

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
November 4, 2015**

The Township of West Orange Planning Board held a regular meeting on November 4, 2015 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 7:32 P.M. It was announced that notification of this meeting was given to the Township Clerk, and posted on the Township Bulletin Board on December 11, 2014 in accordance with the requirements of the "Open Public Meetings Act".

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

ABSENT: Joanne Carlucci, Jason Lester, William Wilkes II

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP, Acting Township Planner, Robin Miller, Board Secretary, Kevin Dillion, Audio-Digital Transcription Service

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Planning Board regular meeting will be held on December 2, 2015 in the Council Chamber at 7:30 P.M.

SWEARING IN

Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP, Acting Township Planner.

APPLICATION

PB-15-09C/Essex County/Turtle Back Zoo/Gibbons Shade Structure
Block: 163; Lot: 1; Zone: R-1
560 Northfield Avenue
Courtesy Review Application.

EXHIBITS

A-1: Aerial Photograph of Turtle Back Zoo dated 1/20/2015, indicating area of Gibbons Shade Structure, prepared by French & Parrello Associates, PA;

- A-2:** Layout Plan Option A, Shade Structure for the Gibbons Exhibit, Sheet S1.1, dated 9/23/15, prepared by French & Parrello Associates, PA;
- A-3:** Building Elevation Option A, Sheet S1.2, dated 9/23/15, prepared by French & Parrello Associates, PA.

DISCUSSION

Mark L. Fleder, Esq., Connell Foley LLP, special legal counsel to Essex County addressed the Board. The County was presenting a Courtesy Review Application to replace an existing adjustable awning shade structure and install a permanent timber shade structure.

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. Mr. Piga said the County had engaged his firm to design a new shade structure for the Gibbons Exhibit.

Mr. Piga described the existing site conditions, the location of various zoo attractions and the existing Gibbons Exhibit, (Exhibit A-1). Mr. Piga said there currently existed a canvas-type retractable awning extending approximately 10 foot by 40 foot out from the four windows of the Gibbons holding area. Mr. Piga explained the glare from the sun reflected off the windows making it difficult for visitors to see in to Gibbons Exhibit. The canvas awnings were located too high and were too short in length; they did not extend far enough out from the windows to alleviate the glare. The new construction would be a 30 feet long by 16 feet wide timber shade structure, similar to a porch; designed to extend further out from the holding facility, it would be set lower – approximately 8 feet. It would provide more shade and would eliminate the glare to allow visitors the opportunity to better view the Gibbons. The County had proposed the project after being after consulting with the Zoo professionals. Mr. Piga identified the existing Gibbons facility and the proposed structure (Exhibit A-2). Referring to Exhibit A-3, Mr. Piga described the new structure; he explained how visitors would experience the exhibit after the improvements. Regarding the building cross section illustration, he said the top of the structure would extend approximately 16 feet from the existing building, situated over the existing windows. Visitors would enter from gateway areas; the areas would be large enough to accommodate strollers. Indicating the front view, he said the structure area had an open plan; the thought was for the Gibbons to have an outdoor view; they would not be staring at a wall; mainly during the winter months and when zoo closed. To continue the design theme of the existing gibbons exhibit, the roof would be a corrugated steel; the corrugated steel would also be used at the bottom of the (four) rough sawn posts; the posts would be mounted on concrete footings; other structure building material would include T-111 siding. In response to questions from Mr. Fleder, Mr. Piga confirmed there would be no exterior lighting, new windows or new doors. Mr. Piga concluded his testimony.

Addressing the Board, Mr. Fleder explained the County had recently retained a contractor to build the project. When he submitted the foundation plans to the Building Department, the contractor was advised the County must first submit the plan to the Planning Board for Courtesy Review. The County had originally thought the project was not subject to a Courtesy Review because it was to replace an existing exterior structure; it was not a new building.

Councilwoman McCartney asked if Mr. Piga had designed the original (existing) Gibbons structure and if so had they observed the same effect on other existing zoo structures; Mr. Piga said French & Parrello had designed the existing structure but had learned from the design flaws for subsequent exhibits; he cited the Big Cat Exhibit as an example.

Chairman Weston stated he did not see a site plan as part of the application submission. He opined Mr. Piga had looked at the project as a small addition to an existing building that would not need site plan approval or courtesy review; however, the Township professionals had determined and the Board believed the review was necessary as part of Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) regulations. Chairman Weston asked if it was the intention of Mr. Piga to submit a final site plan to the Building Department, Mr. Piga answered that due to the small size of the project it was not his intent to furnish a site plan. He stated he would be working with all the existing elevations; the project was more of a design plan change. Chairman Weston noted the Aerial Map was dated January 2015 (Exhibit A-1), however many of the projects from the last year and a half were not depicted. He suggested updating the Aerial Map to reflect the current conditions. Chairman Weston stated the plans had been drawn by Jonathan V. Crawford, PE, French & Parrello Associates (Exhibit A-2 and Exhibit A-3); Mr. Piga confirmed signed and sealed plans had been filed with the Board.

Mr. Gurland said he agreed with Chairman Weston that a site plan should have been prepared; he noted that without an updated Aerial Map it would be helpful to have a site plan; he asked the Board if a site plan should be required. Referring to Sheet S1.1 (Exhibit A-2), Mr. Gurland asked Mr. Piga to show the location of the windows relative to the columns. In response to question from Chairman Weston, Mr. Piga confirmed the windows were existing; they would be shaded by the new structure; they would not be blocked. Mr. Gurland said that on the last page of the Application he could not read the signature of the Applicant; Mr. Fleder said Sangeev Varghese, County Engineer, had signed the Application. Mr. Gurland suggested the (Application) signature page be revised to include "Print Name".

Mr. Eben opined the columns on the drawing did not line up with the columns on site; he thought the project engineer should look at columns on site and line them up. He suggested moving the columns out from the base of the building; he opined it would be of cost-savings regarding underpinnings. Mr. Eben stated he visited the site; he described the picnic area and winding path leading to the site; he said he was unsure if the structure opening lined up with the path; he suggested better landscaping around the little picnic area. Mr. Eben stated the structure was an A-5 Use Group; people would be assembling under the structure; he suggested the information be included on the cover sheet to indicate the licensed professionals authorized to sign plans.

Mr. Klein asked if the opening at the end with the greater slope (taller end) was the same size; Mr. Piga said that due to the slope the opening would be slightly larger. Mr. Klein voiced concern that the sun beating on a corrugated roof would make the structure stuffy; he asked if fans were considered; Mr. Piga said the front of the structure would be entirely open; fans would not be necessary; heat was not the issue in the area; the concern was sun glare off the glass windows

Referencing Exhibit A-3, Mr. Eben noted the metal siding at the bottom right side of the opening of the structure; he asked why it had not be carried to the bottom left side. Mr. Piga said it could be carried to the bottom left side. Mr. Eben stated that if the piers were to come up above grade, the wood would not be on the ground; he opined that by bringing the piers up about six inches off the ground, the posts would be protected longer from water runoff. He confirmed the structure would have no leader or gutter. Mr. Piga stated that where the structure ended there was a landscaped area for the water runoff.

Mr. Grygiel had no questions for Mr. Piga.

The Public Advocate had no questions for Mr. Piga.

Robert Rashkes, 35 Oakcrest Road, asked what the color of the corrugated steel roof material was; Mr. Piga said it would be the color of galvanized steel, a metallic gray color.

Referring to the Aerial Map (Exhibit A-1), Councilwoman McCartney stated that she had a question for Mr. Piga regarding the new parking deck; she asked him if a landscaping plan had been submitted as part of that Application; would he be able to follow up on the inquiry. Mr. Fleder said he would relay the inquiry to the County.

There was no further discussion.

The Public had no comments regarding the Application.

The Board deliberated on the Application. Chairman Weston suggested that a condition of the recommendation to include:

1. A site plan for the Application be developed and submitted to the Building Department, signed and sealed by an NJ licensed professional.

Chairman Weston stated that a further recommendation; but not a condition of approval for the application; that for the next Courtesy Review application, the County submit an updated Aerial Map showing all projects over the last year and a half.

Mr. Gurland asked if the Board should consider carrying the Application to the next meeting; he voiced concern regarding the structural issues raised by Mr. Eben. Chairman Weston advised the Application was a Courtesy Review only; he opined the Board had addressed their concerns with the County; Mr. Eben offered to provide a copy of his suggested revisions to Mr. Piga; the County agreed.

The Board voted on the Recommendation as follows:

Motion: Chairman Weston

Second: Mr. Eben

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

MEETING ADJOURNED at approximately 8:04 P.M.

Minutes adopted December 2, 2015.



Robin Miller, Planning Board Secretary
Township of West Orange

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD WILL BE
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6, 2016 AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.**