

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
October 5, 2016**

The Township of West Orange Planning Board held a regular meeting on October 5, 2016 at 7:30 P.M. in the Council Chamber, 66 Main Street, West Orange, New Jersey.

Chairman Weston called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 P.M. He announced that notification of the meeting was given to the Township Clerk, and posted on the Township Bulletin Board, sent to the West Orange Chronicle and the Star Ledger, and posted on the Township's website calendar. This meeting has been properly noticed to the public in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. No new matters will start after 10:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Jerome Eben, Tekeste Ghebremicael, Gerald Gurland, Councilwoman Susan McCartney, Gary B. Wegner, Chairman Ron Weston

ABSENT: Vice Chairman Robert Bagoff, Lee Klein, Jason Lester, William Wilkes II

ALSO PRESENT: Alice Bierne, Esq., Acting Board Attorney, Robin Miller, Board Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Weston requested all persons stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Vice Chairman Robert Bagoff, Jerome Eben, Tekeste Ghebremicael, Gerald Gurland, Lee Klein, Jason Lester, Council President Susan McCartney, Gary Wegner, Chairman Ron Weston, William Wilkes II

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Weston announced the resignation of Board member Joanne Carlucci, effective September 7, 2016.

The next Planning Board regular meeting will be October 5, 2016 in the Council Chamber at 7:30 P.M.

ADOPT MEETING DATES

The Board voted unanimously to adopt the Planning Board meeting dates for 2017.

RESOLUTIONS

Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment Study

Block: 9; Lots: 11.01, 11.02, 11.03, 32, & 36 and Block: 7; Lot: 22
25 Mitchell Street, 27 Mitchell Street, 29 Mitchell Street, 8-10 Central Avenue,
18 Central Avenue & 4 Tompkins Street

DISCUSSION

Chairman Weston gave a brief recapitulation of the study and the recommendation to Council.

The Board voted on the Resolution as follows:

Motion: Chairman Weston

Second: Mr. Eben

Bagoff: Absent	Carlucci: -	Eben: Yes	Ghebremicael: -
Gurland: Absent	Klein: Absent	Lester: -	McCartney: Yes
Wegner: -	Wilkes: Absent	Weston: Yes	

APPLICATION(S)

PB-16-15C/County of Essex/Turtle Back Zoo/Cattle Exhibit Observation Area and Other Improvements

Block: 163; Lot: 1; Zone: R-1
560 Northfield Avenue
Courtesy Review Application.

PB-16-16C/County of Essex/SMRC/Bollard Lighting Installation

Block: 163; Lot: 1; Zone: R-1
560 Northfield Avenue
Courtesy Review Application.

PB-16-17C/County of Essex/Turtle Back Zoo/Children's Playground Shade Structure

Block: 163; Lot: 1; Zone: R-1
560 Northfield Avenue
Courtesy Review Application.

EXHIBIT(S)

- A-1:** Enlarged aerial view prepared by French & Parrello Associates, dated 1/15/16
- A-2:** Conceptual Plan for Shade Structures at Turtle Back Zoo Children's Playground prepared by French & Parrello Associates, dated 7/5/16
- A-3:** Landscape Plan for Cattle Exhibit Observation Area and Other Improvements, signed by Michael J. Piga, LLA, dated 6/21/16
- A-4:** Conceptual Plan for Installation of Bollard Lighting at the Essex County Skating Arena, prepared by French & Parrello Associates, dated 8/9/16

DISCUSSION

Mark L. Fleder, Esq., Partner, Connell Foley LLP, special legal counsel to Essex County, advised the Board the County had submitted three courtesy review applications for separate projects located at Turtle Back Zoo and the Codey Arena. He asked Mr. Piga to begin with the project for the Cattle Exhibit Observation Area.

Michael J. Piga, LLA, French & Parrello Associates PA, was sworn in, stated his credentials, and was accepted by the Board to be an expert in landscape architecture. Referring to the aerial view submitted as part of the applications (Exhibit A-1), Mr. Piga identified the location of existing exhibits and the area of the proposed new exhibit; it would be located approximately in the middle of the zoo. He said the current cattle exhibit area would be rehabilitated; the goal of the project was to provide a better observation area for visitors to view the cattle. There would be an approximately 300 square foot rustic-look stamped concrete patio area, a pergola for shade, decorative wagon wheels for atmosphere, and new lighting fixtures. The grade would change to

give visitors a view of the vista. Referring to Exhibit A-3, Mr. Piga discussed landscaping and construction details including an 8 feet high wood trellis, new wood fencing, a modular concrete block retaining wall that would range from 1 to 6 feet in height and a bituminous overlay to the walkway immediately south of the observation area. A new a 4 feet high peeled cedar log fence with steel mesh would provide safety. Landscaping and decorative rock formations around the new area, repairs to the existing bituminous walkway to the south would complete the project.

Mr. Piga concluded his testimony.

In response to inquiry from Councilwoman McCartney about landscaping details, Mr. Piga said improvements would include mostly ornamental grasses; one or two new trees would be planted, possibly Eastern Redbuds. No existing trees within the exhibit area would be removed.

Chairman Weston asked for clarification about the three Elm trees listed on the plant schedule; Mr. Piga said they would be included.

In response to inquiry from Mr. Eben, Mr. Piga said the stones indicated on the plan would be real native rock; he clarified the grading area of high and low on the drawing. The exhibit was for Scottish Highland cattle.

Mr. Gurland asked if new drains would be required; Mr. Piga answered in the affirmative, he identified the location of installation and connection to existing system.

Public Questions:

Robert Rashkes, 35 Oak Crest Road, asked if the observation area would be used for musical events. Mr. Piga was unable to answer; Chairman Weston said the Board would consider the question during deliberation, it was a small observation area located on a hill.

Chairman Weston suggested the County continue its presentation of the remaining applications; he stated Public Comment for all applications would be held at the conclusion of all testimony.

Mr. Fleder introduced the Children's Playground Shade Structure; he said Mr. Piga would continue testimony. Mr. Piga said the proposal was for a new shade canopy structure over a portion of the existing Dinosaur Playground. Referring to Exhibit A-1, he indicated the playground was located at the top of the zoo, adjacent to the Barnyard Exhibit. He said the playground was well used, but lacked adequate shade. He said there would be no structural changes or new playground equipment installed. Referring to Exhibit A-2, he said the proposed structure would consist of three triangular shaped canvas panels placed strategically over playground equipment to reduce heat effect. The height of the structure was 16 feet in the center and 11 feet at the ends; the panels would be supported by seven (7) columns on concrete foundation. In response to inquiry from Mr. Fleder, Mr. Piga said the panels would probably be taken down during the Fall/Winter seasons. No new lighting would be installed. He concluded his testimony.

Responding to question from Mr. Wegner, Mr. Piga said the canvas panels color would be in earth tones similar to the shade panels on other exhibits throughout the zoo.

There were no questions from the Public regarding the application.

Mr. Fleder introduced the final project for new bollard lighting to be located at the Codey Arena. Mr. Piga would continue testimony.

Mr. Piga said the new lighting was a continuation of bollard lighting that had been previously installed from the area of McLoone's Boathouse. Referring to Exhibit A-1, Mr. Piga indicated the area of the existing lighting and the pathway of the new proposed lighting along the existing walkway on the south side of Northfield Avenue adjacent to the Codey Arena, the parking deck and the new Education Center. Referring to Exhibit A-4, Mr. Piga said the lighting would be identical to the existing decorative metal lighting. There would be forty (40) new fixtures installed; the fixtures were forty-two (42) inch high, decorative dark bronze metal, lighted bollards that shined in a downward direction. Mr. Piga concluded his testimony.

Mr. Eben stated the project was an ongoing upgrade to continue the lighting from the walkway beginning at McLoone's Boathouse. He asked if the new installation was proposed because the County had received funding for additional lighting. Mr. Fleder said the proposal was due to safety concerns for the many people who used the walkway. Mr. Eben opined the walkways had not been properly maintained the previous winter. He suggested the County consider extending the lighting pathway further along Northfield Avenue all the way up along Walker Road to complete the project. He opined the additional lighting would be a positive aspect of walking initiative endorsed by the Township. Mr. Fleder stated he would advise the County of Mr. Eben's suggestion. Chairman Weston said the Board should discuss the issue; the area encompassed a big campus. Mr. Eben voiced concern about the maintenance of the additional lighting.

Mr. Gurland asked for clarification regarding utility lines depicted on Exhibit A-4; Mr. Piga confirmed they were conduits.

Councilwoman McCartney voiced agreement with Mr. Eben regarding pedestrian safety and walkability. She opined the Board might consider recommending the County consider expanding further the area of lighting.

In response to inquiry from Chairman Weston, Mr. Piga said the lights would be bronze.

The Public had no questions for Mr. Piga regarding the application.

Comments from Public regarding the three applications:

Robert Rashkes, 35 Oakcrest Road, was sworn in, he voiced concerned about the regulation of the Zoo's sound system. Portable sound systems were used during various events; they were being used until midnight. He identified the South Mountain Blues Festival on 9/17/16 and another event on 9/24/16 when music did not stop playing until 11:50 P.M. He asked if the Board had received a response from the County regarding the feasibility for sidewalk expansion on Northfield Avenue further west connecting the neighborhoods located above the horse bridge.

Chairman Weston said the Board did receive a response from the County that they had received the Board's inquiry and was taking it under advisement. Regarding the sound system, the issue was not under the jurisdiction of the Board.

Councilwoman McCartney said the Township had a noise ordinance. Mr. Fleder said he would advise the County on the matter.

Mr. Eben voiced concern about correspondence sent to the County. He understood the County had received the Board's recommendations regarding sidewalks and temporary signage for parking; had the Board yet received an answer from the County Executive. He said the Public was present;

asking questions and voicing concerns. Mr. Fleder said he would follow up with the County Executive regarding the matter.

The Board deliberated on the application. Chairman Weston questioned how far should the bollards extend; might additional street lighting be considered. Mr. Eben stated that he liked what the County had done with the bollard lighting; he suggested extending the lighting further to along the bus station and Turtle Back Rock. Chairman Weston opined the type of lighting not be specific; the Board recommendation would be to extend the general lighting of the area. Mr. Gurland suggested installing lights that were flush to ground at the point where the bollard lighting ended; Chairman Weston opined flush lighting would be problematic because of snow and potential vandalism. He again suggested a different type of street lighting be considered.

Recommendations:

The County consider extending the lighting further east on Northfield Avenue; past the service road at the end of the campus to the bus stop continuing on to Walker Road up to Turtle Back Rock. (Application PB-16-16C/County of Essex/SMRC/Bollard Lighting Installation)

The Board voted on the Applications as follows:

PB-16-15C/County of Essex/Turtle Back Zoo/Cattle Exhibit Observation Area and Other Improvements

Motion: Chairman Weston

Second: Councilwoman McCartney

Bagoff:	Absent	Eben:	Yes	Ghebremicael:	Yes	Gurland:	Yes
Klein:	Absent	Lester:	Absent	McCartney:	Yes	Wegner:	Yes
Wilkes:	Absent	Weston:	Yes				

PB-16-16C/County of Essex/SMRC/Bollard Lighting Installation

Motion: Chairman Weston

Second: Councilwoman McCartney

Bagoff:	Absent	Eben:	Yes	Ghebremicael:	Yes	Gurland:	Yes
Klein:	Absent	Lester:	Absent	McCartney:	Yes	Wegner:	Yes
Wilkes:	Absent	Weston:	Yes				

PB-16-17C/County of Essex/Turtle Back Zoo/Children's Playground Shade Structure

Motion: Chairman Weston

Second: Mr. Ghebremicael

Bagoff:	Absent	Eben:	Yes	Ghebremicael:	Yes	Gurland:	Yes
Klein:	Absent	Lester:	Absent	McCartney:	Yes	Wegner:	Yes
Wilkes:	Absent	Weston:	Yes				

MEETING ADJOURNED at approximately 8:15 P.M.

Minutes adopted November 2, 2016.


Robin Miller, Secretary

Township of West Orange Planning Board

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD WILL BE
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 7, 2016 AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.**