

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD  
OF THE BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES**

May 16, 2023

Chair Martin Kane read the Open Public Remote Meeting Notice published in the Daily Record on May 4, 2023: Adequate notice of this meeting was posted with the Borough Clerk and on the Bulletin Board on May 1, 2023 and made available to all those requesting individual notice and paying the required fee.

Start: 7:30PM

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Menard, Coppola, Berei, Russo, Ryan, Stern and Kane

Absent: Holliday, Sheikh, Horan

Also Present: Attorney, Steve Tombalakian, Engineer, Bill Ryden,

**REVIEW OF MINUTES:** Bethany Russo made a motion to adopt the minutes of the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mitchell Stern provided the second; the minutes were approved by voice vote of all eligible voters.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

Park Lakes Tennis Club, Inc.

Appl.#23-282

Nick Coppola made a motion to adopt the resolution of approval for Park Lakes Tennis Club, Inc. and a second was provided by Chris Ryan. The Board voted 6 - 0 to adopt the resolution of approval with Board members Kane, Russo, Stern, Berei, Coppola and Ryan voting in favor.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No one wished to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

New Application:

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

215 Boulevard

Major Site Plan

Signage, Improved Lot Coverage

Front Yard Setback

Appl. # 23-284

Blk. 55, Lot 58

R-AA Zone

Bethany Russo recused herself from hearing the application.

Lisa Hannan, the attorney representing St. Peter's, said they have requested six waivers. Mr. Ryden felt the waivers for right of way easements, location of structures within 200ft, floor plans, environmental impact statement, well head protection, and wetland delineation could be granted administratively. The Board deemed the application complete but reserved the right to request those items if found necessary.

Father Michael Muller, the rector at St Peter's Church said the church was celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year. As their centennial project the church decided to pay some attention to the grounds. They wanted to address their water management issues, create a new landscape plan, and add outdoor space to congregate. The front of the building was a natural meeting place for the community, the Academy for Children, and the parish. This plan will now give them the ability to install an ADA ramp for the lower part of the building.

The Board and the public had no questions for Father Michael.

John Thomas, a licensed landscape architect in the state of NJ shared sheet P1.30 already submitted. The improvement revolved around the undercroft (church basement). They are adding about 800sqft of patio space. They will install a low stone retaining wall for the ADA access ramp. There will still be stairs to access the undercroft and they are keeping the old stone retaining wall. The view of the church from the Boulevard will remain the same. You will not see the structure. The existing steps to the lower parking lot are in disrepair due to water running down the staircase during rainstorms. They will reconstruct them as close to the existing grade as possible. These steps will connect to the rectory and the new patio. They will add a new 6ft high fence to separate the memorial garden from the rectory driveway. They will reduce the width of the current driveway to 12ft. That area will be used to expand the existing rain garden. The existing garden is not part of the stormwater calculations. The new ramp wall height is 30" high. There would be handrails on both sets of steps and the ramp.

The chair opened the hearing for questions of Mr. Thomas. Martin Kane asked when the rain garden was installed. Brian Marshall, of 220 Morris Ave, said the basin was installed 2018 and planted in the spring of 2019. Exhibit A-1 consisted of 4 pages about the rain garden. The garden is above and beyond the stormwater management required. He shared a video of the runoff on the property during a rainstorm. It is low enough on the hill to catch water and reduce erosion. They want to expand the rain garden and eliminate the bridge that gives the nursery school children access to the playground. The existing garden has many native plants. They will be dug up, divided and reinstalled. Nick Coppola asked who maintained the garden. Mr. and Mrs. Marshall did with parishioners.

Chris Ryan asked what the dimensions for the energy dissipater in the rain garden were. Mr. Derosier said it was about 4ft wide. Jeff Derosier, a licensed engineer in the state of NJ, continued explaining the stormwater management on the site. The driveway area will be reduced. The rain from the house roof and driveway will go into the inlet at the end of the driveway. This is a standard bio retention treatment. Nick Coppola asked when the video was taken. It was before the rain garden was installed.

Mr. Kane asked if there were any additional rain garden questions. W. Ryden said he had no questions, but asked Mr. Marshall's presentation be made part of the record.

Jeff Derosier continued, currently water goes down the driveway, across the parking lot and into a pipe on Martin's Lane. We will install a series of pipes set in stone under the new patio to capture the water. The system will accommodate 4.4ft of rainwater. The catchment is 2x the new coverage. They will move the water into the pipes and spread the water over the area a little at a time rather than discharge at one point. Nick Coppola asked if they were going to remove the clear well. It will remain and be used as is. Martin Kane asked if there was a written maintenance plan. Mr. Derosier said they can provide a simple plan. Tom Menard asked why they weren't

using seepage tanks. The building is so close and there were a bunch of historic trees they wanted to save. This allows us to do stormwater management and the terrace in the same space. Bill Ryden found the plan acceptable.

John Thomas moved on to sheet P1.40 the Landscape and Lighting Plan dated 3/16/23. They are proposing low level lighting on the site. They will have lighting built into the retaining walls below the cap of the terrace, step lights for the steps and ramp to the terrace, 24" lights along the steps to the Boulevard and wall wash up-lights for the new sign. The lighting will operate from dusk to dawn, so people are aware of the church.

Martin Kane asked about the signs currently on the property. What will remain in addition to the new sign proposed. Mr. Marshall said the church would like to keep the rest of the existing signs. Our 4 red doors can make the entrance to the church confusing. They would like to keep the current bulletin board. Jeff Berei asked Mr. Marshall to explain the existing signage. They are proposing a new sign 10ft off the property line in the corner of the property. It is located outside the site triangle. The existing sign "A" is a single sided bulletin board giving the service times, liturgy, and rector's name. W. Ryden asked the size of the proposed sign. J. Thomas said it was 30sqft. J. Berei thought they were replacing sign "A" with the new sign. T. Menard thought the lighting should be on from dusk to 10pm. Could they override the timer for the few events that run later. Mr. Kane agreed with Mr. Menard. Sign "D" locates the office and parish hall at the side door. Sign "B" located left of the front door identifies the church entrance. Sign "C" is a small sign by the academy door to redirect people up the stairs to the front of the church. M. Mueller said they are all directional signs. You need to be in the parking lot to see them. The Board found the directional signs acceptable. Steve Tombalakian asked if they remove the bulletin board would they be adding any more information to the new sign. They will not be doing that. Martin Kane said, per Mr. Ryden, they needed to obtain a Soil Erosion Control Certificate. They have submitted their application to the Morris County Planning Board. Jeff Berei asked about the fence parallel to the memorial garden. John Thomas answered they propose a stained horizontal board fence. What was the material used on the terrace retaining wall façade? The proposed stone wall will be made of smaller stones of the same color as the existing with a bluestone cap. Mr. Thomas shared exhibit A-2 a rendering that showed the proposed wall. T. Menard asked the height to the top of the wall from the grade below. John Thomas said the most it will be is 46" so no guard rail is required. They need to meet the building code.

There were no questions from the public.

Chairman Kane asked the applicant to discuss the variances. The applicant was proposing an average front yard setback of 54ft verses the 114ft that is required. The new structure will be 22ft forward of the existing building. The building is not getting closer to the Boulevard. W. Ryden said the average front setback is 118.6ft not 114ft. The applicant needed to add the setbacks of those two residential structures on the left to the final plans. Mr. Ryden said the improved lot coverage was changing to 52.3%. Currently it is 51.2%, where only 20% is allowed. The project is having a minor impact on coverage, the planned stormwater mitigation will help with that. T. Menard said he could accept the increase in coverage because of all the stormwater management they were doing. Mr. Kane reminded us signs were not permitted in the zone. He thought the applicant should remove sign B. The applicant needed to provide the area of the directional signs

that would remain.

There was no public wishing to ask questions or make a comment on the application.

Tom Menard made a motion to approve the application with the conditions listed by the attorney for the board. Steve Tombalakian said the applicant was seeking preliminary and final site plan approval with 3 variances for signage, average front setback and improved lot coverage. The applicant will revise the plans to include the correct average front yard setback and sizes of the remaining signage, eliminate the information sign, provide a simple stormwater maintenance plan, apply for a soil erosion certification, get Morris County Planning Board approval, and place the lights on a timer so they go off at 10pm unless there is a night event. A second was provided by Nick Coppola. The board voted 6 – 0 to approve the application with members Kane, Menard, Stern, Berei, Coppola and Ryan voting in favor.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Master Plan Committee – Members of the committee were not present to provide an update.

Ordinance Committee – The committee met on Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No members of the public wished to make a public comment.

**Other Matters** – The Board had no additional matters to discuss.

Martin Kane made a motion to close the meeting at 9:22PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Shaw, Secretary