

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
October 17, 20187:30 p.m.

In Chairman Favate's absence, Mayor Bruce Harris called this Regular Meeting of October 17, 2018 to order at 7:35 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building. Mayor Harris announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Mayor Bruce Harris	X	
Steve Williams	X	
Chrmn. Susan Favate		X
H. H. Montague	X	
William Heap		X
Vice Chrmn. Matthew Wagner	X	
Torri Van Wie		X
Vice Chrmn. Matthew Wagner	X	
Kyle Muir		X
Curt Dawson	X	
Matthew Engel	X	
Council Member Peter Hoffman	X	
Vincent Loughlin, Esq.	X	

Also present:
Vincent DeNave, Borough Engineer and Zoning Officer

Vice Chrmn. Wagner arrived at the meeting at 7:36 p.m. just before the roll call. He substituted for Chairman Susan Favate.

Public Comment
There was none

Resolution #PB 2018-23

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2018 Planning Board meeting. Mr. Montague seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The minutes were approved.

Discussion Item

Discussion of application checklist

Mr. DeNave confirmed with Board members that they had reviewed the document containing comments made by him and Ms. Lelie regarding the checklist.

Mr. Dawson asked about language concerning trees and test pits. Mr. DeNave stated that more language will be added to the checklist concerning trees. If a resident or developer proposes to

remove a Borough tree, they must go before the Shade Tree Commission. Applicants must be made aware of the tree replacement requirements, and the need for a landscaping plan.

Mayor Harris confirmed with Mr. DeNave that a reference to the Shade Tree ordinance will be included in the checklist.

Mr. DeNave stated that language will be added to the checklist concerning test pits. When 400 sq. ft. of additional impervious coverage is proposed, a draining and grading plan must be submitted by the applicant.

Vice Chmrm. Wagner had concerns about the requirement of the “photo realistic” of Item 2. This requirement would prove costly to some applicants. Mayor Harris pointed out that streetscapes are very helpful when subdivisions are being proposed.

After further discussion, Mr. DeNave suggested that he could add an attachment showing an example of a “photo realistic” streetscape.

Mayor Harris noted that the Borough Shade Tree Commission wants to change the ordinance to require that the Shade Tree Commission reviews everything on an application before it goes before the Planning Board. Mayor Harris suggested that instead there should be a requirement stipulating that applicants must comply with the Shade Tree ordinance.

Mr. DeNave discussed a recent application where a tree stood where the proposed driveway was to go in. Discussions between the Shade Tree Commission and the developer were held. The developer will be planting two new trees on the property.

Board Correspondence

Correspondence from Brady & Correale, LLP, Attorneys at Law

Planning Board Application #17-16, Maria Cambria, 23 Lincoln Avenue/14 Cherry Lane

Attorney Loughlin explained this correspondence involves a lot line adjustment on an application heard by the Board in January, 2018. The Board’s approval of this lot line adjustment expired in July. The Borough statute states that the Planning Board has the authority to further extend their approval an addition of 190 days if the Board receives a reasonable basis for the request of extension.

In his letter dated Sept. 10, 2018, Mr. Correale stated that he has a serious illness and had been away from his office a number of months. Mr. Correale is asking for the 190-day extension.

Attorney Loughlin felt that there was more than a reasonable basis for the subdivision to not have been perfected in July, 2018. He pointed out that this is an administrative matter for the Board and does not require a public hearing.

Attorney Loughlin stated that he has gone ahead and prepared a resolution for the Board to grant this request for an additional 190 days. The new extension will end in July 2019.

A motion was made/seconded to approve the extension of Application #17-16, Maria Cambria, 23 Lincoln Avenue/14 Cherry Lane, with the Board's Recording Secretary and Vice Chrmn. Wagner to sign the resolution, if approved.

A roll call vote was taken:

Mayor Harris	-	yes
Mr. Williams	-	yes
Mr. Montague	-	yes
Mr. Engel	-	yes
Mr. Dawson	-	yes
Council Member Hoffman	-	yes
Vice Chrmn. Wagner	-	yes

Attorney Loughlin stated that Mr. Correale had expressed appreciation to the Board for considering this request under the circumstances.

Application PB #18-09

Gravity Vault

40 Watchung Avenue

Final Site Plan

Block 134, Lot 28

Final Site Plan

Daniel Cronheim, Esq., attorney for the applicant, came forward. He stated that Gravity Vault has been in business for almost 10 years. The applicant is proposing a small addition to a large building. The applicant will keep the existing number of parking spaces.

Mr. DeNave pointed out that 40 Watchung Avenue is an existing building with two permitted uses: the Strand tennis facility and the rock climbing facility at the rear of the building. In the Master Plan changes for the "M" District, recreational and instructional are now permitted uses. Gravity Vault is proposing to add 2500 sq. ft. to the existing building. Currently on the site, only 75 parking spaces exist. According to the ordinance, they are supposed to have 178 parking spaces on site. It was Mr. DeNave's opinion that the site functions well as it stands now. Mr. DeNave noted that no additional spaces are being proposed as part of the proposed addition. A variance is needed for spaces for nine additional cars **that would be required due to the addition.**

Lucas Kovalcik, owner of The Gravity Vault, was sworn in to testify.

Mr. Kovalcik testified that nine years ago when the Gravity Vault moved into the rear of 40 Watchung Avenue, the other tenant had been a wholesale florist. The entrance to the Gravity Vault is on the side of the building. An adjacent side parking lot that constitutes the Gravity Vault's main entrance. Tennis facilities occupy the front two-thirds of 40 Watchung Avenue.

Answering Attorney Cronheim's questions, Mr. Kovalcik testified the current parking arrangements between his business and the tennis facilities have worked well. The two businesses have different peak hours.

Mr. Kovalcik testified that the proposed addition would basically add to the current services provided by Gravity Vault. An exercise room will be constructed as well as a small group fitness room for yoga classes, stretching classes, etc.

Vice Chrmn. Wagner asked how large the classes for yoga and other activities are. Mr. Kovalcik answered 10 to 15 people would be the average.

Answering questions from Mr. Montague concerning operations, Mr. Kovalcik stated that he was considering opening his business as early as 9 a.m. Hopefully people may want to do fitness exercises at that hour. Gravity Vault's parking lot is currently completely empty during the a.m. hours. Currently, Gravity Vault does not open until 12 noon. Thirty-five parking spaces exist on the side of the building.

Mr. Kovalcik stated that he hopes that rock climbing will eventually become an alternative form of fitness and people would like to visit the Gravity Vault in the a.m. hours.

Mayor Harris brought up the possibility that there may be more people visiting the Gravity Vault at a given time than what exists today on the site. How would this impact the parking? Will Gravity Vault run out of parking?

Mr. Kovalcik didn't believe Gravity Vault will run out of parking. Gravity Vault has never experienced a parking issue.

Mr. DeNave asked Mr. Kovalcik if Gravity Vault had ever had a situation of running out of parking spaces.

Mr. Kovalcik answered no. The few times Gravity Vault has held competition events over the ten years of their existence, they have secured additional parking spaces. Other than those events, on an annual basis, there has never been a parking issue.

Mr. DeNave asked Mr. Kovalcik if Gravity Vault did run out of parking spaces, where would his clients go? Mr. DeNave noted that there are not many spaces available in that immediate area.

Mr. Kovalcik answered that scenario hasn't happened. The few times Gravity Vault has held competitions; additional parking is secured at Bottle King and National Manufacturing.

Mr. Montague was concerned that the nearby delicatessen parking (Pascarella) may be taken up by Gravity Vault clients.

Mr. Williams pointed out that a chain-link fence has recently been installed between the Gravity Vault and the delicatessen.

Mr. Kovalcik noted that the delicatessen has more business than the Gravity Vault and the tennis facilities combined.

Council Member Hoffman asked Mr. Kovalcik if there had ever been an overflow of parking from the delicatessen customers into Gravity Vault's spaces.

Mr. Kovalcik answered that has never been a problem. He pointed out that the delicatessen closes at 5 p.m.

Mr. Montague asked Mr. Kovalcik what his busiest hours were.

Mr. Kovalcik answered between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. most check-ins take place.

Mr. Dawson and Mr. Kovalcik discussed the percentage of parking that would be used on a busy day.

Mr. DeNave asked Mr. Kovalcik how many people would be in a climbing class.

Mr. Kovalcik answered during the day 20 to 25 people at any point participate in a climbing class, including people "spotting" or belaying the ropes.

Vice Chrmn. Wagner confirmed with Mr. Kovalcik that a majority of Gravity Vault people are already parked, on site.

There were no questions from the public for the applicant.

Attorney Cronheim and Attorney Loughlin decided to waive the testimony of the applicant's architect.

Mayor Harris made a motion to approve Application PB #18-09: Gravity Vault – 40 Watchung Ave., seeking a Final Site Plan. Council Member Hoffman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Mayor Harris	-	yes
Mr. Williams	-	yes
Mr. Montague	-	yes
Mr. Engel	-	yes
Mr. Dawson	-	yes
Council Member Hoffman	-	yes
Vice Chrmn. Wagner	-	yes

Application PB #18-09 was approved.

Mr. Williams reported that at the November 7th Planning Board meeting, Topology will hold a public hearing to discuss their findings on the River Road project. Notices of this hearing will be sent to the newspapers.

Mr. DeNave added that Topography has been doing a study to see if River Road could be determined to be an area of redevelopment. Topography will be presenting the findings of the study at the November 7th Planning Board meeting. Board members will be receiving a report from Topography in advance.

Application PB #18-01: Main Street Development Group, LLC – 20 Coleman Avenue East – Minor Subdivision will carry to the December 5, 2018 Planning Board meeting.

At 8:25 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on November 7, 2018, 7:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Holler
Recording Secretary