MINUTES OF DELAWARE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT www.delawaretwpnj.org

HYBRID IN-PERSON and VIRTUAL via ZOOM PUBLIC ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING

DATE: January 12, 2023

Chairman Cline called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Chairman Cline read the Public Notice Requirements.

The Notice Requirements called for in the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied. Said Notice was transmitted to the Hunterdon County Democrat, The Times (of Trenton), and the Star-Ledger. Said Notice was posted in the Delaware Township Municipal Building and filed in the Board Office; all on January 18, 2022.

OATHS OF OFFICE

The following Board Members were sworn into office by Attorney Goodell:

- 1) Mike Manley
- 2) Cullen McAuliff
- 3) Scott Milesnick

MEMBERS ATTENDANCE

Buchanan, Emmons, Fowler, Gilbreath, McAuliff, Milesnick, Warren, Cline, Manley (via Zoom)

MEMBERS ABSENT

None.

PROFESSIONALS/STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

- 1) Steve Goodell, Board Attorney
- 2) Jim Kyle, Board Planning Expert (via Zoom)
- 3) Rob O'Brien, Board Engineering Expert
- 4) Denise Filardo, Board Secretary

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

	BOARD OFFICERS
1	Chairperson
2	Vice Chairperson

ELECTION OF CHAIR

Administrative Officer Filardo accepted nominations for Chair. Ms. Gilbreath nominated Mr. Cline and Mr. McAuliff seconded the motion. There were no other nominations and nominations were closed. By voice vote, Member Cline was elected Chair, with his abstention.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Chairman Cline accepted nominations for Vice-Chair. Mr. Fowler nominated Mr. Emmons and Mr. Warren seconded the motion. There were no other nominations and nominations were closed. By voice vote, Mr. Emmons was elected Vice-Chair.

RESOLUTIONS/MEMORIALIZATIONS

1) ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE NOTICE FOR 2023 RESOLUTION NO. BOA-2023-0A

A motion was made by Mr. Fowler and seconded by Mr. Emmons to adopt Resolution No. BOA-2023-0A memorializing the 2023 Meeting Calendar. By voice vote all members were in favor.

2) APPOINTMENT OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS FOR 2023 RESOLUTION NO. BOA-2023-0B

A motion was made by Mr. Fowler and seconded by Mr. McAuliff to adopt Resolution No. BOA-2023-0B appointing the Board Professionals and Board Secretary for 2023. By voice vote all eligible members were in favor.

AREA OF EXPERTISE EXPERT FIRM Steve Goodell, Esq. Parker McKay Attorney Engineer Rob O'Brien, PE Van Cleef Engineering 2 James T. Kyle, PP, AICP Kyle, McManus Associates 3 Planner Secretary provided by Township Denise Filardo Delaware Township 4 New Jersey Advance Media Hunterdon County Democrat, Newspapers for publication New Jersey Advance Media 5 The Star-Ledger and of legal notices The Times of Trenton Publishing The Times of Trenton Corp.

APPOINTMENT OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS

MEETING MINUTES

1) OCTOBER 13, 2022

Eligible Members: Emmons, Fowler, Gilbreath, Manley, McAuliffe, Warren and Cline

A motion was made by Ms. Gilbreath and seconded by Mr. Emmons to adopt the October 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes. By voice vote all eligible members were in favor.

2) NOVEMBER 10, 2022

Eligible Members: Buchanan, Emmons, Gilbreath, Manley, McAuliffe and Cline

A motion was made by Ms. Gilbreath and seconded by Mr. McAuliffe to adopt the November 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes. By voice vote all eligible members were in favor.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

 ROGER AND HOLLY LOCANDRO Block 41, Lot 1.10 Sandbrook Headquarters Road Applicant is seeking an Extension of the Time of the protection period for the Final Major Site Plan and Subdivision Approval of Phase II pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-52 and an Extension of the Time within which to obtain a construction permit.

After Chairman Cline read the requested relief, Larry Wohl, Esq. a neighbor within 200 feet asked to speak. Mr. Wohl wanted to make sure that the Board was aware of the letter he sent questioning the sufficiency of public record for review timely, specifically all of the records from all of the hearings related to this matter. I did hear back from Mr. Goodell who stated that in the future all of the boxes of files could be made available, but they were not available on the third of this month and all of the records were not available

Mr. Goodell clarified for the record that what he communicated to Mr. Wohl was thank you for letting us know that you were not able to see all of the other boxes of files from the prior applications, but you were able to see this particular current application file and the prior application files could be made available and were being made available as of the time of receipt of your letter.

The applicant's attorney, John Lanza, Esq. stated that the current application file was available and the prior application files were available by appointment.

Chairman Cline stated that he believed those records were made available as of Monday, and there had been a miscommunication on exactly what was requested. Chairman Cline asked Secretary Filardo to confirm that the prior application files were made available. Secretary Filardo confirmed that the prior files were made available by appointment and to her knowledge there was no one who scheduled an appointment.

The following individual was sworn by Board Attorney Goodell and testified:

1. Thomas Decker, PE of Van Cleef Engineering, (Applicant's Engineering Expert)

Chairman Cline noted that Mr. Decker was previously accepted by the Board as an Engineering Expert.

Attorney Lanza stated that there are issues and matters beyond our control, as well as timeliness & cooperation of other agencies which has held us up.

Mr. Decker is here to explain what has been done and what will be done to finalize this application.

Mr. Decker's testimony included and was not limited to the following:

- Since we were here last for an Extension of time, our office evaluated two (2) of the structures for which the County requested improvements to be improved upon. The first is a culvert to be extended and the second is a culvert with parapets and guardrails.
- When our structural engineers inspected the culvert to be extended, they discovered that the culvert was in such disrepair that it could not be extended and in fact needs to be demolished and replaced.
- We then met the County Engineer on site and they then revised their approval to eliminate the work requested on the other culvert with the parapets in exchange for the Locandro's demolishing and replacing the entire culvert that was to be extended. This revised approval took time.
- Since the new culvert is being extended on both sides of the County road. It was necessary to have discussions with the property owner on the other side of the road to obtain approvals and an easement from the property owner.
- We then redesigned the plans, inclusive of stormwater management which are now awaiting approval of the Hunterdon County Engineer. Once the County approves, the plans will then be reviewed by NJDEP.
- We anticipate obtaining the necessary approvals within a year.

Mr. Fowler asked if they would have been able to move ahead on the other work on the application prior to the County approval.

Mr. Decker said it was best to get the bridge resolved and submit one consolidated plan. Mr. Fowler asked if they will be able to finalize the plans and obtain approvals within a year. Mr. Decker said yes.

Chairman Cline asked if there have been any other changes to the plans other than the culverts and Mr. Decker confirmed that there have been no other changes.

Attorney Goodell stated that Final Approval was only granted two (2) years ago.

There were no other questions from Board Members.

A member of the public, Roger Byram of Headquarters Farm, questioned whether there were enough members currently on the Board with knowledge of this application and asked if it wouldn't be beneficial for the Locandro's to present this complicated application again. Chairman Cline stated that there are at least five (5) current Board members who voted favorably on the application.

Board Attorney Goodell stated that the Applicant has applied for a nondiscretionary extension. If they can provide proof that they were unable to proceed with development because of delays from outside Government agencies and that they applied promptly for and diligently pursued the required approvals then the Board has no discretion but to grant a one (1) year extension.

There were no other questions from the public.

RELIEF GRANTED

One (1) Year Extension of Time.

The Board voted on the motion of Ms. Gilbreath, seconded by Mr. Emmons to grant a one (1) year extension of time. The vote record follows.

Roll Call: Locandro, Blk 41, Lot 1.10 – Extension of Time							
Member	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	No Vote	Absent	
Buchanan (Alt. 1)					Х		
Emmons (Vice Chair)		Х	Х				
Fowler			Х				
Gilbreath	Х		Х				
Manley			Х				
McAuliffe			Х				
Milesnick (Alt. 2)					Х		
Warren			Х				
Cline (Chair)			Х				

PUBLIC HEARINGS

 FRIENDS OF THE LOCKTOWN STONE CHURCH, INC. 323 Locktown Sergeantsville Road Block 8, Lot 1 Applicant is seeking a Use Variance to permit an Assembly Use along with Bulk Variance relief to construct a 702sf accessory building containing an ADA-accessible restroom, kitchenette and storage space.

Larry Wohl, Esq., introduced himself as the applicant's attorney and he distributed copies of the floor plan to Board Members.

It was confirmed that the applicant's notice was sufficient and Board Attorney Goodell confirmed that the Board is taking jurisdiction over the application.

Attorney Wohl provided an overview of the requested relief and a history of the property including its use over time.

The Locktown Stone Church was constructed in 1819, and has been listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Sites since 1974. The Wickecheoke Creek runs along the northern side of the property. The church was restored between 1987 and 1993, making it suitable for events. It is no longer used as a church, it is used for special events such as concerts, student performances, arts and crafts shows, lectures and elementary school programs, holiday gathers, weddings and funerals.

The Friends of the Locktown Stone Church, Inc. has been involved with the property since 1987. The current lease extends to 2049. The non-profit is responsible for maintenance and raises money for the continued use of the building.

The property is owned by the Township of Delaware and leased to the Friends of the Locktown Stone Church, LLC. In accordance with the lease which extends until 2049, the church/building shall be made available to the general public at designated times as may be prescribed by the Township of Delaware for uses that include, but are not limited to, historical education and interpretation, cultural events, and community meetings and events.

Friends of the Locktown Stone Church, Inc. would now like to expand its use of this site by constructing a one-story, 702 square foot carriage shed to provide a multi-purpose room with kitchenette, a utility room, storage closest, restroom facilities, and installing a 2000-gallon septic concrete holding tank. Drinking water would be supplied by a 550gallon underground water tank. Additional site improvements include ADA accessibility to the church and parking.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A-1	Letter from Historic Trust
Exhibit A-2	Delaware Township Ordinance No. 2022-05
Exhibit A-3	Lease between Delaware Township and Friends of the Locktown Stone Church.

The following individuals were sworn and testified during the hearing:

- 1) John Mark Zdepski, President of Friends of the Locktown Stone Church, (Applicant's President);
- 2) Tom Stearns, PP, AICP, CLA, LLA of Stearns Associates, (Applicant's Planning Expert);
- 3) Robert S. O'Brien, PE, CME, (Board's Engineering Expert)
- 4) Board Planner James T. Kyle, PP, AICP, (Board's Planning Expert)

Mr. Zdepski's testimony included and was not limited to the following:

- Review of the historical owners and uses of the property since 1819;
- Fundraising;
- The church building is expensive to heat and is not air conditioned, and as such event scheduling is targeted for the warmer months;
- The need for rest rooms;
- Parking lot capacity and overflow parking;
- Maximum occupancy;
- The proposed kitchen will be used for warming food that has previously been prepared offsite.

There were no questions from the public for Mr. Zdepsky.

Tom Stearns' provided his qualifications to the Board. The Board accepted Mr. Stearns' qualifications as a Planning Expert.

Chairman Cline asked if the applicant wants to bifurcate, if they want a vote on "D" variance first? Attorney Wohl stated that they do not want to bifurcate.

Mr. Stearns testimony included and was not limited to the following:

- An overview of preexisting conditions which include non-compliant front, side and rear yard setbacks and insufficient lot depth.
- Design Waivers requested for reduced number of parking spaces, screening and loading plan.
- No lighting is proposed except for flood lights on the new building which will be turned off no later than 10:00pm.
- Justification for granting the requested relief including special reasons and site suitability.
- Granting of the Use Variance will promote the general welfare because the subject site is particularly suitable to the proposed use. The Stone Church has been located at that site since 1819, and its adaptive reuse at that location, as an assembly hall that serves the public, promotes the general welfare.
- Granting of the Use Variance would promote Purposes (e), (g), (i), (j), and (l) of Zoning.
- The church and proposed carriage shed are uses consistent with surrounding properties, and the church has historically always been an assembly use.
- The special events contribute to the maintenance of the property and the church building.
- The new accessory structure is designed to look like an historic horse and wagon shed, while providing for needed accessible bathroom and meeting space.
- No detriment to public good; no impairment to the zone ordinance and Master Plan.

Questions from Board Members and Board Professionals initiated a discussion about parking which included the following:

- The number of and dimensions of parking spaces
- Average number of attendees at events and corresponding number of vehicles
- Overflow parking and permeability of the gravel parking area.

Mr. Kyle read from Ordinance Section 230-126F Activities permitted in stream corridors where there is no reasonable or prudent alternative.

(1) For Category One waterways, requests for exemptions or modifications shall be subject to the authority of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and not the Township of Delaware.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman Cline offered the following comments:

- There is an existing lease agreement;
- The Use does promote public welfare;
- Pre-existing nonconforming use with a special hardship;

• They are making the venue more modern, easier for people to attend and I feel very positive.

Mr. Fowler stated that he is in support of the application as it is beneficial to the community.

Mr. Warren did not have any comments.

Mr. McAuliffe echoed previous comments from Board Members and feels that the aesthetics are pleasing.

Mr. Milesnick agreed with previous Board Members' comments.

Ms. Gilbreath reminded the applicant to ensure that their Engineer adds all of the items discussed on the Site Plan.

Mr. Buchanan echoed Ms. Gilbreath's comment.

Mr. Manley offered that the organization and facility enhance living in Delaware Township and he thinks it is good for the Township that the Friends of the Locktown Stone Church do this.

RELIEF GRANTED

<u>"D(1)" Use Variance</u> to permit an assembly use at the site and to expand the use of the site by constructing a one-story, 702 square foot carriage shed to provide a multi-purpose room with kitchenette, a utility room, storage closest, and restroom facilities, installation of a 2000-gallon septic concrete holding tank and 550-gallon underground water tank, and providing accessible access to the church and additional parking.

<u>Bulk Variance</u> relief granted for the following pre-existing conditions: minimum lot size and lot depth; and minimum front, side and rear yard setbacks for the principal church building. In addition, the new accessary building qualifies for a hardship variance from the minimum setback requirements.

The Board voted on the motion of Mr. Fowler, seconded by Mr. Emmons to grant the requested Use and Bulk Variances. The vote record follows.

Roll Call: Friends of the Locktown Stone Church Blk 8, Lot 1 Use and Bulk Variances with conditions									
Member Motion 2nd Yes No Concur Absent									
Buchanan (Alt. 1)					Х				
Emmons (Vice Chair)		Х	Х						
Fowler	Х		Х						
Gilbreath			Х						
Manley			Х						
McAuliffe			Х						
Milesnick (Alt. 2)					Х				
Warren			Х						
Cline (Chair)			Х						

The Board took a brief recess at 9:28pm. The Board resumed the meeting at 9:38pm.

- 5) GTG Builders, LLC
 - Block 23, Lot 6

Applicant is seeking Use Variance, Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval to construct four, two-bedroom apartments, each having an attached garage in the rear of the proposed building; and any other associated variances as need arises.

This application commenced on August 11, 2022 and was continued on October 13, 2022, then continued to December 8, 2022. The applicant was not ready to proceed on December 8, 2022 and asked the Board to carry the application to the January 12, 2023 meeting. The application was carried to January 12, 2023 without need for further notice.

Board Chair read from agenda rested relief and dates.

On behalf of the applicant, Attorney Gruenberg stated that they essentially completed all of their testimony. The Board had some questions about the size of the building, so Mr. Finelli would like to testify for 5 to 10 minutes. Public can then ask questions.

Mr. Finelli was previously sworn and remains under oath.

Mr. Finelli presented a new exhibit into evidence.

EXHIBIT

A-9 Matrix depicting building and lot widths (as depicted on the tax map) in the neighborhood.

In response to previous requests from the Board, Mr. Finelli's testimony included and was not limited to the following:

- Even though we already complied with the bulk requirements, we have reduced the footprint of the building by removing one (1) foot from the front, one (1) foot from the back and four (4) feet from the building width.
- Further enhancements have been made to the Stormwater management plan

Questions were opened to the public pertaining only to Mr. Finelli's testimony

Matthew Morris 553 Rosemont Ringoes Rd. – asked what the impervious percentage is and Mr. Finelli responded that Township Code is 45% and the proposed is 44.5%.

There were no other questions from members of the public.

Public Comment was opened and limited to five (5) minutes per person.

The following Members of the public were sworn:

Marilyn Cummings 348 Rosemont Ringoes Rd. - Brought a map of the Sergeantsville Historic District identifying its boundaries. Ms. Cummings is not in favor of the application.

DTBOA+MINUTES+2023-01-12

A gentleman identified himself as "Red", stated that he is totally against this application because it is in the Historic District.

Liza Davis of 7 Holly Jill Lane – Delaware Township Chairperson Historic Advisory Committee reported that the committee met last night and could not agree on a position pertaining to this application. We provided observations in the form of a letter (attached herewith).

Matthew Morris of 553 Rosemont Ringoes Rd. – We welcome a build but this seems excessive. Environmental impact from previous owner. There are things buried under ground, concerns about new owners with children.

I have concern has as to how eight (8) bedrooms function on one sewer line. We want a neighborhood, not transient neighbors.

Roger Byrom of Headquarters Rd. We work very hard to have a "sense of place" around this special community. This apartment building is not contextual and does not fit with our sense of place. They also need to be sure about potential environmental problems.

Justin Mickey of 5 Bird Lane - I won't speak on aesthetics. The applicant just skated in on size. Parking garages will be filled up, stacked parking, there will not be much room around the building.

Valerie Tucci of 22 Sandy Ridge Rd. – Urged the Board not to grant these variances. This site is much more suited for a single-family house which would better reflect the character and nature of the community. This is not the most suitable thing to be there. Also concerned about possible environmental issues.

Ravenna Taylor of 43 Lambert Rd. – emphasize that we wouldn't have this application if this were a single-family home.

Concerned about environmental testing, it is old and not adequate for moving forward with this. There doesn't seem to be a benefit for Township and Sergeantsville. There will be stacked parking, increased traffic. Where will Amazon, UPS and FedEx trucks stop? I think Delaware Township needs more housing of this type but this is not site.

Amanda Aguzzi of 556 Rosemont Ringoes Rd. - We are a young couple who have children and live next door. I believe an updated environmental survey should be done and I urge town to find a way to have this done.

Charles Taylor 43 Lambert Rd. - I don't understand the benefit to the town, I don't think it fits in historically. The existing sewer system is very old, just hanging on. Is the applicant going to pay to upgrade?

Marilyn Cumming stated that she has petitions. Attorney Goodell stated that no Board can accept petitions.

There were no members of the public on Zoom.

Public Comment was closed at 10:27pm.

Attorney Gruenberg thanked the Board for their attention to this application and then provided a succinct and thorough summation reviewing the requested relief and highlighting the supporting evidence. He noted that they tried to work with the Board Professionals and made modifications to come up with the best plan. We ask that you act favorably on this application.

Chairman Cline asked Attorney Goodell read the "charge" for the Board.

Attorney Goodell reviewed the following:

- D(1) Use Variance and special reasons;
- The Planner provided his understanding and opinion based on the MLUL that the application enhances general welfare as it provides Affordable Housing.
- The Negative criteria is concerned with how this will affect neighbors, will there be any substantial detriment?
- This is not an inherently beneficial use so must use Medici and must show that the site is particularly suited for this use. You heard Mr. Gruenberg
- Positive criteria are the special reasons.
- You can't consider the type of ownership, you must treat both the same.

Attorney Goodell stated that he agrees with Mr. Gruenberg that you do not have jurisdiction over environmental issues, they are not of Land Use jurisdiction and are governed by the NJDEP.

Mr. Manley – the Affordable Housing unit is a big plus, however I don't agree with the architect, the scale is too large. I am not in favor.

Mr. Buchanan – No comments.

Ms. Gilbreath – I am kind of on Mike's side I think site has potential. The COAH unit is quite a concession. I think once built it will not have an adverse effect on the community. I am in favor.

Mr. McAuliffe – respect what builder has done in other parts of the Township. I do not support the application due to the density.

Mr. Emmons – I think the Village is the appropriate and proper place for this. Scale fits in, but I'm not sure the design fits. I think there should be more work done on architectural plans.

Mr. Warren – I am impressed with Mr. Finelli's efforts. I have concern about stress on sewer service, but see benefit of Affordable Housing unit. I support the application.

Mr. Fowler – Thanked Attorney Goodell for clarifying our jurisdiction regarding the environmental matter. Aesthetics, whether it fits in is highly subjective. I think Finelli did a great job. Concerned about the sewer capacity. The COAH unit, I think this was used just to slip this in. I asked for additional unit and answer was no. I have a big challenge weighing in favor.

Mr. Milesnick – I do not have a compelling interest to approve. Density is my issue, struggling with how this benefits the neighbors. I think the additional cars, from a density perspective, I do not support it.

Chairman Cline stated that he has been on this Board for forty (40) years and this is probably the most difficult decision he has had to make. Public good is for entire Delaware Township, but those who live in the immediate area are the most affected. However, the COAH unit is very important, it does provide varied housing, in an area with sewer & water and there are not many places where growth of this type could take place in the town. This is a difficult decision.

The Board voted on the motion of Ms. Gilbreath, seconded by Mr. Warren to grant the Use Variance with Conditions. The Use Variance was denied with three (3) members in favor and four (4) members opposed.

Roll Call: GTG – Motion to Grant Use Variance with Conditions							
Member	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	<mark>No Vote</mark>	Absent	
Buchanan (Alt. 1)					Х		
Emmons (Vice Chair)				Х			
Fowler				Х			
Gilbreath	Х		Х				
Manley				Х			
McAuliffe				Х			
Milesnick (Alt. 2)					Х		
Warren		Х	Х				
Cline (Chair)			Х				

PLANNING BOARD UPDATE

Secretary Filardo reported that due to technical difficulties, the December 6, 2022 Planning Board Meeting was cancelled. The Annual Reorganization Meeting will take place on January 17th.

PROFESSIONAL BILL LIST

Chairman Cline read the non-escrow item from the Bill List.

NON-ESCROW BILLS	INVOICE NO.	DATE	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Parker McKay, P.A. (Legal)			
General Board Matters	3154441	11/14/22	\$459.00
General Board Matters	3155746	12/12/22	\$34.00

The Board voted on the motion of Mr. Fowler, seconded by Ms. Gilbreath to approve payment of the non-escrow legal bills. The vote record follows.

Roll Call: Approval of Non-Escrow Bills								
Member	Motion	2nd	Yes	No	Not Eligible	Absent		
Buchanan (Alt. 1)					Х			
Emmons (Vice Chair)			Х					
Fowler	Х		Х					
Gilbreath		Х	Х					
Manley			Х					
McAuliffe			Х					
Milesnick (Alt. 2)					Х			
Warren			Х					
Cline (Chair)			Х					

Chairman Cline read the escrow items from the Bill List.

ESCROW BILLS	INVOICE NO.	DATE	<u>AMOUNT</u>					
Parker McKay, P.A. (Legal)								
Friends of Locktown Stone Church	3154440	11/14/22	\$51.00					
Friends of Locktown Stone Church	3155745	12/12/22	\$51.00					
GTG Builders	3154438	11/14/22	\$731.00					
Anastasio	3154439	11/14/22	\$578.00					
Locandro	3155747	12/12/22	\$68.00					
Van Cleef (Engineering)								
GTG Builders	3935016-6	12/01/22	\$748.00					
Kyle McManus Associates, LLC (Planning)								
Friends of Locktown Stone Church	3972	01/09/23	\$960.40					
GTG Builders	3975	01/09/23	\$319.50					

The Board voted on the motion of Mr. Fowler, seconded by Mr. Emmons to approve payment of the escrow bills. All were in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Manley and seconded by Mr. Emmons and the meeting was adjourned at 11:03pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deníse Fílardo

Planning and Zoning Board Secretary

These minutes were approved on March 9, 2023.