

HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
January 12, 2017

Chairman Sean Lipani called the Planning Board Regular Public Meeting of January 12, 2017 to order at 7:33 pm. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting took place in the Courtroom of the Hillsborough Township Municipal complex.

Chairman Lipani announced the meeting had been duly advertised according to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975 ("Sunshine Law").

OATH OF OFFICE – Samuel Weinstein (Seat Alt. #2)

Mayor Suraci administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Weinstein.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Carl Suraci - Present
Robert Wagner, Jr. – Present
Committeeman Frank DelCore – Absent
Robert Peason – Present
Stephanie Forrest – Present
Neil Julian, Vice Chairman - Present

Sally Becorena – Arrived 7:38 pm
Shawn Lipani, Chairman - Present
Kenneth Hesthag, Secretary – Present
Ron Skobo (Seat Alt. #1) - Absent
Samuel Weinstein (Seat Alt. #2) - Present

Also present: David K. Maski, PP, AICP, Planning Director; Eric Bernstein, Esq., Board Attorney (Eric M. Bernstein & Associates); William H.R. White, III, PE, CME, Board Engineer (Maser Consulting P.A.); Michael Lombardozi, CCR, Covering Court Reporter; and Caz Bielen, Board Videographer (Premier Media, LLC).

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

- January 05, 2017 – Reorganization Meeting

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Peason, seconded by Mr. Wagner.

Roll Call: Mr. Wagner – yes; Mr. Peason – yes; Mr. Hesthag – yes; Mayor Suraci – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes; Chairman Lipani – yes. Motion carries.

Mr. Bernstein noted the arrival of Ms. Becorena at 7:38 pm.

DISPOSITION OF RESOLUTIONS

- Norma NORZ (Giraldi) – File 16-PB-14-MRV

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Peason, seconded by Vice Chairman Julian.

Roll Call: Mr. Wagner – yes; Mr. Peason – yes; Mr. Hesthag – yes; Ms. Becorena – yes; Mayor Suraci – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes; Chairman Lipani – yes. Motion carries.

PLANNING BOARD BUSINESS

- Danielle LEVATINO – File 16-PB-13-SRV – Extension of time through March 31, 2017 / Request for adjournment date

Mr. Maski commented that the Applicant's Attorney informed the Township that soil testing has been done and sent to the laboratory. However, the results are not ready. The Applicant is requesting to adjourn from February 2, to March 2, with notice.

A motion to approve the extension and adjournment date was made by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Julian.

Roll Call: Ms. Forrest – yes; Mr. Peason – yes; Mr. Wagner – yes; Mr. Hesthag – yes; Ms. Becorena – yes; Mayor Suraci – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes; Chairman Lipani – yes. Motion carries.

- Master Plan Subcommittee

Chairman Lipani requested to have all members from the 2016 Master Plan Subcommittee join him again this year (Mayor Suraci, Mr. Wagner, Mr. Peason, and with Committeeman DelCore as the Alternate), filling the remaining seat left vacant from Dr. Marulli, to Vice Chairman Julian.

A motion to approve was made by Chairman Lipani, seconded by Mr. Wagner. There were no other nominations.

Roll Call: Ms. Forrest – yes; Mr. Peason – yes; Mr. Wagner – yes; Mr. Hesthag – yes; Ms. Becorena – yes; Mr. Weinstein – yes; Mayor Suraci – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes; Chairman Lipani – yes. Motion carries.

- 2016 Planning Board Annual Report

A motion to adopt, as written, was made by Vice Chairman Julian, seconded by Mr. Peason.

A motion to approve the extension and adjournment date was made by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Julian.

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Roll Call: Ms. Forrest – yes; Mr. Peason – yes; Mr. Wagner – yes; Mr. Hesthag – yes; Ms. Becorena – yes; Mr. Weinstein – yes; Mayor Suraci – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes; Chairman Lipani – yes. Motion carries.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

None

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

None

PUBLIC HEARING – SUBDIVISION/SITE PLAN APPLICATIONS

- **Neil & Barbara VAN CLEEF / HRC Associates, LLC** – File 16-PB-17-SRV – Block 199, Lots 34.01 & 145 – 30 – 40 Brower Lane. Applicants seeking Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval; ‘c’ bulk variances, design waivers and submission waivers,; and required parking waivers, to expand the existing HRC Health Club/Fitness Center and construct an addition; construct an expansion of the Country Classics office building; construct a new two-story 7,322 sf. building fronting on Brower Lane; and provide revised parking and circulation plan, for properties within the GC Gateway C District, and within the ASD Overlay Zone (EC Review: 11-28-16 / HPC Review 12-15-16).

Chairman Lipani announced he would be recusing himself for this application due to business dealings with the Applicant.

Vice Chairman Julian took over the meeting.

William b. Savo, Esq., representing the Applicants, called the Applicant’s Engineer.

Exhibit A-1 – Rendering of the existing site conditions (sheet 2 in site plan packet) dated 7-20-16

Exhibit A-2 - Rendering of the proposed site conditions (sheet 3 in site plan packet) last revised dated 12-13-16

Michael K. Ford, PE, of Van Cleef Engineering Associates was sworn in, accepted by the Board and gave the following testimony:

Mr. Ford said the Board had been provided with a black and white copy of the plans used for display in the site plan packets.

Mr. Maski asked Mr. Ford to review the sheets that had been revised, for clarification.

Mr. Ford said Sheet 3 of the site plan, and the grading plan, sheet 6 were revised 12-13-16. The revisions were minor to address comments made.

Mr. Ford said the proposed plan is to enhance circulation on the property and provide additional parking up-close to Brower Lane; the addition to the Racket & Fitness Club; construction of a new building in the center of the Property; and small addition to the existing office occupied by Country Classics , Inc. on the east side of the Property.

Mr. Ford said the site is in the Gateway ‘C’ Zoning District, which was created in 2015. The proposed activities and uses are permitted. The site is serviced by public water and sewer. There is access and frontage on Brower Lane. There is an existing curb-cut in the middle of the Property, which is where a residential house and garage had been located, which was demolished in 2009.

Mr. Ford said there is currently parking on the east portion of the property that dead-ends close to Brower Lane but does not have direct access to Brower Lane. Part of the application would be to make that connection so that vehicles going to the center facilities would not need to circulate through the site and out to Royce Brook Road.

Vice Chairman Julian asked if that was a requirement of the County.

Mr. Ford said no; it is the goal of the Applicant.

Mr. Ford explained when Amwell Road was realigned, Brower Lane essentially became a dead-end road with a cul-de-sac, which is essentially a driveway access to this property. He said the driveways that were at the site at the base of the railroad bridge on Amwell Road were not preferred by the County. Now that Brower Lane is essentially an access driveway to the site, they can provide for the new curb-cut at the end of the cul-de-sac and create the new access pattern so that people coming down the end of Brower Lane will not need to circulate through the existing parking. There will be a new parking

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area for the Brower Lane access but no new parking for the rear of the existing site. At the time when the Applicants were before the Board last year with an informal; the parking included an expansion at the most northern portion of the site, as well as a covering of the existing tennis courts. Those two items have been abandoned for this project. The additional parking that had been proposed has been added close to Brower Lane. The new parking is centrally located to the three main buildings rather than at the rear of the site closest to the nearest residential neighbors.

Mr. Ford said comments were received in response to the Landscape Plan submitted. He said each and every comment within the January 4, 2017 Maser report will be addressed to Mr. White's satisfaction, including the tree mitigation. The Applicants will provide street trees along Brower Lane internally and will be providing an enhanced buffer. Mr. Ford said he had reviewed all seven pages of comments with Mr. White and would agree as a condition of approval, that the Applicant would comply with all suggestions and comments by Mr. White.

Vice Chairman Julian asked Mr. Ford to review the stormwater management.

Mr. Ford said the Gateway 'C' Zone allows for 85% impervious coverage. The existing conditions for the two lots are at about 39% and 32%. Even with all of the improvements, the sites will only be at about 45%. There is an existing detention system in the northerly portion of the tract, with a direct storm drainage pipe to the public road behind the site. A small portion of the site drains in that direction but most is collected by a stormwater collection system and discharges to a pipe immediately adjacent to the railroad. The proposed is implementing porous pavement for the new parking with subsurface storage areas underneath the porous pavement, and an underground detention basin, underneath the parking, immediately adjacent to the middle building. The application is not only submitted to Mr. White for review, but also to the County and DRCC. He said the DRCC has already issued a memo that all of the stormwater submitted as part of this application comply with all of their regulations.

Vice Chairman Julian said there was some concern expressed by the neighbors for the rear of the property (during the informal review). He asked if those concerns were addressed in the plan.

Mr. Ford said the parking at the rear of the property and enclosure of the tennis court are no longer elements of the plan. The underground detention basin now proposed under the parking connects to existing storm drainage facilities that discharge to the east of the property, not directed to its nearest neighbors. Mr. Ford said as part of the implementation of the tree mitigation and enhanced buffer along the northerly property line, the Applicant can provide some regrading and swales to direct stormwater away from the neighbors, even though there are no improvements proposed there that would create additional drainage. He said what steps that can be taken to improve an existing condition, can be taken.

Mr. Ford said a site lighting plan has been submitted. He said there is no change to the lighting in the existing parking areas. The proposed is to carry forward the existing theme and fixtures that are on-site today. Currently, the existing site has Colonial type fixtures, at a 12 ft. mounting height, with the lighting focused downward. He said Mr. White has asked for a point-source analysis of that site lighting, including demonstrating from actual on-site or night light meter readings, that there is no light spillage onto the neighbors' properties. Some of the existing handmade copper fixtures from forty years ago may have readings which are less than the current standards. The detailed analysis will be provided to Mr. White. However, if the analysis proves these fixtures to be less than the current standards of 3 candles, the Applicant requests that additional lighting not need to be added, especially where adjacent to residential neighbors, since these fixtures have functioned adequately for so many years. All of the lighting proposed is in the new parking area, as shown on the plans. The lighting in the back is the existing lighting. Mr. Ford said the lighting analysis would include the entire site.

Mr. White said they typically look for cut-off fixtures so there is not a lot of glare for the neighbors. He said looking at this site and the enhancement to the buffer, there does not appear to be a lot of light escaping. Mr. White said if the Board feels it is acceptable to continue with the Colonial themed fixtures, he does not have an issue with the glare for the residential homes behind it.

Vice Chairman Julian said they are not cut-off fixtures but they still have lower glare.

Mr. White agreed.

Mr. Ford said there is currently a very intense Evergreen screen that has development over the course of many years. If Mr. White feels there are any areas throughout the site that need to be enhanced with buffering, the Applicants are agreeable to place the landscaping in areas that are more effective.

Mr. Ford said there is one dumpster location for the entire site, which is adequate. There is a wooden stockade fence around to keep it screened. Additional landscaping will be provided, as per Mr. White's comments.

Mr. Ford said deliveries are made via mail delivery or by small box-trucks, such as UPS. This will remain unchanged.

Vice Chairman Julian asked Mr. Ford to review the comments from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

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Mr. Ford said the HPC reviewed the application because there is a two-story professional building that has historic value and is on the Preservation Plan, known as the “Wyckoff House”. This application does not involve any changes to that existing building. The HPC provided a memo that confirmed the application has no adverse impact to that structure.

Mr. Ford said there was a comment that raised greater accessibility for pedestrian and bike access. There is a sidewalk between Brower Land and the first driveway on Royce Brook. The Applicants intend to replace that sidewalk with an extension of a sidewalk. That sidewalk will hook up to the sidewalk along the easterly professional building. An extension of the sidewalk along Brower Lane to the driveway to the back of the site, as well as sidewalk and pedestrian access connections from the expansion of the Fitness Club at the south side of that building, to Brower Land and to the parking to the east.

Mr. Ford said although adequate parking has been provided, the parking can be shared by the uses because they are complimentary. The parking is more heavily used during the day, while the health club parking is greater after hours. The parking has been calculated as if all of the uses are being used simultaneously. The parking today is at 148 parking spaces. The proposed will be at 247 parking spaces, as required by the ordinance.

Mr. Ford said no new signage is proposed but they are requesting a waiver to keep the existing freestanding sign at the intersection of Royce Brook and Brower, as well as a small freestanding sign at the central driveway. No new street signage is proposed.

Mr. Hesthag asked if the lighting is sufficient for the new parking.

Mr. Ford said the existing lighting and existing parking remain unchanged. There will be two fixtures that will be relocated to accommodate a row of parking. The new lighting is concentrated in the new parking area.

Mr. Ford said page 10 of the plans provides the phasing plan. Three phases are proposed to accommodate construction sequencing. Phase I consists of the main parking along the existing driveway and a portion of a parking area. Phase II is the addition to the Country Classics building and/or the addition to the Racket Club. Most of the landscaping would be done during the early phases, the exception being the landscaping immediately adjacent to the middle building, which is Phase III. The Applicant foresees the parking being built immediately upon approval; Phase II thereafter. There is no specific time set for Phase III, but rather when the need is evident for the middle building, some time in the future.

Mr. White asked about a cross-access easement given the property is owned by two separate owners on two separate lots.

Mr. Ford said the Applicants will agree to file a cross-access easement for shared access and parking.

Mr. Maski asked Mr. Ford to review the hours of operation for all of the entities on the site.

Mr. Ford said Mr. Wilke will review the hours of operation for the health club. He said Van Cleef operates 9 am – 5 pm.

Mr. Maski asked for review of how the buildings will be used.

Mr. Ford reviewed all, starting from the east: Racket & Fitness Club – will have an addition on the south portion of the building; Van Cleef Engineering Building – unchanged as part of this application; new two-story professional building. There was some discussion as to whether or not this building would be built now or in the future.

Mr. Savo commented the future building would be for offices, which is a permitted use.

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Mr. Maski said the plan shows the building would be used by the Racket Club. He said the Board would need to know now what the use will be so as to determine whether or not any variances are associated.

Mr. Ford said he would do back to that. He continued identifying the buildings along the property. He said there is an existing detached garage with an apartment residence over it, which remains unchanged as part of the application. The Wyckoff House is a two-story professional building that remains unchanged. Lastly, is the two-story professional office building to the east currently occupied by Country Classics, which will have an addition on the north end of the building. There is also associated parking and the addition of a new driveway cut on Brower Lane that connects the parking.

Mr. Maski said the plans and the conversations over recent months have indicated the new building would be used for the Racquet & Fitness Center. If being amended, the Board would need to know.

Mr. Savo stated Mr. Wilke will clarify that when he comes up.

Mr. Ford commented that for the Gateway 'C' District, the parking standards are at a higher level per square foot than for general office use. If that building was used for general office use, the parking would still be adequate. He said, with that said, if that building were used as a medical office, the parking would not be sufficient since the parking for a medical practice is higher than for a health club. The use would be restricted based on parking.

Vice Chairman Julian asked if a resubmittal was in order.

Mr. Bernstein said once the Board hears from Mr. Wilke, it can then decide whether or not the application needs to be amended.
Open to the Public.

Barbara Boudreau – Rails Edge Road

- Ms. Boudreau said the subject property slopes on the right-hand side, from the front of the property to the back of the property about 12 ft. She said when there is a heavy rain, she gets a stream through her property and alongside her driveway.
- Ms. Boudreau said the plans reviewed at the Township did not show any grading changes there. She asked how in adding an additional 9,000 sf. of impervious surface, that she would not have more water in her yard.

Mr. Ford said none of the drainage that goes to that direction now comes from areas that will be changed by the application. He said the addition will have direct pipe of drainage into the proposed underground facility. Landscaping changes are shown on the plan, not land disturbance changes for a swale. Since the plans were drafted, it was agreed with Mr. White's office, that the area of concern would be regraded as part of the enhanced landscaping area, and provide a swale that will help direct any water that goes along that property. Mr. Ford said they will try to develop a drainage pattern from Ms. Boudreau's property to flow towards the railroad tracks.

- Ms. Boudreau asked if that would be a condition.

Mr. Ford agreed it would be a condition of approval.

- Ms. Boudreau said she had concerns with the traffic in and out of the existing driveway. She asked if there was any consideration to closing off that driveway, as was discussed 17 years ago when those houses were put in.

Mr. Ford said there is no plan to change that driveway. He said all of the access for the site can be reached through Brower Lane. He said this application is about moving any need for access to the site to Brower Lane with the addition of the second driveway, additional parking, concentration of the use and secondary access has been designed in an effort to focus and direct traffic not toward the existing driveway but to the new driveway.

- Ms. Boudreau asked if any of the outside cross-training activities will be moved inside.

Mr. Ford said that can be answered by Mr. Wilke when he testifies.

Mr. Savo called Applicant Gregory Wilke.

Gregory Michael Wilke, President of HRC Associates, LLC, was sworn in and gave the following testimony, in response to questions asked by Mr. Savo:

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Mr. Wilke said he and his wife, Jennifer, own HRC Associates, LLC. He said HRC Fitness is the old Racket Club built in 1979. It was originally solely a racquetball facility with 12 courts, a lounge and locker rooms. As the game of racquetball became less popular, the original owner converted courts to other purposes in the 80's and 90's, including dance studios, fitness studios, martial arts studio, offices and locker rooms. A 55 ft. enclosed in-ground pool was constructed to the east face of the building in 2001. The current facility has 5 racquetball courts.

Mr. Wilke spoke briefly on the personal connection to Hillsborough for him and his wife. He said they purchased the company in 2012 and changed the name to HRC Fitness shortly thereafter. Since then, a number of upgrades were done to the exterior and interior. The proposed expansion is to provide HRC Fitness clients with a more comfortable facility. The first new client space is a lounge for the Premier Dance families, located in the center south end addition. Currently the dancers and their families hang out in between classes in the main lounge area, which is adjacent to the racquetball courts. By creating a dedicated lounge area, the dancers will be able to do homework and hang out without the noise of a racquetball game. The existing lounge will become an enclosed baby sitting room, which is double the size of the current baby sitting room, and in high demand.

Mr. Wilke said the second and third spaces are the addition of two 20 ft. x 40 ft. dance and fitness studios. One studio will be used by Premier Dance for small practices. The other studio will be used as a fitness studio. The fourth new client space is the addition of a 40 ft. x 40 ft. fitness studio. This studio will allow HRC Fitness to offer the latest group fitness classes. Mr. Wilke said their tag line is "all under one roof". He said the goal is to be able to offer fitness for the "family", providing opportunities for parents to take classes while their children are in dance or martial arts classes.

Mr. Wilke said the next two spaces do not add to the building footprint but would be created by the conversion of Court #5 to an additional fitness studio and/or office space. The lower level would provide additional equipment in the fitness. The upper level space would either be used as a 20 ft. x 40 ft. fitness studio, or more likely converted into office space. Currently the facility lacks adequate conference and office space.

Mr. Wilke said the final new space is the creation of an outdoor covered porch on the south side of the building that will allow HRC clients to relax and get some fresh air.

Mr. Wilke said there is currently only one primary means of ingress and egress for the facility, on the north face of the building leading to the main parking lot. In the evening, this parking lot acts as a drop-off and pick-up area for the children taking classes with Premier Dance Studio. The traffic flow is sometimes congested in the lot due to an estimated 15 -20 cars over the course of a ten minutes window for pick-up and drop-off for these classes. Parents park wherever they find room to wait for their children.

Mr. Wilke said the proposal of the addition for HRC would create a second means of egress on the south face of the building which would be used solely in the evenings for the families of Premier Dance, ultimately reducing congestion and the number of cars on Royce Brook to Brower Lane.

Mr. Wilke said the addition will not affect the hours of operation, which are Monday – Thursday 5 am – 10 pm; Friday 5 am – 9 pm; Saturday 6 am – 6 pm; and Sunday 8 am – 4 pm.

Mr. Wilke said the cross-training will be cleaned up in the next months and will no longer be doing the training outside.

Mr. Savo asked Mr. Wilke to explain the reference on the plans for use by HRC Fitness.

Mr. Wilke said the original concept was to expand the use into the new building but at this time, there are no plans presently to do so.

Mr. Maski explained that the site plans and architectural plans note that the building will be wholly occupied by HRC Fitness. He asked Mr. Wilke if that is now not the case.

Mr. Savo said his client understands the approval would be based on the entire building being used by HRC. If that were to change, they would need to come back before the Board, but currently, there is no present need for the building.

Mr. Maski asked Mr. Wilke to make clear, regardless of need, if the Applicant is applying to build a new two-story building to be fully occupied by HRC or not.

Mr. Wilke said that is correct.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Wilke if he was clear that any change whatsoever for the proposed use of that building for anything other than for use by HRC Fitness would require the Applicant to come back before the Board for approval of that building.

Mr. Wilke said he understood.

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Mr. Bernstein said that includes potential occupancy, in a different manner.

Mr. Wilke said that is correct.

No question from Mr. White for this witness.

Mr. Maski asked the times for trash pick-up.

Mr. Wilke said it was during the day but that he was not certain of the time.

Mr. Maski said the ordinance states there shall be no trash pick-up or deliveries between the hours of 10 pm and 7 am.

Mr. Wilke said they are compliant.

William Couch – Railsedge Road

- Mr. Couch said in its heyday, the outdoor cross-training done on the former tennis court generated a lot of noise with the flipping of tires and use of firehoses. He asked if the Board could condition any approval on the discontinuation of the outdoor training.

Vice Chairman Julian said Mr. Wilke testified the outdoor training would be discontinued.

- Mr. Couch said Mr. Wilke said it was his intension.

Mr. Savo said if the Board makes it a condition, the Applicant will accept.

- Mr. Couch asked if there have been any drainage studies done of the existing facilities. He said indeed there is a “river” that occurs between his house (#16) and his neighbor’s house (#18) is coming from these structures.

Mr. Savo said this is not the witness to ask. He said however, Mr. Ford already testified he would work with Mr. White to address the problem for any existing drainage issues.

- Mr. Couch asked if he and his neighbor would be notified of the proposed changes.

Vice Chairman Julian said the stormwater plan is already in the plans. The swale and grading have been talked about but the Township Engineer, Mr. White, will work with Mr. Ford to mitigate any potential run-off or flooding.

Mr. Savo agreed.

Mr. White said the proposed improvements will not increase or decrease this issue, except for what he and Mr. Ford will work out to direct run-off towards the railroad and out of the neighbor’s yards. The application will not exasperate the situation; it will make it better.

Vice Chairman Julian said as he understands it, the engineers will work to redirect the water from the neighbor’s properties, if there is any.

Mr. White said there is a sanitary sewer easement in between the neighbor’s properties that may be creating some of the problems from settlement.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Wilke the anticipated use of the tennis courts.

Mr. Wilke said he will be removing the personal training equipment, tires, ropes, etc. and it will no longer be used as a personal training area.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Wilke if he will be putting that area back to its original condition as a tennis court.

Mr. Wilke said yes.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Wilke if he would be willing to make that a condition of approval.

Mr. Wilke agreed.

Linda Couch – Railsedge Road

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- Ms. Couch said she has spoken with Mr. Wilke about the traffic in and out of the current driveway onto Royce Brook. She asked if that driveway could be a dedicated entrance only. She said that driveway is very hazardous.

Vice Chairman Julian advised that question could be answered by the traffic expert when he testifies.

- Ms. Couch asked about the use of the tennis court. She said she understood the current training would be discontinued but said in the 23 years she has lived there; it has never been used as a tennis court. Ms. Couch said that area seems to have been used for the kids during the summer camps. She asked what the use would be.

Mr. Wilke said the intent would be to continue to use that area during the day for the summer camps, for the kids to use for kickball, tag and those types of activities.

- Ms. Couch asked if it would be a more intense use. She said in the past, it had been used in the morning and a few times during the day. That is very different from having it being used all throughout the day for 25 – 50 kids. Ms. Couch asked for a more definitive use.

Mr. Wilke said the intent is to continue as they have been over the course of the past 4 to 5 years. He said they cannot accept more kids for the summer camps.

- Ms. Couch said that area has not been used the past few years because the exercise equipment has been up.

Mr. Wilke said he would like to use that area for the summer campers at least a few hours a day.

- Ms. Couch asked if there could be more conversations with the neighbors so that the use does not become more intense.

Mr. Wilke agreed.

Mr. Bernstein stated having conversations does not assist the Board in taking its actions. He suggested that if a conversation were to take place that it be done quickly, be memorialized, and made part of the Resolution of Approval. There will be some time before the Resolution is presented to the Board. Any agreement needs to be taken care of before this Board votes on the Resolution.

Mr. Wagner asked for further explanation as to what would be decided.

Mr. Bernstein said the issue appears to be the intensity of the use at that part of the property. Apparently the tennis court area usage and hours is not set in stone.

Mr. Savo said the Applicant can clarify.

Mr. Wilke said they may have two groups of 5-10 kids out in the grass area playing tag or kickball. When it is muddy, he said he would like to move those activities to the tennis court. He said he does not plan to increase the number of kids or activities to that court. Summer camp runs 8 am – 4 pm Monday through Friday in the summer.

Mr. Wagner said kickball would be played when most people are working.

Mr. Wilke agreed.

Mayor Suraci asked if the grass area has been used for summer camp.

Mr. Wilke confirmed it has. That area has been used some 25-30 years.

Gary Dean, PE from Dolan and Dean Consulting Engineers, LLC, was sworn in, accepted by the Board and gave the following testimony in response to questions asked by Mr. Savo:

Mr. Dean confirmed he had done a traffic analysis before and after construction, and of the driveways and access to Brower Lane, for which they submitted a *Traffic Impact Assessment for HRC Associates, LLC*, dated August 11, 2016.

Mr. Dean said the underlying traffic used in the report was collected mid-May of 2016, and representative of typical traffic activities. The study was done on the peak hours of 7 am – 9 am, and 4 pm – 6:30 pm. Once that data is collected, the 60 minutes period in which traffic is the busiest is identified. He said this is a unique situation in that all of the surrounding roads, with the exception of Amwell Road, are dead-end streets. The traffic and activity are concentrated essentially at Brower and Royce Brook. All of that traffic then intersects Amwell Road at the traffic signal.

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Mr. Dean said a fair amount of widening and improvements were put in when Amwell Road was realigned by the County and the signal was put in. He said a lot of engineering and pavement was done for a series of dead-end roads and driveways. The signal, the widening, and the number of lanes provided allows traffic to be processed very safely and efficiently, and in a uniform and controlled manner.

Mr. Dean said the busiest time in the morning was found to be between 7:30 am – 8:30 am. Site activity was fairly light, with 23 vehicles entering and 17 vehicles exiting. The higher activity was at night, which is consistent with the dance activities and fitness programs offered. Ninety vehicles were identified entering the peak hour; 70 exiting during the peak evening hour. Mr. Dean reviewed that roughly 80 vehicles came in on Royce Brook, but as traffic leaves, about 55 vehicles left via Royce Brook, and about 20 were concentrated on Brower Lane.

Mr. Dean said the focus of this application is to reorient and relieve some of the pressure from Royce Brook, especially from the queuing or stacking of vehicles in the parking field. The proposal is to have all of the dance activities in the southern portion of the property. The heavier traffic that is affecting Royce Brook will instead use Brower effectively as the site's driveway. Brower Lane is a remnant of Amwell Road and is essentially not used by anyone other than the subject property; it should be vacated by the County. This allows entering parents to use the cul-de-sac on Brower to que along the site frontage. What is proposed as a site sidewalk and entrance, with an improved frontage on Brower Lane, will accommodate the dance-related traffic. Parents who wish to come in rather than just drop-off can use the proposed 15 additional parking spaces on the easterly side. The primary parking area will still be used for those utilizing the fitness facility.

Mr. Dean said they prefer not to change the two-way traffic to one-way traffic. He said restricting it or even removing it would again create an issue with conflicting with traffic. Mr. Dean said he is very confident realigning the dance related traffic to keep it on the southerly side of the property will relieve a lot of traffic from Royce Brook.

Mr. Dean said although he did not witness the situations the public described, he could see its potential. There is a row of mature pine trees to the left of the driveway that serves as a buffer between the driveway and the residents to the west. Those trees need to be cleaned up to improve the sight line for vehicles leaving HRC and onto Royce Brook. Mr. Dean said he has recommended to the Applicant that the branches on the street side be limbed to improve visibility. He said there is also a mature pine tree on the right side that obscures the STOP sign that needs pruning. Mr. Dean said he is not typically an advocate of the white "stop" bars but in this case, it may be appropriate. A reflective strip on the channel post may also be helpful as a visual cue of the approaching "stop" area. Mr. Dean said he would defer to the Board's Engineer. Mr. Dean said between the clearing and some reinforcing of the intended traffic regulations that will improve safety and the conditions for the exiting traffic.

Mr. Dean addressed the projections for the proposed improvements. He said they extrapolated based on the square footage area of the office space and fitness space. The evening traffic is projected to be at 32% which is in keeping with the area. That would be an additional 26 vehicles attracted to the site within one hour, with 17 exiting vehicles. Mr. Dean said the redirection of traffic to Brower Lane will lessen the impact and improve what the residents experience on Royce Brook today. Mr. Dean said they expect very favorable levels of service in and out of the site. The signal will be able to accommodate the increased traffic associated with the use.

Mr. Dean said the required number of parking spaces is being provided per the ordinance. As Mr. Ford mentioned, this is a shared parking arrangement in that as the office users vacate the parking in the evening, the fitness center has the use of those spaces. Conversely, when the office is busiest during the day, the fitness center is generally below what they see at peak times.

Mr. Dean said Mr. White has requested some supporting data, which will be provided to him.

Mr. Dean addressed the parking stall sizes. He said there are some spaces at 9 ft. x 18 ft., others are 10 ft. x 18 ft.; the ordinance requires 10 ft. x 20 ft., with 30 ft. aisles. Mr. Dean said he advocates bigger parking stalls in select areas where there is high turnover with expected large parcels, such as a Home Depot or grocery store. He said 9 ft. x 18 ft. is the standard size almost all across the State. This size accommodates a large SUV and does not compromise safe circulation.

Vice Chairman Julian asked Mr. Savo if his Client would be willing to improve the sight line at the end of Brower.

Mr. Savo said the Applicant would follow Mr. Dean's recommendations, as concurred with by the Board's Engineer.

Mr. Dean said irrespective of the outcome that should be done anyway.

Mr. White noted that would include the addition of the "stop" bar and reflectorization of the STOP sign / post.

Vice Chairman Julian also mentioned the trimming of the trees.

Mr. Dean said people will drive on their own accord but improving the sight lines will at least make that safer.

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Mr. Maski asked if Mr. White's recommendation to reconfigure the parking layout to prohibit parking within 50 ft. of a driveway would impact the number of parking spaces.

Mr. Dean said in his review of the comments with Mr. Ford, the parking spaces on the southerly portion of the property comply. There are two handicap parking spaces upon entering the westerly driveway on Brower. Mr. Dean said he did not expect the turnover of those spaces to conflict with the in-bound traffic. The only traffic coming in from Brower, which is a dead-end road, is associated with the site. He said the standard of 50 ft. is to assure a motorist pulling in does not hesitate and block traffic should another car be backing out. Mr. Dean said if Mr. White made a strong recommendation to adhere to that, there are other areas at the site where they can accommodate the two relocated spaces to keep the net supply the same.

Mr. Maski asked if on-street parking is permitted or prohibited on Brower.

Mr. Dean said it is permitted.

Mr. Maski asked for more details about the drop-off and pick-up areas on Brower related to the dance studio.

Mr. Dean said his understanding is that the children are of an age group where the parents can drop them off. The curb frontage would be used for standing, rather than parking, but parking is permitted. Should a parent need to come inside, the intent is for them to park in the easterly parking area. The street is public and cannot be regulated under Mr. Wilke's control unless the street is vacated.

Mr. White said he had spoken with Mr. Ford about shifting the handicap parking spaces back and shift a space elsewhere to allow for a longer throat. That shift will improve what is proposed.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Dean if it was correct to say that the parking and traffic analysis took into account that the second (new) building in the middle of the site was to be an office building.
Mr. Dean agreed.

Mr. Bernstein said the Applicant provided testimony that the intent of that new building is not going to be a professional office building but rather another fitness center. Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Dean if he wished to change his testimony on parking obligations and / or traffic movements on the site based on that provision.

Mr. Dean said he would defer to Mr. Ford on the parking spaces requirement. The requirement in the zone (for office) is 3 spaces per 1,000 sf.; whereas the health and fitness ratio is 3.5 per 1,000 sf.

Mr. Ford said the number of spaces is based on a fitness center, calculated at 3.5 spaces per 1,000 sf. The parking is already adequate for recreational use or office use. He said if the Applicant were to come back to the Board for a change to office use, there would be no need to change any of the site improvements. If it were for general office use, there are about 3 more spaces than would be required.

Mr. Maski said the concern for a changed use would not be the parking but for the operation, hours, traffic, turn over, etc.

Mr. Savo reiterated the Applicant already agreed to come back if there was a change.

Mr. Dean said they assumed roughly a 10,000 sf. increase to the fitness center. The middle building will be 7,300 sf., and the total addition to the existing, excluding the covered porch, is 5,800 sf. so the combined total would be around 13,000 sf. which is only 3,000 sf. short of the calculation. Mr. Dean said that square footage would yield another 6-8 vehicles. He said he was confident in the findings of the traffic study will remain consistent. Coming out of the service road at Amwell Road is at a level of service 'C' so there is abundant capacity to accommodate 8 – 10 additional vehicles.

Mr. Maski asked if there would be any interior directional signs to properly direct visitors to the site to where they want to go. If not, he asked proper signage be added.

Mr. Dean agreed that discrete signage could be provided. He explained that most are repeat visitors to the site so other than the initial visit, they will know where to go.

Mr. Savo agreed.

Mayor Suraci asked if there was any data on accidents on Royce Brook leaving the entrance.

Mr. Dean said he had not requested that data.

Mayor Suraci asked if there will be a designated walkway between the existing and new fitness center buildings.

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Mr. Dean said there is connectivity throughout the site intermittently.

Mayor Suraci said the likelihood is that people will take the shortest route, which is through the parking lot. Mayor Suraci asked what types of activities will be in each building.

Mr. Wilke said there are no plans to build that building presently. However, if the martial art was in that building, there would not be a need to go in between the two buildings. There is a reception area in the plan so there would not be a need to check in at the HRC building and then go to the new building for a martial arts class. It would be a stand-alone operation; all of the martial arts programs would be moved over to the new building.

William Couch – Railsedge Road

■ Mr. Couch asked what time Mr. Dean found to be the busiest hour in the evening.

Mr. Dean responded 4:45 pm – 5:45 pm.

■ Mr. Couch asked if the traffic dropped off significantly after that.

Mr. Dean said it did. He said that is a function of two components; site traffic and street traffic. There is a spike in traffic around 5:15 pm – 5:30 pm for residents coming home from work, and then it goes down as you get later into the evening. He said they actually extended their count until 6:30 given the unique operation. The peak hour count was determined to be between 4:45 – 5:45 pm.

Break 9:20 – 9:27 pm.

Exhibit A-3 – Proposed addition and alteration for HRC Fitness (Sheet 1, Dated 9-28-16)

Exhibit A-4 – New Fitness Building

Exhibit A-5 - Addition to the Country Classics Office Building

Mark Yarrington, AIA was sworn in, accepted by the Board as a licensed Architect, and gave the following testimony:

Mr. Yarrington reviewed the exhibits. He said A-3 shows the one-story addition on the Brower Lane side, for an aerobics exercise activity studio; the new central lobby for Premier Dance of Hillsborough; and two new dance spaces at the south end of the building. The architectural theme is to use the barn theme of the existing building and break it down further throughout. There is also a covered porch.

Mr. Yarrington said A-4 shows the new HRC freestanding two-story structure. The new building is 4,982 sf. on the first floor, and approximately 2,340 sf. on the second floor. The design is classic colonial.

Mr. Yarrington reviewed A-5. He said the addition to the Country Classics office building on the easterly side of the property. The proposed is a one-story addition for approximately 3,216 sf. The intended use is as a design center. When purchasing a new home from Country Classics, the purchaser would meet to make various selections for materials, appliances, fixtures, colors, etc. This currently occurs in their sales model. Architecturally, the design is consistent with the existing building.

Vice Chairman Julian asked if the architecture blends in with the Wyckoff House.

Mr. Yarrington said the easterly and the freestanding have very similar themes. The HRC building, which faces Brower Lane, is the furthest from the Wyckoff House and has a different theme.

Maureen Rizzo – Railsedge Road

■ Ms. Rizzo asked if the new building will be the same elevation as the engineering building.

Mr. Yarrington said it will not be as tall as the existing Van Cleef building.

Mr. Savo called the Planner to testify.

James Kyle, PP was sworn in, reviewed his credentials, was accepted by the Board, and gave the following testimony in response to questions asked by Mr. Savo:

Mr. Kyle reviewed Mr. Maski's comments from his review dated 12-19-16. Mr. Kyle said many of the comments can be qualified as an existing nonconforming conditions. They address things that may have changed when the zoning was changed back in 2015. By virtue of that change, those conditions became nonconforming.

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Mr. Kyle reviewed the existing nonconforming variances required: maximum front yard setback; maximum building height; insufficient buffer to the residential dwellings; maximum front yard setback to Royce Brook Lane; insufficient buffer along Royce Brook Road.

Mr. Kyle said there are three new variances required: to exceed the maximum front yard setback for the proposed stand-alone fitness center – 10 ft. permitted / 89 ft. proposed; maximum front yard setback for the addition to the existing fitness center as an expansion of a nonconforming use, from Brower Lane – 10 ft. permitted / 39.4 ft. proposed, and from Royce Brook Road – 10 ft. permitted / 50 ft. proposed.; and for relief from maximum building footprint – 20,000 sf. permitted / 29,967 sf. proposed for the addition to the existing fitness center.

Mr. Kyle reviewed the waivers requested: parking stall sizes; parking in the front yard for a bay of new parking spaces; existing free standing signage for Van Cleef Engineering and HRC Fitness that are not conforming to the existing ordinance. No additional signage is proposed for the site. Mr. Kyle said there are also existing parking spaces that exceed 10 spaces without a 2" DBH tree being planted. There are 19 spaces existing on the site without a tree being planted.

Mr. Kyle noted the related design standards the site does not comply with: roof pitches; front entrance for Country Classics does not face a public street; and a departure for the existing facades of HRC for not having windows on the front of the building.

Mr. Kyle addressed the variances requested as 'c'(2) variances, and spoke on how he believed the benefits far outweigh any detriment. He said given this location and the conditions proposed, there is no substantial impact. He reviewed the setback variance as a 'c'(1). He said the location of the existing building creates a practical difficulty on the property. He argued that not meeting the setback was a benefit to the surrounding residential homes.

Mr. Kyle said the one-story addition which increases the footprint respects the existing design and allows for better integration and makes more efficient use of the land and less impact to the homes on the westerly side of the property. Mr. Kyle said based on the testimony, the waivers requested are justified.

Mr. Maski reviewed the variances and waivers listed in his report. Most had previously been testified to.

Mr. Maski asked how the buffer would be mitigated since the amount of required distance was not available.

Mr. Kyle stated there are no improvements proposed for the rear of the building. He said there is deciduous vegetation that exists so you can see through to the neighboring properties. The line of Evergreen trees that will be added will help to buffer the property.

Mr. Maski asked Mr. Kyle to address the required buffer from parking.

Mr. Kyle explained additional landscaping is proposed along Brower Lane however, there will not be a fence or wall. Given the location, there will not be a lot of pedestrian traffic. He said the proposed street trees will provide adequate screening and separation.

Mr. Maski asked for more explanation on the waiver for the signage.

Mr. Kyle said the freestanding signs are existing and likely approved under some other iteration of the site plan. No changes will be made to the signs.

Mr. Maski asked that the compliance plans provide the sign details.

Mr. Savo agreed.

Mr. Yarrington addressed the design waivers including the roof pitch, which he said is necessary due to the windows. He reiterated that putting in windows to the HRC Fitness building would not be ideal, given the use.

Mr. Maski confirmed with Mr. White that the application would also require a waiver for the lighting.

Maureen Rizzo – Railsedge Road

- Ms. Rizzo said the garbage truck comes 2:15 – 2:30 am twice a week and dumps the dumpster. The cleaning crew is also at the dumpster at around 1 am. She asked if the dumpster can be relocated.

Mr. Savo said they already agreed to comply with the ordinance.

Mr. Maski reiterated garbage cannot be picked up between 10 pm and 7 am.

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Mr. Savo said they understand.

Close public.

Vice Chairman Julian added other discussion items talked about as: a conversation between the Applicant and the neighbors about the usage of the tennis courts; the Applicant will work with the Township Engineer on the stormwater to address any of the neighbor's concerns; and the usage of the buildings was discussed.

A motion to approve 16-PB-17-SRV with all of the conditions agreed upon, as well as all of the approvals required, was made by Secretary Hesthag, seconded by Mr. Wagner.

Roll Call: Mr. Peason – yes; Ms. Forrest – yes; Mr. Wagner – yes; Secretary Hesthag – yes; Ms. Becorena – yes; Mr. Weinstein – yes; Mayor Suraci – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes. Motion carries.

Mr. Maski informed Vice Chairman Julian there is no business scheduled to the meeting of January 26th

A motion to cancel the 01-26-17 meeting was made and seconded. All were in favor; motion carries.

Mr. Maski noted the next meeting is scheduled for February 2nd.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. All were in favor; motion carries.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 pm.

Submitted by:
Debora Padgett
Administrative Assistant / Planning Board Clerk