

VOORHEES TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 10, 2015

The Chairperson called the meeting to order. It was stated that this meeting is being held in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act and has been duly published and noticed as required by law".

Flag Salute

Roll Call

Present:Mrs. Schwartz, Ms. Atkinson, Mr. Rashatwar, Mrs. Brown, Mr. Grabowski, Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Hale

Absent:Mr. Wu

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Garbowski makes a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2014 and the January 2015 meeting as distributed and the motion is seconded by Mrs. Brown. Remaining Environmental Commission Members all in favor.

New Business

Mr. Jeffrey I. Baron, Esquire of Baron & Brennan, P.A. introduces himself and presents the application for a (3) Lot Major Subdivision on behalf of Mr. Hristos Kolovos. The presented (3) Lot Major Subdivision is in Voorhees and borders Gibbsboro. Mr. Baron advises that the application has been presented to the Planning Board and he is in receipt of the CME consultant's letter. He goes on to introduce John M. Pettit from Pettit Associates who is the professional engineer and planner for the project.

Mr. Baron briefly describes the project as a (3) Lot Major Subdivision with (1) lot as the planned building of a home and the other (2) lots reserved for homes that are not yet planned. It is a small extension of the cul de sac at the end of Eastwick on the other side of Little Egg Harbor Road. Mr. Pettit explains that public sewer and water will be extended into the property to serve the (3) Lots. He advises that storm water will be handled by an underground system, which will infiltrate the run off into the ground. Mr. Baron explains that the (1) Lot will be used for Mr. Kolovos' home and that this is the only home planned for the Subdivision at present time. He further explains that the (2) homes shown on the plans are simply shell homes because the lots have not yet been sold and no plans have been determined for them. Mr. Hale questions whether they have intended sizes for the future homes and Mr. Baron explains that they do not have specs for those homes at this time. Mr. Hale further asks whether there will be individual storm water management systems for each individual property. Mr. Pettit advises that there will be. Mr. Hale goes on to ask how the engineer intends on sizing them. Mr. Pettit explains that they have determined that each system will be calculated based on

the square footage of the home and the square footage of the impervious. Mr. Hale asks that those calculations be submitted to Mr. Giddings.

Mr. Baron explains that through litigation with the adjoining municipality they were granted permission to access the property through Eastwick, which means they are able to come through Gibbsboro to get to the Voorhees property. Furthermore, as part of the agreement the bike path that was installed by Gibbsboro previously can remain there in spite of it being on Mr. Kolovos' property. Mr. Hale asks if Eastwick is considered a municipal road in Gibbsboro and Mr. Baron advises that it is. Mr. Hale further asks if that portion of Eastwick will be deeded over to Voorhees. Mr. Baron explains that the undedicated portion of the road in front of the property has been granted an easement for the properties use. He further explains that there are also sewer laterals that Mr. Kolovos has agreed to have extended into the cul de sac and that Gibbsboro has also asked to have Old Egg Harbor Road extended out to the southern property line of the proposed project. Mr. Rashatwar questions the demarcation of the property line and Mr. Pettit explains that the laterals will be extended for the possibility of future utility connections.

Mr. Hale then asks to review the consultant's report dated February 5, 2015.

Township Ordinance Requirements

#1: Mr. Giddings had suggested that the applicant should submit a complete and appropriate Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with Township Ordinance 158.04 by February 18, 2015. The revised EIS is to include but not limited to Slopes, Soils, Clearing, Wildlife Species, etc. The applicant agreed to the terms and will be submitting the necessary report.

#2: Mr. Baron acknowledges that that their present plan is far too aggressive of a clearing area. He advises that they will seek to reduce the proposed clearing. Mr. Hale explains that there needs to be an appropriate 1 for 1 plan set forth under Township Ordinance 154.006E. Mr. Baron agrees to submit a Tree Compensation Plan that follows township guidelines. He also explained that he would like to see the heavily wooded appearance to remain and will try to keep the buffer as natural as possible.

NJDEP Regulatory Requirements

The site does not contain features regulated by the NJDEP, Division of Land Use Regulation.

General Requirements

#1: In response to Mr. Giddings question of the abandoned cars located on the property, Mr. Baron advises that the abandoned vehicles that appear on the existing conditions survey belong to a neighbor and will be removed. He further stated that a Preliminary Assessment (NJDEP Standards) was previously completed and that it will be made available to Mr. Giddings.

#2: The consultant's letter advises that due to the elevations of the stormwater management structures, it is necessary for the applicant to submit soil borings or profile pits to demonstrate the required separation between the seasonal high water table and the bottom of the proposed structure. Mr. Pettit advised that during discussion with Mr. Rakesh Darji, the applicant requested and was granted, as a condition of preliminary approval, an extension for the submission of soil borings and profile pits. The soil borings and profile pits will be submitted at a later date to justify the condition of the subsurface design.

Mr. Hale addresses Mr. Pettit and advises that the Environmental Impact Statement should be revised to include a more in depth analysis of the present vegetation, identity of known wildlife and discuss hydrology. It should also have a section on alternatives and a section on permits, even if they are not required. He further advises that Mr. Pettit should review the requirements for Impact Statements that are presented to the Commission. He also explained that he will recommend that the Planning Board hold off hearing the application until a revised EIS is received.

Mr. Hale then asks the Commission Members for additional comments or concerns. Mrs. Brown asks that Mr. Pettit address the individual stormwater drainage systems. She asks if the individual property owners will be responsible for their own system. Mr. Baron explains that each system will be maintained by the individual owner and there will be a deed restriction to that affect. She further asks whether the road will be dedicated or undedicated. Mr. Baron explains that the decision will remain up to the board and if it remains undedicated then a homeowners association will be established. Mrs. Atkinson asks about the report stating that there are steep slopes on the site but that there is no section addressing the impact of such slopes. According to Mr. Baron, under Voorhees Ordinance they will submit updated site plans once the building permits are pulled.

Mrs. Schwartz questions why the bike path buffer will be landscaped instead of leaving it wooded. Mr. Baron explained that during litigation Gibbsboro "insisted on a buffer so the residents of Gibbsboro would not look at houses in Voorhees". Mrs. Schwartz points out that the proposed site plan looks as if the buffer is being cleared around the bike path and then being replanted. She questions why the dense buffer is being cleared instead of being left as is. Mr. Baron explains that the buffer that is shown on the plans is the buffer that was approved by Gibbsboro in order to screen the homes. He further explains that they would be willing to leave as many indigenous trees as possible and try to leave the buffer as natural as possible. Mr. Baron advised that the buffer submitted was reviewed and approved by Gibbsboros municipal engineer.

Mr. Hale then opens the meeting to public comment:

Jeff Kiesel

49 Chippenham Drive
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Mr. Kiesel addresses the commission and advises that he has been a resident of the above address for the past 7 years. He advises that as a resident of this address he never knew that the land was being sold and would have liked to be advised of such a sale. Mr. Kiesel feels that the re-sale value of his home will now be negatively affected due to a home being built in his back yard. He further explains that the wooded area as it stands has a significant wildlife population including deer, wild turkey, beavers, badgers, hummingbirds, etc. Mr. Kiesel explains that his daughter loves the forest that is essentially their back yard and as the property is now, he is surrounded by trees. He states that when he purchased his home he was told that the wooded area behind his home was public land that would not be built on. He goes on to point out various other locations within Voorhees that he feels were failed developments and fears that Mr. Kolovos' property may turn into one of these.

Mr. Hale addresses Mr. Kiesel and explains that he understands his disappointment because he has been in the same situation. He advises that Mr. Kolovos is not doing anything with the property that he is not authorized to do. Although he empathizes with Mr. Kiesel he suggests that the neighbors establish a friendship with Mr. Kolovos in order to possibly be kept in mind when decisions are being made regarding the properties development.

Anthony Pozzi
53 Chippenham Drive
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Mr. Pozzi addresses the commission and advises that his concern is seeing the buffer remain as large and natural as possible. Mr. Baron explains that that the plan will be reworked to incorporate the public's concerns for a larger buffer.

Mr. Hale then makes a motion to close the public portion. Mrs. Atkinson approves the motion and Mr. Garbowski seconds it. All remaining commission members agree.

Mr. Hale then discusses what is necessary from the applicant to comply with Voorhees Environmental Commission recommendations:

- Revised EIS to be submitted by Wednesday, February 18, 2015
- Revised and appropriate Tree Compensation Plan
- Leave the buffer as natural as possible
- Snow fencing during construction phase
- Comply with stipulations of the consultants letter

Mr. Hale then calls for a motion to record and forward the Commission's recommendations to the Planning Board. Mrs. Schwartz makes a motion to approve and Mr. Rashatwar seconds the motion. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Mrs. Schwartz, Mrs. Atkinson, Mr. Rashatwar, Mrs. Brown, Mr. Garbowski, Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Hale

Nays: None

Additional Business

Mr. Hale would like recommendations for a new Chair to represent Sustainable Voorhees. He advises that at the end of the calendar year he will be stepping down. Mr. Hale explains that Sustainable Voorhees is working with the Township to roll out new recycling bins and pamphlets on recycling guidelines.

Mr. Gaffney suggests that the commission possibly review the subject of abandoned and failed building projects. He advises that there are numerous sites within Voorhees that are not being maintained and question the possibility of any recourse. Mr. Hale advises that the nuisance properties are the responsibility of the Code Enforcement Official.

Mrs. Atkinson advises that Eastern High School will be hosting the annual Earth Day Event on Sunday, April 26, 2015 and that Sustainable Voorhees will be present.

Mr. Hale seeing no public present, waves the public portion.
Meeting was adjourned.

Kendralyn Cornwall

VEC Secretary

