

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
 May 2, 2012 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Richard Crater called the Chatham Borough Planning Board meeting of May 2, 2012 to order at 7:36 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building. Mr. Crater announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Mayor Bruce Harris	x	
Chairman Richard Crater	x	
Councilman Collander		x
Donna Cali-Charles	x	
Vincent DeNave	x	
Joseph Mikulewicz	x	
John Bitar	x	
Susan Favate		x
H.H. Montague	x	
James Mitchell	x	
Matthew Wagner	x	
Vincent J. Loughlin, Esq.	x	
Dr. Susan Blickstein	x-arrived at 7:58 p.m.	

Also present was Robert Brightly, P.E. of Ferriero Engineers, sitting in for John Hansen, Board Engineer. Harold Maltz, the traffic engineer for the Planning Bd., was present. Mr. Maltz is with Hamal Associates, Inc., West Orange NJ.

Adoption of Minutes

The meeting minutes of April 18, 2012 were approved as amended.

Public Hearing and Discussion

Amendments of Master Plan for: Updates to Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)

The following were sworn in to testify:

Cynthia Steffens, member of the Environmental Commission & Chairperson of the Green Initiatives of Chatham Borough

Richard Plambeck, member of the Environmental Commission

Mrs. Steffens thanked the Board for their consideration of these updates to the ERI to be incorporated in the Borough Master Plan. She explained that if these updates were approved and added to the Master Plan, Chatham Borough will be able to keep 20 priority points towards Sustainable Jersey certification. The Borough ERI doesn't include some sections that Sustainable Jersey has decided recently are now necessary: Endangered & Threatened Species of Wild Life, Regional Relationships, Land Use. Mrs. Steffens reported that Mr. Plambeck has written those sections and has updated data to

reflect the Census taken in 2010. The Environmental Commission has adopted these changes.

Mrs. Steffens asked the Board to please adopt these new sections to the ERI into the Master Plan. She gave a brief background on Sustainable New Jersey.

Mr. Plambeck explained how Chatham's ERI came about. Certain sections are now required. Data from the 2010 census now provided up-to-date information for the ERI. Mr. Plambeck noted the resources he had used in writing the updates.

Mayor Harris and Chairman Crater thanked Mrs. Steffens and Mr. Plambeck for their hard work on this project.

Mr. Crater read aloud the Resolution approving these amendments to the Master Plan and approving these updates to the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI). Mayor Harris made a motion to approve this resolution. Mr. Bitar seconded the motion. There were no comments from the public. A roll call vote was taken:

Mayor Harris	-	yes
Mrs. Cali-Charles	-	yes
Mr. DeNave	-	yes
Mr. Bitar	-	yes
Mr. Mikulewicz	-	yes
Mr. Montague	-	yes
Mr. Mitchell	-	yes
Mr. Wagner	-	yes
Chrmn. Hoffman	-	yes

Application PB #11-05

Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval

Chatham Gateway, LLC – KinderCare (child care center)

47 Main Street

Block 129, Lot 5

Glenn Pantel, Esq., attorney for Chatham Gateway came forward and gave an introductory statement on this application.

Mr. Pantel stated that the application entails the construction of a child care facility. The applicant is making an effort to preserve the Parrott Mill Inn structure. A favorable report has been received from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) with respect to the architecture. The Parrott Mill structure will be used only as an accessory office use in connection with the daycare center.

Mr. Pantel introduced Fred Coco, the applicant's site engineer. Also present was James Kassay, the applicant's architect.

Mr. Pantel reviewed the variances being sought: for the front yard setback, for the number of parking spaces, for omission of an off-street loading area, for the size and height of signage.

Mr. Pantel noted that design waivers are being sought for fence height, lighting height, a landscape island in the off-street parking area, three tandem parking spaces, and proposed parking spaces within the front yard and side yard setback lines.

Mr. Pantel stated that the proposed use is an inherently beneficial use under the Municipal Land Use Law. The use is also permitted under the ordinance for this district.

Board Attorney Loughlin asked Mr. Pantel what other witnesses will be testifying for this application. Attorney Loughlin informed Mr. Pantel that any reports or any other submissions must be submitted in a timely fashion for the Board's professionals to review.

Mr. Pantel stated that the applicant's engineer and architect will be testifying tonight on the revised plan. No further reports will be coming from these witnesses. Another witness, the operator of the proposed KinderCare, will be testifying tonight. Mr. Pantel stated that all required NJ licensing will be obtained for this KinderCare facility if it is approved. The applicant's traffic consultant and the land planner will testify at the June 6th Planning Bd. meeting.

Alfred Coco, the applicant's engineer, was sworn in. He submitted his professional credentials to the Board what was accepted. Mr. Coco is employed by Menlo Engineering Inc., Highland Park, NJ.

Mr. Coco submitted Exhibit A-1: Chatham Gateway Overall Plan – an aerial photograph which was superimposed the proposed site plan. He pointed out surrounding buildings. He described the proposed driveway which will come off of Parrot Mill Road and enter the proposed parking lot. The existing driveway opening on Main Street will be redone.

Mr. Coco submitted Exhibit A-2: the proposed plan. Mr. Coco testified that the largest components of the facility will be the two-story KinderCare. He reviewed the square footage of the proposed building and the square footage of the Inn's existing building. Mr. Coco reviewed the location of the new driveway arrangement and the new parking spaces. In total, 22 parking spaces will be designated on the entire site. Two of these spaces will be designated for the handicapped.

Mr. Coca pointed out the proposed play area and chain link fence. The existing sidewalk will be replaced. ADA ramps will be installed at all the driveway openings. Underground stormwater detention system will be provided. An existing storm sewer from the street will tie in with this underground detention system.

Mr. Crater confirmed with Mr. Pantel that KinderCare has no drop-off plan. Mr. Pantel explained that parents will park on site and escort their children into the facility. At the

end of the day, the parents will park their cars and go inside the facility to pick up their children.

Dr. Blickstein informed Mr. Pantel that variance relief would be needed for the height of the proposed fence. She also questioned the appearance of the chain link fence with the privacy slats for the front yard. Other options should be considered. Mr. Pantel asked Mr. Coco to technically explain why the proposed fence reaches that particular height.

On the plans, Mr. Coco explained how the height of the fence would rise up in relationship to the terrain and extending to the end the proposed play area. The fence would be following a wall.

Mr. Coco described the applicant's landscaping plan. Twenty new trees and 150 shrubs will be planted. He described the proposed lighting for the parking lot. Boxed fixtures will direct the light downward.

Mr. Coco noted that this proposed application is in the B-3 District zone. Child care is a permitted use in the B-3 District. With the applicant trying to preserve the existing Inn structure have, site constraints have resulted and have created some of the variances. Mr. Coco discussed the front yard variance. It involves a pre-existing non-conformity. This variance could have been avoided, if the Inn could have been shifted further north.

Mr. Coco discussed the parking variance needed. The applicant will be providing 22 parking spaces on the site. Thirty-one spaces are required under the zoning ordinance. In order to preserve the historic Inn building, this parking variance becomes necessary.

Dr. Blickstein pointed out that the Borough does not allow parking in the front yard. She questioned whether Mr. Coco was attempting to give planning testimony.

Mr. Pantel stated that Michael Tobia, the applicant's planner, will give testimony with regard to the Municipal Land Use Law and the application at a future hearing.

Mr. Coco said there was no need for a loading zone for this facility. Further testimony will be given on this matter by the KinderCare's Operational Manager.

Mr. Coco described the applicant's two proposed signs. One sign will be on the Main St. façade and the second one on the Parrott Mill façade. Both these signs have the words "KinderCare" and a logo. The KinderCare lettering measurement complies to the ordinance. The logo will exceed the letter height size and will necessitate a variance. A monument sign will be installed at the driveway on Main St. Another monument sign will be installed near the driveway on Parrot Mill Road.

Mr. Coco noted that the ordinance allows for a 4 ft. high fence within the front yard and a 5 ft. high fence in the side yard. For security reasons, KinderCare is proposing a 6 ft. high fence to prevent the children from climbing out and to prevent the public from trying to reach in to the children.

Mr. Coco reviewed the applicant's lighting plan. All of KinderCare's lighting will be installed on the north side of their building. The building will block any lighting from impacting the closest neighbor on Parrot Mill Road.

Mr. Coco reviewed the two waivers being sought by the applicant. One waiver is for the size of the traffic island. The island is smaller than what the ordinance requires. The other waiver is for the tandem parking.

Dr. Blickstein confirmed with Mr. Coco that a retaining wall is being proposed along the property line on the east side.

At Mr. Brightly's request, Mr. Coco reviewed the stormwater drainage as it handles water traveling down the site. A swale will be constructed to handle the water on the south side of the applicant's property.

Mr. Maltz, the traffic engineer for the Board, asked Mr. Coco if he knew if there were any parking restrictions on Parrot Mill Road in the vicinity of the applicant's site. Mr. Coco recalled there may have been a sign restricting parking to 3 hours. Mr. Pantel stated that the applicant's traffic consultant will be addressing that matter at a future hearing.

Mr. Coco submitted Exhibit A-3: the coversheet of the architectural plans for the KinderCare proposed for 47 Main Street. Mr. Pantel stated that the applicant's architect will be giving more extensive testimony on this exhibit.

James Kassay, the architect for the applicant, was sworn in to testify. Mr. Kassay submitted his professional credentials to the Board.

Mr. Kassay stated that the architectural plans have tried to stay within the design guidelines of the Borough. He testified that the architecture for the proposed building was made to be compatible with the existing Inn structure. He described the siding, the color, and the trim. Operational shutters will be installed. Mr. Kassay explained how the roof element was designed. A gable area and dentil blocks will be included.

Mr. Kassay submitted Exhibit A-4: First floor and second floor plans. He pointed out the location of the lobby, the director's office, the warming pantry, the elevator, and two sets of stairs. Mr. Kassay pointed out which rooms will hold specific age groups of children.

Mr. Pantel noted that modification to the proposed fencing in the front will be discussed when the KinderCare representative testifies. Mr. Kassay testified that the mechanical systems will be put in the proposed attic space. No chimneys are being proposed.

Mr. Kassay submitted Exhibit A-6: A drawing of the existing Parrott Mill Inn. The applicant is proposing to remove the eastern wing and a portion of the southern elevation of the existing Inn. The eastern wing was a later addition to the original Inn. This wing

is not in good condition. Mr. Pantel confirmed with Mr. Kassay that a complete historic refurbishment and restoration will be done. Mr. Pantel noted that the applicant has received favorable reviews from the Historic Preservation Commission with respect to the planned restoration of the Inn.

Mr. Kassay submitted Exhibit A-7: A sample board showing the proposed building materials to be used on the KinderCare facility and the Inn. He explained how the proposed shingle, sidings and paint colors will all attractively match.

Mr. DeNave asked Mr. Kassay and Mr. Pantel whether they had evaluated the existing Inn structure to determine whether or not the demolition could compromise the existing Inn.

Mr. Kassay noted that the “back sides are in poor shape” but the applicant could support the structure to maintain the front two sides and still be able to carry out the proposed repairs.

Mr. Brightly and Mr. Kassay reviewed the height measurements. To help with this discussion Mr. Kassay and Mr. Pantel submitted Exhibit A-8: Architectural Site Plan.

There were no further questions from the Board or the public.

At 9:29 p.m. a break was taken.

At 9:35 p.m. the meeting resumed.

Mr. Pantel introduced Matthew Taylor, Operations Manager for KinderCare. Mr. Taylor will also be available at the next meeting. Mr. Pantel said that Mr. Taylor is prepared to give the Board an “abridged” version of how a KinderCare operates.

Mr. Taylor was sworn in to testify. He gave a brief overview of his professional background. Mr. Taylor testified that his responsibility is to select a safe location for KinderCare children to attend.

Mr. Taylor testified that with the proposed square footage, a state license could be obtained for this KinderCare to handle 120 to 130 children. Accredited teachers must be hired for most of the classrooms. The Chatham KinderCare will probably operate from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., five days a week. Mr. Taylor anticipated no more than 15 to 18 employees at one time. Specialists will be employed for language instruction and different curriculum items, which a regular employee could not teach. Special needs children will be welcome at KinderCare.

Dr. Blickstein asked if seasonal programs will be offered. Mr. Taylor answered yes. KinderCare will do field trips in the summer, and hold science camps. KinderCare tries to partner with other educational facilities to devise a curriculum with them. An after school program will be offered.

Mr. Maltz confirmed with Mr. Taylor that the pick-up and drop-off routine, suited to the needs of the parents, will be spread out. A staggered schedule of a 3 hour lee-way for drop-off and pick-up will be maintained.

Mr. Maltz asked Mr. Taylor discussed the possibility of split-day attendance. Mr. Maltz asked Mr. Taylor, if the Board approved this application, would KinderCare be amenable to a resolution requiring that a maximum of 124 children be in the building at one time. Mr. Taylor answered yes.

Mr. Maltz noted that Gary Dean, the applicant's traffic engineer of Dolan & Dean, has addressed Mr. Maltz's concerns about traffic and parking. Mr. Dean has received the traffic reviews submitted by Mr. Maltz. Mr. Taylor suggested that issue could be better covered when Mr. Dean is present at a future hearing.

Mr. Maltz suggested that tonight Mr. Taylor review the drop-off and pick-up process. Mr. Dean did not touch on that matter. Mr. Maltz stated that he had serious concerns about the proposed 22 parking spaces. In his research, Mr. Maltz felt that 22 spaces would be on the low side. He recommended this issue be addressed if not tonight, then at a future meeting. If there is not adequate parking for this facility, parked cars could spill onto neighboring streets.

Mr. Maltz asked if KinderCare had any data on peak parking demands. Mr. Taylor answered no; however he felt the parking arrangement will work fine. KinderCare will ask parents to park their cars and bring their children into the facility. A parent will sign in by computer and take their child to their classroom. On an average that procedure takes from 5 to 7 minutes.

Mrs. Cali-Charles asked how the children enrolled in after school programs will be transported to the facility. Mr. Taylor answered probably by the child's school bus. Depending on the demand, the KinderCare van may offer transportation.

Dr. Blickstein pointed out that the architectural plans noted that the playground area might have to be modified based on the state licensing requirements. Mr. Taylor explained that on a yearly basis state licensing will change criteria for playgrounds. He testified that KinderCare's playground has a capacity for 101 children; however, the likelihood of that number of children being on the playground at the same time is very slim. As for the fence, Mr. Taylor believed KinderCare will come up with a design that satisfies the Board. The proposed 6 ft. perimeter of the fence is needed to ensure the security of the children on the playground.

Mr. Crater informed Mr. Taylor that the drop-off situation at local daycare centers have been a problem. Mr. Crater concerned that KinderCare parents will be parking on surrounding streets during drop-off and pick-up times. This matter will be addressed at the next hearing.

Regarding state licensing, Mr. Taylor stated that typically KinderCare does not submit its licensing application until ground is broken for the center. Also, when staff members are being hired, they must undergo background checks. That can be a lengthy process.

Mayor Harris asked if KinderCare had a target date to open. Mr. Taylor answered KinderCare would like to open at some point in 2013.

Mr. Pantel noted that Chatham Gateway will continue its application before the Planning on Wednesday, June 6, 2012, 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Mr. Taylor will attend this second hearing. Also, Michael Tobia, KinderCare's planner will be testifying. Gary Dean, KinderCare's traffic consultant, will be testifying. Mr. Crater reminded Mr. Pantel that Board members would like to see all exhibits in advance of the June 6th hearing.

At 10:15 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:



Elizabeth Holler
Recording Secretary