visits; sidewalk; site triangle obstruction; type of gate; driveway surface; and storm water runoff.

In response to Board members' questions related to contact with the Homeowners Association, Mr. Curcio stated that, to his knowledge, there had been no discussions with respect to the project.

Mr. Sartorio advised that the two issues he had raised in his report had been addressed when the plans were revised.

Pointing to a plan, Mr. Curcio indicated where the site triangle was located and described the present standard and existing conditions. He stated that the intersection was controlled with a stop sign and expressed the opinion there was adequate site distance. Mr. Curcio noted that Walker's Forge Road was owned by the County, and the County had reviewed and approved the proposal.

Mr. Garonzik referred to Alexander Litwornia's report, which contained a recommendation to deem the application complete.

Mr. Percy moved, seconded by Mr. Cain, to deem complete for review Application No. 2013-006, submitted by the Hamilton Township MUA. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING "AYE", NO "NAY", NO "ABSTAIN".

Mr. Curcio stated that the small site and the location of the existing pump station structure made it necessary to request a front yard and rear yard setback to place the building where proposed. He testified that the front yard setback would be an improvement from the existing condition; that the facility is an essential service; and that the upgrade of the facility would advance zoning purposes.

Mr. Sartorio reviewed his memorandum, and stated that the facility is a public utility substation, which are permitted in all zoning districts. He commented that, due to the lot size, meeting the required standards to upgrade the site would clearly be a hardship and would meet the "c.(1)" standard in his opinion.

Mr. Sartorio referred to the Ordinance section that provides standards for public utility substations, and noted that the pump station services the surrounding area, and that the design of the building and the fence style would be an improvement.

Mr. Sartorio pointed to the issue of no landscaping being proposed for the site, and questioned how preservation or replacement of the landscaping on the adjacent site would be addressed.

Mr. Sartorio noted that one off street parking space would be used on a regular basis.

Mr. Garonzik read Alexander Litwornia's report, within which questions were raised related to construction activity; site triangle; site access; fence location; equipment noise; gate type; future development south of the site; stop sign location; and sidewalk.

Board members asked questions and commented with regard to fan location; construction traffic control; fence gate; landscaping; and sidewalk, to which responses were provided.

With regard to the issue involving the location of the fence gate on Eagle Drive, it was decided to require that it be operated electronically to address safety concerns.

Mr. Garonzik advised that the Master Plan provides for sidewalk to be constructed in the area of the project, and Mr. Curcio pointed out that the MUA's property has frontage only on Eagle Drive and not on Walker's Forge Road.

A discussion took place with regard to landscaping, particularly along the common property line with the adjoining developed residential lot. It was felt that the Applicant should work with the Board's Landscape Consultant to develop a suitable landscape plan.

Mr. Wigglesworth opened the meeting to public comment.

Michael Biglin stated that he resided at 23 Westwood Road and was on the Homeowners Association for Hamilton Pointe/Misty Pines. Mr. Biglin requested that the Board consider requiring an increased buffer, as the facility would now be exposed on three sides and that any disturbance of landscaping and the irrigation system on the HOA's property be replaced. Pointing to a plan, he indicated where he felt additional buffering should be provided.

Mr. Curcio stated that he believed the Applicant could agree to that.

Mr. Biglin stated that he saw no need to provide sidewalk on Walkers Forge Road, and that he would prefer that landscaping be provided.

Kelly Leonard, 6198 Eagle Drive, advised as to where the sidewalk ended and where the MUA's trucks park when visiting the site, and commented that those trucks sometimes knock over his mailbox. He expressed concern with regard to the potential for increased noise due to replacement of the solid fence with an open fence.

Beth Ireland, 6197 Eagle Drive, the property owner adjacent to the site, asked questions and made comments with regard to the fence construction, debris and drainage issues.

Mr. Cain moved, seconded by Mrs. Dix, to close the public portion of the hearing. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING "AYE", NO "NAY", NO "ABSTAIN".

Mr. Choyce expressed disappointment regarding the fact that the Applicant did not contact the Homeowners Association, considering that the HOA owned common property on three sides of the site; and he commented that he would like to see the HOA have some involvement with the final outcome with respect to aesthetics.

A discussion ensued regarding the issue, and it was felt that any landscaping and irrigation disturbed during construction should be restored and enhanced in consultation with the Board's Landscape Architect Consultant.

Mr. Cain moved, seconded by Mrs. Dix, to grant preliminary and final minor site plan approval to the Hamilton Township Municipal Utilities Authority, Block 731.01, Lot 30.05, Application No. 2013-006, with a waiver granted to permit structures within the site triangle easements and variances granted for front and rear yard setback, conditioned upon the fence gate on Eagle Drive being operated by an electric gate opener; restoration of any landscaping and irrigation equipment destroyed during construction; and enhancement of the landscaping and buffer to the satisfaction of the Board's Landscape Architect Consultant.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE ABOVE MOTION:

Mr. Adams – Aye

Mr. Bilicki – Aye. He stated that he was disappointed that the HOA hadn't been contacted by the Applicant; that he hoped the MUA would contact any HOA's in the future; that he understood why the fence could not be solid on all sides; and that he hoped the HOA would be satisfied with the outcome.

Mr. Cain – Aye. He stated that he agreed with contacting HOA's about projects within their developments; that transparency is always a good thing; that the project would be an improvement to the area; and that the benefit to the personnel who have to work on the equipment far outweighs any detriment.

Mrs. Dix – Aye. She noted the importance with regard to the upgrade, as the facility serviced approximately three hundred and fifty residences and the improvement would make it safer for the MUA employees, as well as for the neighborhood.

Mr. Cheek – Not present

Mr. Choyce – Aye. He commented that the size of the site made the improvement difficult, and stated that it was unfortunate that the fence couldn't conceal the facility, but he understood the requirement for the open fence.

Mr. Kurtz – Aye. He stated that he hoped that the HOA would have input with regard to the landscaping

Mr. Percy – Aye. He expressed some concerns, but stated that he understood the need to upgrade the facility in keeping with current technology.

Mr. Rogers - Aye

Mrs. Tomasello – Recused

Mr. Wigglesworth – Aye.

SAID MOTION CARRIED.

Oakcrest High School (Informal Presentation) – Tom Hopkins, AIA LEED AP, was present.

Mr. Hopkins advised that the Business Administrator, Charles Muller, could not be present, as he was attending a similar presentation for capital project review and recommendation in Galloway Township.

Mr. Hopkins described the issues that they were trying to resolve and the proposed improvements to the athletic fields and building.

Board members asked questions, made comments and expressed concern with regard to parking during events, flooding in certain areas, ramp location, proposed path locations, wooded buffer and lighting.

Mr. Sartorio referred to his report and advised that the proposal was consistent with the Master Plan. He offered comments and suggestions regarding the proposed improvements and to address existing site issues.

Mr. Hopkins stated that a response to the submission was required either to the Department of Education or the District within forty-five days, and if one were not provided, it would be assumed that the project is in compliance and approved.

Mr. Sartorio stated he would update his memo to reflect Board members' comments and forward it to the Secretary to be submitted to the District.

Public Comment – Mr. Wigglesworth opened the meeting to public comment and there was no response.

Mr. Cain moved, seconded by Mr. Percy, to close the public portion of the meeting. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING "AYE", NO "NAY", NO "ABSTAIN".

Adjournment – Mr. Percy moved, seconded by Mr. Cain, to adjourn the meeting. SAID MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING "AYE", NO "NAY", NO "ABSTAIN".

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Rainbow,  
Planning Administrator