

Christine Woodbury

From: Paul Walitsky <paul.walitsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 19, 2019 4:33 PM
To: Christine Woodbury
Subject: Environmental Commission meeting 12/16/2019

Christine, There were 6 plans reviewed. Several were resubmittals.

1) PLN-19-00010 Two JFK Blvd. L.L.C.

Plans updated to include impervious requirements. Plans state 70% permitted but 48.4 % proposed. No further issues noted.

2) PLN-19-00016 BNY Mellon (636 -640 Pierce Street
No environmental Issues as per info provided.

3) ZBA -19-00005 Calvary Baptist Church (5 Franklin Street)
Applicant has revised plans to include pervious pavement for 2.5%. This will allow them to get below Maximum of 60%. Environmental commission recommends that they increase use of the pervious pavement to reduce coverage even more.

4) ZBA-19-00015 Trust under Article 6 u/w/o Sigmund Sommer and Levin Properties LP (31 Cedar Grove Lane)
Applicant is seeking variance on maximum percent of Impervious coverage 20% permitted 32 % proposed (148,000 sq ft) Environmental Commissions recommenmds using pervious pavement to reduce impervious coverage where possible.

5) ZBA-19-00030 Diamond Investors & Builders LLC (61 Juliet St)
No comment

6) ZBA-19-00040 Dade Bhagwan Vignan Institute (630 South Middlebush)

a) We recommend pervious pavement.

b) Septic System. How will septic be handled for existing home?, How many gallons per day will be handled for both the house and the proposed House of Worship? How mamny seats proposed for the House of Worship? Information provided, insufficient for a proper review.

c) Part D Line 1. Re: Previous applications Applicant is apparently unaware that a previous House of Worship proposal for this property was submitted and failed to satisfy State Standards for sanitary disposal for a house of Worship. The previous applicant proposed a septic system instead of packaged sewage treatment plant. (The septic system was rejected by the State)

d) Endangered wildlife. Wildlife within the surrounding vicinity should be protected. from being disturbed. How will this be managed?

e) Lighting. How do you manage Light pollution? LED lighting is recommended <Solar also recommended.

f) Tree removal/replacement. We oppose the substantial removal of mature trees when there is an open field available for construction.

Paul Walitsky
Franklin Township Environmental Commission

Christine Woodbury

From: Paul Walitsky <paul.walitsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 11:56 AM
To: Christine Woodbury; Walter Andrews
Subject: Re: TRC meeting 05/19/20

Christine, Hi. Th Environmental Commission held it's virtual meeting last night. I will try below to give you each of the plan reviews which we covered.

Ivy River PLN-19-00015 Applicant asking for OK to reassign parking spaces from adjoining warehouse building to the new unit on Riverside Drive.

Original plan approved by Environmental Commission. This application does not affect previous approval, No detrimental environmental impact.

Macedonia Church PLN-00039 Environmental Commission recommends that Applicant use LED Lighting. Consider Solar panels and use of pervious asphalt in parking area

North American Real Properties PLN-19-00018

This is a subdivision request. No construction nor plans. No Environmental effect.

Dada Bhagwan PLN-00040 Suggest appropriate landscaping be considered. No other environmental concerns.

237 Lenox Drive- Neil Patel (ZBA 20-00005) Suggest considering moving house to the right (from street view) Keeping mature trees.

Estate 3509 Route 27 (PLN-16-00009) Adding second floor area. and 1 parking space. No Environmental Concern.

Burian (ZBA_20-00009) Above ground pool no Environmental Concern. Placement seems appropriate to save trees and conform with nearest neighbors.

23 Dorset Ct. (ZBA_20-00006) Shed location. Increases impervious coverage slightly above ordinance. Is there a way to reduce gravel coverage.

9 Laird Terrace (ZBA-20-0003) 2 car garage. Placement seems reasonable. Lot size big enough that impervious coverage should not be a problem

Rossi (ZBA_20-000010) Sun room. Sun rooms do have some positive environmental impacts if constructed properly. Need construction details and materials if opinion can be offered. Generally, Need increased insulation on roof. Also Applicant should consider solar panels on roof of house to offset possible energy requirements. (Solar on Sun room roof may not work due to shadow from trees)

Notes are not clear if we covered Elion Acq.

Call me if any questions

Christine Woodbury

From: Paul Walitsky <paul.walitsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 10:37 AM
To: Christine Woodbury; Walter Andrews
Subject: EC review of building Proposals

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On 9/21/2020 the Environmental Reviewed two building plans.

1) Dada Bhagnan Vigan Institute.

EC suggests using the open space on the plot for the building rather than removing the hundreds of trees cited in the report slated for removal.

Applicant should use pervious paving in the areas for car parking to reduce stormwater runoff.

Applicant has a 21,000 sq ft roof. They should consider Solar cells and possibly a "Green Roof or Vegetative Roof" This will help reduce Stormwater runoff, Reduce costs for heating and cooling and help in fight against Global Warming.

Alternatively they could consider a DSolar Canopy over the parking area.

Applicant should be aware that flooding does occur on South Middlebush at the low areas adjacent to the site.

2) Sal Datta Mandir Inc. (583 S. Middlebush) The Septic system seems to meet requirements. May require a Treatment Works Application from NJDEP. Praise for pervious pavement plan.

The main part of the roof is flat and could be a prime location for Solar Cells or even partly a "Green Roof or Vegetative " roof.

Paul Walitsky
Vice Chair Environemtnal Commission.

Franklin Township Environmental Commission's Additional Comments to the Township's Zoning Board of Zoning Adjustment Regarding the Dada Bhagwan Institute (Block 36.01: Lot 6.03) Application for 630 South Middlebush Road.

Much of the following information is based on the Environmental Commission's review and re-review of the plans, Commission members subsequently walking the Snyder farm with Ray Snyder, knowledge of environmental issues including septic system issues, stormwater runoff issues, wildlife, farming issues, information provided by the Chair of the Township Shade Tree Commission, as well as information provided to us by Mr. Snyder, verbally and in an email from him to Environmental Commission to document his concerns.

It has been brought to the Environmental Commission's attention that the original plan for this proposed project was to locate the structure on the front field closer to South Middlebush Road, but Township staff strongly suggested against that plan in order to protect the scenic byway vista. Preserving our scenic byways and beautiful vistas should always be a consideration. That said, to build where the proposed project is currently designed will mean clear cutting of a vast amount of trees, removing not only a beautiful canopy of trees, another type of scenic vista, but destroying an environmentally sensitive area. Trees, especially older trees, absorb carbon dioxide as they grow and store carbon in their wood which helps slow the rate of global warming. Trees also help prevent flooding and soil erosion and provide a habitat for many bird species, bees, butterflies, and other wildlife.

About 6 of the approximate 18 acres of the proposed site is open cleared field with 12 heavily wooded acres with shade trees and one dwelling on site. The proposed construction, a 21,000 square foot building, a detention basin, access roads and 2 parking lots would be constructed within the 12 acre heavily wooded portion of the property. The wooded area consists of mainly mature oak trees, beech trees, and dogwoods, most of which are 60 – 80 feet tall. To complete this proposed project, the majority of these trees will be removed, destroying this large tree canopy, another invaluable and beautiful vista and an environmentally sensitive area.

In 2016 the Township, by proclamation (attached), adopted a goal of increasing our tree canopy to 42%, as part of our application to Sustainable Jersey (SJ), under SJs *Community Forestry Plan and Tree Cover Goal Action*. The loss of this 12 acres of canopy would substantially set back the Township's goal with this clear cutting.

According to the documentation provided by the applicant in the EIS for this project - dated November 7, 2019, the following species were identified as being located within the immediate vicinity of the project site; state Threatened species include the American Kestrel (nest) and Grasshopper Sparrow (breeding site), Special Concern species include the Great Blue Heron (foraging) and Northern Harrier (non-breeding sighting), and state Endangered species includes the Upland Sandpiper (breeding site confirmed).

Mr. Snyder has advised us that he has observed Red-headed Woodpeckers, Great Blue Herons, Vesper Sparrows, several species of hawks, several species of owls, falcons (one of which resides in a nest on his property), and Bald Eagles, which at least one Environmental Commissioner has observed and has video recordings of two roosting and flying together in the nearby area. Mr. Snyder also indicated that there are several species of turtles present (including Box Turtles, an endangered species) that are on the Threatened or Special Concern list. He further indicated his concern for the effect on the amphibian population which is a very sensitive and important part of any ecological system.

The original plan for this site called for positioning construction partially on the cleared section of the property, but this was changed, in part due to the scenic byway issue. We believe that can be worked around. The septic, sewage and detention basin plan issues would also have to be readdressed to accommodate a revised plan. There is also a question at this time of where the permeability test was performed in reference to where the actual septic system is proposed to be placed. This needs to be addressed.

There were no details regarding the septic system provided to the Environmental Commission at the time of our initial review. We have concerns if the current plan is to tie the existing house into the same septic system being proposed for the Temple. How will this be accomplished, what is the total (combined) design flow for both the house and the new structure and does it meet regulatory criteria? The site plan shows the proposed septic system location to be close to South Middlebush Road. How is the applicant addressing the significant distance that the proposed septic system will be from the actual structure? Also, what are the current setbacks from the proposed septic system to any existing septic systems and wells on this property as well as any neighboring properties? Are all the required setbacks being met? All septic system approvals are contingent on the County Health Department's review of these plans. Pending some currently unknown details and due to the lack of information provided, the NJDEP may also have to review these plans and approve them.

Allowing a variance for a setback of 50 feet (as requested by the applicant) where a 200 foot setback is required, based on our current zoning rules, could have a severe detrimental impact on the neighboring farm's growing fields due to stormwater runoff from the proposed site, and would ruin any existing aesthetic buffer between the Snyder Farm and the proposed project. The potential damage to farmable fields due to the removal of buffers, versus the land's value as farmland with the current extensive buffer is unknown at this time, but conceivably substantial.

If approved, this project would be an excellent place for a Green Roof to be installed to assist with the applicant's stormwater management plan, whatever the final design is. The Environmental Commission recently passed a resolution regarding green roofs. One of many points of information in the resolution indicates that research from a Penn State study "...has shown that green roofs provide considerable reduction in the volume of stormwater leaving a development site and they reduce the peak rates of runoff. Green roofs are unique in that they have the ability to capture and retain a volume (depth) of rain from each rainstorm."

It is the Environmental Commission's position that this project could be moved, in large part, to the open northern field area of the property where many fewer trees would need to be removed, lessening the impact on the local wild life, while maintaining our efforts to reduce global warming and preserving the scenic byway vista. There would be plenty of room to construct buffers including planting semi-mature trees and other vegetation, along South Middlebush Road and the northeast border of the property, similar to other areas along this corridor, helping to preserve the scenic byway.

It is the Environmental Commission's further determination that a tradeoff of removing 12 acres of mature hardwood trees, which would take generations to replace, and will adversely impact a Franklin Township working farm that dates back to the 18th century, for a few hundred feet of scenic byway, which can be readily remedied with buffers, is not an appropriate trade off.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this important matter.

Franklin Township Environmental Commission

October 19, 2020