

September 19, 2013

Work Session

A meeting of the Allendale Planning Board was held in the Municipal Building on September 19, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 8:05 PM by Mr. Quinn, Chairman, who announced that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were met by the required posting and notice to publications.

The following members answered to roll call: Mr. Quinn, Mr. Sirico, Mr. Sasso, Mr. Walters, Mr. Zambrotta, Ms. Sheehan, Mr. Scherb, Ms. Checki, Mr. O'Connell, and Mr. Strauch.

Absent: Mr. Barra

Mr. Quinn started the work session portion of the meeting. He said that the Poskanzers just needed a formal signing of the document. Since the Poskanzers were not at the meeting, Mr. Quinn assumed that the document was not back from the County yet or available to be signed.

Mr. Quinn said that Northern Highlands Regional High School at 298 Hillside Avenue, Block 201, Lot 8 was next on the agenda. Mr. John Keenan, Superintendent of Northern Highlands, was present to speak to the Board. Mr. Quinn said the Board had received plans from Northern Highlands about making lighting, drainage, and paving improvements. Mr. Keenan said that he was there to explain what they were looking to do on the property. Mr. Keenan told the Board that he had met with Mr. Yakimik who toured the property and reviewed what they had in mind for the proposed plans. He continued that these plans are in the preliminary stages as they have applied for a grant to help with the costs. The State of New Jersey has announced assistance to school districts for building projects. Northern Highlands found out about this grant last spring and submitted the grant application based on what improvements were needed from their five year plan. Mr. Keenan explained that the school did not know how much money, if any, that they would get from the State. The plans submitted to the Board were the plans that were sent to the State for the application. The plans may not be done in their entirety as they may need to scale back if they don't receive the full funding. This would not involve any referenda from the public.

Mr. Keenan discussed the improvements. The lighting would be both inside and outside. They had an energy audit and decided that certain lighting needed to be replaced including lights in the gymnasium, auditorium, and in other areas. The outside lighting would include low bollard lighting for the entrance on East Elbrook as many residents have complained that it is very dark entering or leaving the service driveway. There are sports like tennis and recreation activities that use the fields and lighting is needed for security reasons. When the engineer wrote to the Board he used the word review and that may not have been the best word to use for this situation. Mr. Keenan said they just wanted to keep the Board informed about the application and will let the Board know as they hear back from the State.

Mr. Dunn asked whether the site plan application was for review or just advisory and Mr. Keenan said it was more advisory at this time as he didn't think they would hear from the State until January or February. At that time Northern Highlands would have to see how much money they have been allotted by the State and what projects are the priority based on the amount of money that is given. Mr. Dunn asked if they are presenting the final plan to the State Board of Education and Mr. Keenan said it was not required. Mr. Dunn just wanted to make sure all the procedures were done according to protocol and Mr. Keenan agreed. Mr. Quinn asked if there were time limits on the grants and Mr. Keenan said that there was a September 4th deadline when the grant application had to be turned into the State. Mr. Quinn commented that the plans were preliminary at this stage and Mr. Keenan agreed. Mr. Keenan continued to explain that the plans included putting drainage in certain areas around the property. The curbing and paving has to do with the drainage but on the application the school separated the two areas to try to obtain more money. Mr. Keenan said they wanted to keep the lines of communication open and the school is in touch with John Yakimik and John Wittekind. Mr. Quinn said the Board appreciated that effort.

Mr. Sirico asked for clarification on the lighting being proposed on East Elbrook and Mr. Keenan said he wasn't even sure that part would be done. Residents had asked for some lighting in the back because of security reasons and Orange and Rockland had put a light on one of their poles. It may be enough lighting. Mr. Sirico said that in the preliminary plans it said poles and he was thinking of tall poles but Mr. Keenan said that was a misunderstanding as he thinking small bollards just to light the way. Mr. Sirico asked if lighting would be put in back of the stands and Mr. Keenan said not at this time. Mr. Quinn said that the Board would have concerns about light spillage and drainage for any type of plans coming before them. Mr. Keenan said they were concerned about drainage on East Elbrook and in the future will be looking to work with everyone to make sure the efforts to improve the drainage are successful. Mr. Strauch recommended that anyone who wanted to see bollard lighting should go to downtown Ramsey as the town had just installed them. Mr. Keenan said that putting the taller lighting in was not what they were proposing. Mr. Sirico thanked Mr. Keenan for coming to the meeting to explain what was happening. Mr. Walters asked about the motion detector lighting on the property and explained how the lights shine into his home's windows and asked if the lights could be redirected. Mr. Keenan said he'd be happy to look at it but security lighting at schools was critical for safety purposes and for distracting vandalism which is why they are on a lot. If the lights could be better angled the school could consider doing that for him. This type of lighting would be part of the proposed upgrades. Mr. Sasso asked whether a stop sign or speed bump was being considered to be placed on the service road. Mr. Keenan said he would have to defer to the police about that proposal. Mr. Keenan didn't think the curbing was going to happen on East Elbrook as he didn't think it was needed. Mr. Quinn thanked Mr. Keenan for coming. This concluded the work session part of the meeting.

Regular Session

Mr. Quinn announced that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were met by the required posting and notice to publications.

The following members answered to roll call: Mr. Quinn, Mr. Sirico, Mr. Sasso, Mr. Walters, Mr. Zambrotta, Ms. Sheehan, Mr. Scherb, Ms. Checki, Mr. O'Connell, and Mr. Strauch.

Absent: Mr. Barra

On a motion from Mr. Sirico, seconded by Ms. Sheehan, the minutes from June 20, 2013 were approved.

Mr. Quinn went over the agenda and that most of the items were discussed in the work session. Mr. Quinn asked Mr. Dunn if Northern Highlands would have to come to the Planning Board and Mr. Dunn replied no because the school is not part of the jurisdiction of the Board. Mr. Dunn explained that in the work session he had asked Mr. Keenan if he was applying to the State Board of Education. Mr. Walters added that Mr. Keenan mentioned that he would do what his counsel told him to do whether that meant presenting to the Planning Board or the State Board of Education.

Mr. Quinn opened the meeting to public. Bill Robinson from 5 East Elbrook Drive approached the Board. He has lived in Allendale since 1984. His property is behind the school football field and is next to the service drive. He was worried about more lighting being put on the service road next to his home. Lights already shine into his windows and he suggested putting up deflectors to alleviate the surplus of lighting. He was also worried about security but cautioned against the amount of lighting being proposed. Mr. Robinson suggested placing security cameras around the property lines. He also expressed concerns over parking on East Elbrook during the sporting events as people usually park on both sides of the street and you can't get an emergency vehicle up that road. Mr. Quinn said that the Board would consider all of these ideas if a site plan comes before the Board. He explained to Mr. Robinson that the plans were just preliminary and not an actual application. If Northern Highlands files an application the Board can look into the details of the plan. Mr. Dunn confirmed that there were no plans before them, no application, and no presentation so the ideas Mr. Robinson presented would probably be better addressed to the Board of Education, the Superintendent, or the school's engineer. Mr. Dunn said if they did come back to present their application to the Board that the people in the area would have a chance to express their concerns. Mr. Dunn wasn't even sure whether the school would present their plans to the Board in the future or not.

The meeting was closed to the public. Mr. Quinn asked the Board members if they had anything else to discuss. Mr. Strauch mentioned that according to the Borough Code lighting from your property can not travel to your neighbor's property. He also told the Board that the Land Use

Committee was working on some documents and would be sending them to the Planning Board in the future.

On a motion from Mr. Walters, seconded by Ms. Sheehan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Knispel