

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
 August 7, 2013 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Susan Favate called this Chatham Borough Planning Board Regular Meeting of August 7, 2013 to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building. Mrs. Favate announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Names	Present	Absent
Mayor Bruce Harris	X	
Council Member Fife	X	
Chairman Susan Favate	X	
Vincent DeNave	X	
Matthew Wagner	X	
Donna Cali-Charles	X	
H.H. Montague	X	
James Mitchell	X	
John Bitar	X	
Joseph Mikulewicz	X	
Richard Crater		X
Vincent K. Loughlin, Esq.	X	
Dr. Susan Blickstein	X	

Robert C. Brightly, P.E., the Board Engineer, was also present.

Open to the Public

No one came forward.

Adoption of Minutes

The meeting minutes of June 19, 2013, second draft, were approved as submitted. Mrs. Cali-Charles and Mr. Mikulewicz abstained from voting because they were absent from this June meeting.

Resolutions

There were none.

New Application

There were none.

Pending Business

Application #13-03

Minor Subdivision

51 Summit Avenue

Block 124, Lot 11

This is a continuation from the hearing held at the June 19, 2013 meeting.

Mrs. Cali-Charles recused herself. Mr. Mitchell, who had been absent from the first hearing, signed a certification form that he had listened to the taping of the June 19th meeting and was therefore eligible to vote tonight. Mr. Mikulewicz noted that he had not listened to the recording of the first hearing.

Nino Coviello, Esq. briefly reviewed what had transpired at the previous hearing. He noted that Alan Andreas, the owner and architect of the project, had testified. Also the applicant's engineer and planner had given testimony. Mr. Andreas remained under oath from the previous hearing.

Attorney Coviello noted that Board members should now have a new submission from the applicant dated July 24, 2013, which included revised architectural and engineering drawings.

Mr. Andreas submitted Exhibit A-5: a long streetscape picturing the neighborhood on Summit Ave., including renderings of the two proposed homes.

Mr. Andreas testified that the plans have now taken Lot 11.2, changing it from a 3 bedroom house and reducing it to the size of the proposed home for Lot 11.1. The home on Lot 11.1 will be a two-bedroom house. Also, a shared driveway is now being proposed. A full-frontal porch is being proposed for the house on Lot 11.2. The remaining FAR will be utilized to raise the roof pitch slightly. The lot line will be moved slightly.

Mr. Andreas offered to remove the existing guardrail on the property.

Christian Kastrud, the applicant's engineer, came forward. He remained under oath from the previous hearing.

Mr. Kastrud submitted Exhibit A-6: the new colorized revised plans. By creating a shared driveway, the imperious coverage has now been reduced. A 30 ft. driveway aisle will be created, with 4 parking spaces for each lot. Better vehicular turning will now result with this new driveway arrangement. Also, more green area will now be created along each side of the two dwellings.

Mr. Kastrud testified that swales will be created along each property line.

Mr. Kastrud stated that more green area will be created to the south of the garage of Lot 11.1 and to the north of the garage on Lot 11.2. Regarding stormwater run-off, the paver driveway will be curbed. Mr. Kastrud explained how any water flowing on the driveway will travel. There will be an inlet top between the two garages which will collect run-off from the driveway and parking spaces.

Mr. Kastrud testified that the applicant is willing to install dry wells. The roof-leaders from the two dwellings and the garages will pipe the water to these dry-wells. The dry wells will be placed behind the garages. The ultimate flow to the neighboring properties will be reduced, from existing.

Mr. Kastrud submitted Exhibit A-7, the plans for the shared driveway with the proposed dry wells.

Board members suggested pushing the garages back 3 feet in order to create more green space for children exiting the back of the house. Mr. DeNave pointed out to Board members that if this green space were to be created, more pavement would be needed to reach the garage.

Attorney Coviello confirmed with Mr. Kastrud that the applicant can comply with all points raised by the Board Engineer's memo dated July 30, 2013.

Board Engineer Brightly asked Mr. Kastrud what would be the net decrease in impervious on the property.

Mr. Kastrud answered at the last hearing there was a decrease of 1700 sq. ft. It's now been reduced by another 700 sq. ft.

Robert Michaels, the applicant's planner came forward. He remained under oath from the previous hearing.

Mr. Michaels testified that the new proposals being given tonight make the applicant's plans more in conformance with the neighborhood look and streetscape. Both proposed dwellings will now have front porches. The slope and pitch of the roofs will be more in conformance with the neighborhood. Mr. Michaels testified that the amended plans meet both the negative and positive criteria.

Attorney Coviello noted that Dr. Blickstein had submitted a letter, dated July 29th, giving comments on the plans. Mr. Michaels stated that a new landscaping plan will be submitted, showing additional buffering that will be planted. The shared driveway will allow a greater ability to landscape between the proposed lots and the existing neighboring lots on either side.

Referring to Dr. Blickstein's letter, Mr. Michaels believed that the only variance now needed is for lot width. The Board discussed the proposed window wells with Mr. Michaels. Mr. Michaels testified the benefits of the shared driveway far outweighs any detriments. The impervious coverage will now be decreased because of the shared driveway. The properties on either side will not be impacted by these proposals.

Mr. Andreas submitted and explained Exhibit A-8, the landscaping plan. Dr. Blickstein pointed out that Mr. Andreas is not providing nearly as many deciduous trees as are being removed. The front yard and exterior side yard looked very bare to her. After further discussion, Mr. DeNave suggested the applicant come up with the specific number of trees, and their species, for the front yard. Dr. Blickstein stated that she would like to see at least two more street trees.

Attorney Loughlin and Dr. Blickstein suggested a condition requiring two new street trees, and two additional shade trees in the front yard beyond those shown on the plans dated 7/24/2013. Mr. Andreas reviewed what flowers and plantings will be put in to hide the foundations.

Attorney Coviello waived any further comments. He had no further witnesses to testify.

Mr. Mitchell noted that the engineering aspect was remarkable. He also noted that testimony was given that the proposals will go well with the streetscape. However, Mr. Mitchell believed too much overcrowding will result with four families living on a lot that was originally meant for one family, now being divided into two. He believed the application was “too much”.

Attorney Loughlin reviewed the conditions that the applicant agreed to regarding this minor subdivision:

- 1) The applicant is to produce a revised landscaping plan to add two street trees, two additional trees in the front yard (one per lot), and two additional trees (one per lot) to shade the proposed driveway parking spaces.
- 2) There is to be an easement for the driveway by the applicant’s attorney subject to the reasonable review and approval of the Board Engineer and the Board Attorney.
- 3) The governing body has to approve the re-location of the storm drain easement.
- 4) A developer’s agreement will be made if required by the Mayor and Council or the Borough Attorney subject to County approvals, subject to compliance with all terms, conditions, and requirements of the Board Engineer’s review letter of 7/30/2013, as part of the landscaping plan to be provided.
- 5) The applicant is to provide a note and an indication that the street trees are subject to maintenance as required by the Borough requirements.
- 6) The basement window wells, part of the foundation in the side yard setbacks, are hereby approved.
- 7) The applicant is to provide a landscaping plan showing landscaping between the window wells and the property line as discussed by the Board, subject to whatever fees and requirements are required under any affordable housing ordinance. Payment of all fees, including escrows, are subject to the review and approval of the Borough Engineer.
- 8) The existing guide rail will be removed. Additional landscaping will be planted in that area.
- 9) The lighting fixture will be modified to a downward facing fixture to eliminate spillage on to neighboring properties. A lighting plan will be submitted, showing this modification.

The submitted architectural plans, elevations, and renderings will contain all of the details and elements which were reviewed by the Board and requested by the Board. No bedrooms will be allowed in the basement.

Mayor Harris made a motion to approve this application with the agreed upon conditions as reviewed by Attorney Loughlin. Mr. Montague seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Mayor Harris	-	yes
Council Member Fife	-	yes
Mr. DeNave	-	yes
Mr. Wagner	-	yes
Mr. Mitchell	-	no
Mr. Montague	-	yes
Mr. Bitar	-	yes
Chrmn. Favate	-	yes

M District Update

Dr. Blickstein noted that the M-District subcommittee and the Borough interns had compiled comment forms and survey results from the businesses in the M-District. She asked subcommittee members to give their comments tonight on the M-District workshop recently held.

Council Member Fife felt the format recommended by the Board Planner, Dr. Blickstein, was exceptional. Thirty-four property owners from the M District, mostly from Commerce Street and some from River Road, attended. A significant number of Watchung Ave. businesses were also represented. She recalled the attendees seemed to arrive “ready to do battle”; however, by the end of the evening most attendees understood that their section of town can become very viable.

Mr. Bitar pointed out that the goal of this M District workshop was to receive input from the business owners and to clarify what the Borough would like to see for the industrial districts. The businesses were urged to give their views and suggestions.

Mr. Wagner noted that the number of attendees were better than he expected. He was glad the attendees’ attitudes changed for the better once they understood what the subcommittee was interested in.

Dr. Blickstein reported that the issue of non-conforming uses among the businesses was made clearer to the business owners. More information and discussions can be held on this matter.

Attorney Loughlin felt all the attendees showed extreme interest. No one lost their temper. Many attendees were glad to go one on one with the Borough officials and subcommittee members who were at the workshop. There was a good interaction with the neighborhood.

Dr. Blickstein reported that the M District subcommittee held a meeting earlier tonight and went through the comment forms. She noted that most respondees agreed that improvements are important in that section one way or another. Dr. Blickstein noted that the sub-committee had discussed working on a shared document with the Planning Board for the September 18th meeting. She would like the document distributed to Board members some days before the meeting. On September 18th, the Board can discuss what needs to be further done. The Board can decide what type of public hearing they may want to hold in the future on this matter.

Dr. Blickstein suggested after the Planning Board reviews her draft document, the Board may want to send the Borough Council a letter with a copy of the document for their consideration. An update could be presented at a Borough Council meeting. The document could be available on the web site. Attendees from the recent workshop could be invited to the public hearing with the Borough Council. The document could be included with the invitation..

New Business

There was none.

Future Applications

Mr. DeNave discussed an upcoming application, C-2 Education, which is proposing to use the empty store, formerly a liquor store, at CVS Plaza. Educational uses are allowed in that particular district. This applicant is scheduled for the August 21st meeting, and will be seeking a Waiver of Site Plan, Change of Use application.

Mr. DeNave discussed another application for 338 Main Street. The building has been vacant for years. The applicant proposes a physical therapy and speech therapy practice. This would be a conditional use. Mr. DeNave said the Board will be looking at the parking situation and how it might affect the surrounding residential districts. Mayor Harris said he would like the Board planner to be present at this application. The applicant should have a parking management plan presented by a qualified professional. Attorney Loughlin advised the Board not to routinely approve too many Waivers of Site Plan. Enforcement problems could arise.

The C-2 Education application will be heard at the August 21st Board meeting.

Mr. DeNave reported that the Board of Education will have an application proposing a new parking lot for Washington Ave. School. Mrs. Favate and Dr. Blickstein asked that the September 18th meeting be reserved totally for M-District discussion.

Mayor Harris reminded all Board members, if they haven't done so, please attend the State training sessions for new Planning Board members.

Mr. Montague reported on the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting held on July 24, 2013.

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

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 21, 2013, 7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:



Elizabeth Holler
Recording Secretary