

**MINUTES
TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
November 29, 2023 7:30 P.M.**

The Township of West Orange Planning Board held its regular meeting on November 29, 2023 at 7:30 P.M. via virtual ZOOM videoconference.

Chairman Bagoff 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- *Chairman Bagoff* requested all persons stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Planning Board regular meeting will be held **Wednesday December 6, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.**

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Dr. Robert Bagoff; Mr. William Wilkes; Mr. Ken Alper; Mr. Jerry Guarino; Mr. Christopher Morgan, Sr.; Mayor Susan McCartney; Mr. Peter Smeraldo; Councilwoman Tammy Williams; Mr. Cardoza;

ABSENT: Mr. Sal Jensen;

ALSO PRESENT: Diana P. McGovern, Esq., Planning Board Attorney;
Paul Grygiel, Town Planner;
Mr. Doug Rohmeyer, Board Engineer;
Jamilet Baquerizo Vite, Acting Planning Board Secretary

MINUTES & RESOLUTIONS

- [PB-23-10 Goddard School - Draft Resolution](#)

Motion: Chairman Bagoff

Second: Mr. Guarino

Alper:	Y	Morgan:	Y
Bagoff:	Y	Smeraldo:	----
Cardoza (Alt.2):	Y	Wilkes:	Y
Guarino:	Y	Williams:	----
Jensen (Alt. 1):	----		
Klein:	----		
Mayor Susan McCartney:	Y		

- [West Orange Plaza Draft Resolution.pdf](#)

Motion: Chairman Bagoff

Second: Mr. Smeraldo

Alper:	Y	Morgan:	Y
Bagoff:	Y	Smeraldo:	Y
Cardoza (Alt.2):	----	Wilkes:	Y
Guarino:	Y	Williams:	----
Jensen (Alt. 1):	----		
Klein:	Y		
Mayor Susan McCartney:	Y		

SWEARING IN

- The Township Professionals *Ms. Kate Heller, Township Planner* and *Mr. John Hess* were sworn in.

APPLICATIONS

- **PB-23-09 Essex County Country Club**

Block: 156; Lots:1; Zone: R-2

350 Mt Pleasant Avenue

The applicant is proposing modifications to existing improvements and construction of new accessory buildings associates with its golf course and other facilities.

PRESENTATION

- Ms. Lisa John-Basta entered on the record on behalf of the applicant.
- The applicant is looking for site plan approval for minor modifications and improvements to the existing golf course
- The Essex County Club is one of the oldest in the country dating back to 1887.
- The golf course has been before this board on multiple occasions for various upgrades to the facility.
- The application is a fully conforming site plan application with no variances.
- Essex County Country Club Representative John Delmauro entered on the record and he was sworn under oath.
- The golf club has a healthy membership with over 300 members in different classes.
- The applicant is proposing a few renovations of the golf course itself and one of the renovations is that they had requested is a soil moving permit. The reason for the soil removal is that from the 2nd hole through the 18th hole it's very traditional upgrading of Tees and bunkers that has to be done every 10 to 15 years, since sand washes away which is why they have to improve and redo those and they hired a golf course architect to help them make those improvements.
- On the 1st hole where they are changing the whole bit and creating two different fairways and restructuring the green a bit.
- They are also proposing to demolish the existing pro shop and golf cart barn.
- They would like to install a comfort station which would include two restrooms and a small kind of grab and go snack bar, no seating, quickly grab and go and move on and the other big piece of this is that there's no cover on the backside of the golf course. So, anytime we get weather there's really nowhere for anyone to go, so to serve as a safety precaution they have an overhang that if they do get lightning, people can stand there and get covered until they can go get them and bring them back to the club.
- The snack bar area itself is approximately 105 square feet.
- The snacks will be pre-package, no kitchen on site.
- The proposed location for the comfort station was chosen because it's out of the line of sight of anybody hitting a golf ball.
- It'll be open up during golfing hours when golfers are on the golf course.

NO BOARD QUESTIONS

PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONS

- Mr. Hess asked if the applicant could consider moving the comfort station to another location. Mr. Delmauro said that it's really a safety concern they have looked at other various locations on the golf course and they're to be honest just in the line of sight of golf balls getting hit.

PUBLIC QUESTION

- Micaela Bennet at 33-35 Old Indian Road asked if Mr. Delmauro had safety concerns for anyone but the golfers. Mr. Delmauro said that they have concerns for their employees and anybody that uses the amenities.
- Kevin Malanga at Ridge Road asked what type of beverages will be served at the comfort station. Mr. Delmauro said that the same that would be in the cart, like soft drinks, water, beer and alcoholic beverages.

- Kevin Malanga asked if the liquor license permits the selling of alcohol in different locations. Mr. Delmauro answered in the affirmative.
- Kevin Malanga asked how trash will be handled. Mr. Delmauro said that they will pick it up and bring it back to the clubhouse and dispose of it.
- Lou Picciano at 29 Old Indian Road asked if they are serving cocktails. Mr. Delmauro answered in the affirmative.
- Lou Picciano asked if Mr. Delmauro would agree that having stored alcohol and food on site might be a target for vandals or other schemers. Mr. Delmauro said that he does not agree.
- Susan Campbell at 39 Old Indian Road asked if the golf club is concerned about rodents. Mr. Delmauro said they don't have rodents or rats there currently and there is no intention to have rodents or rats. All garbage will be disposed every single day and there will be no garbage exposed outside of the building.
- Mel Valdez at Elm Street asked if the facility will be equipped with security cameras. Mr. Delmauro answered in the affirmative.

PUBLIC COMMENT*

PRESENTATION

- The civil engineer Mr. Paul Calabrese entered on the record, he was sworn under oath and his credential were accepted by the board.
- The property is a fully developed golf course.
- Soil erosion and sediment control plan was prepared and submitted for review to the Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District.
- Received Soil Erosion certification and general permit for stormwater from the state.
- The applicant will comply with the ordinance in regards to soil removal.
- They will be removing the old pro shop.
- Widen the driveway entrance.
- They will add bio retention areas, where the asphalt will be removed to reduced the heat island effect.
- A bag drop-off area will be added for guest.
- They will add 10 EV spaces.
- The utilities will be put underground.
- They will be putting LED lighting which are more efficient. They will be 16ft poles.
- They will be restriping the parking lot, in which they are able to add 33 parking spaces.
- No additional impervious.
- They will be removing 3 trees to widen lot. They will also be replanting 7 trees and 21 bushes.
- Existing cart storage is not sufficient. The new cart storage will a pre engineer steel building, it will be 14ft and 11 ¾ inches. It will have 72 spots for parking. The golf cart barn will have 70 feet setback from property line.
- It will include a single stall bathroom for employees.
- The restroom will be 58 feet from the nearest property line & 145 feet from the nearest residential building.
- The comfort station will have the men's bathroom and a unisex bathroom to accommodate women and persons who require ADA access.
- The snack bar will have refrigeration and sink only.
- The utilities in the comfort zone will include electrical, water and sewer.

- Rear yard is 45 feet, it does not exceed ordinance requirement.
- The applicant will comply with the comments from the board engineer Mr. John Hess.

BOARD QUESTIONS

- Mr. Alpert asked if they will be using solar panels. Mr. Calabrese said he hasn't discussed it with the applicant.
- Mr. Alpert asked if there will be cooking surfaces in the comfort station. Mr. Calabrese said that there will be no cooking surfaces.
- Mr. Guarino asked if they reached out to the neighbors. Mr. Calabrese said that he did not.
- Mr. Guarino asked if there will be any music or public announcements coming from the comfort station. Mr. Calabrese said that there will not.
- M. Smeraldo asked if there will be any gas line. Mr. Calabrese said that no gas line will be installed.
- Mr. Cardoza asked if there will be staff at the comfort station. Mr. Calabrese answered in the affirmative.
- Mr. Cardoza asked if the bushes will be native. Mr. Calabrese said that they will be native.

PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONS

- Mr. Hess asked if they anticipate any impact on the residential neighborhood. Mr. Calabrese said that he does anticipate any impact.
- Mr. Hess asked if there will be any electric heating. Mr. Calabrese said that the comfort station will be winterized at the end of the season.

PUBLIC QUESTION

- Micaela Bennet asked if there will be any internet in the comfort station. Mr. Calabrese said no.
- Kevin Malanga at Ridge Road asked if Mr. Calabrese could describe the vegetative screening between the comfort station and the property line to the South. Mr. Calabrese said that currently is a wooded area with trees.
- Kevin Malanga asked how many planting islands are proposed in the parking lot. Mr. Calabrese said that 3 are being proposed.

OBJECTOR PRESENTATION

- Micaela Bennet calls Mr. Peter Steck as a planning expert and he was sworn under oath.
- Mr. Peter Steck has testified as a planner for the Essex County Country Club in previous applications.
- Mr. Steck has reviewed the comfort station plans.
- Comfort station definition in the dictionary is a place for restrooms for the public.
- Mr. Steck says that this is more than a comfort station.
- No low shrubs at the end of cul-de-sac
- Applicant is supposed to identify wetland areas.
- Comfort station is very unusual in an 18-hole golf course.
- The R-2 does allow golf courses and club house.
- Mr. Steck suggests burden of the applicant to show that it qualifies as a customary accessory structure.
- If it is not a customary accessory use, it triggers a "d" variance which can only be heard by the Zoning Board.
- No evidence presented in adequacy of parking being proposed.
- Mr. Steck objects to the placement of the building.

- Mr. Steck believes that the board has insufficient information to make a reasonable judgment.

BOARD QUESTIONS

- Chairman Bagoff asked what if the applicant decides to sell only beer and soft drinks. Mr. Steck said that he still considers that a bar.

NO PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONS

NOPUBLIC QUESTION

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Kevin Malanga said that the parking lot should be in compliance with the municipal code.

CONDITIONS:

- The Applicant shall comply with the Township ordinance regarding soil movement requirements.
- The Applicant will comply with all comments and recommendations set forth in the Planning Board Engineer's November 28, 2023 letter by John Hess of CME Associates except those related to the comfort station.
- The Applicant shall construct an additional planting island in the parking lot, bringing the total to four (4) planting islands.
- The plants proposed for the parking lot islands shall be non-invasive plants and be approved by the Township Forester.

***The application has been bifurcated. The comfort station part of the application will be carried to the January 3, 2024 Planning Board regular meeting. ***

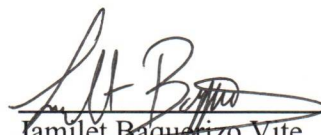
Motion: Chairman Bagoff

Second: Mr. Klein

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Jensen (Alt. 1):	---		
Klein:	Y		
Mayor Susan McCartney:	Y		

Meeting adjourned at 11:06PM.

ADOPTED: 4/3/24


 Jamilet Baquerizo Vite
 Acting Planning Board Secretary