

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
November 27, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Hindle at 7:00 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

SALUTE TO FLAG

ROLL CALL

Board Members in Attendance:

Allen
Becker
Cook
Filler
Hindle
Hendrickson
John
Mueller
Panico
Villa
Izzo

| Member | 2023 Excused Absences | 2023 Unexcused Absences |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Allen | | |
| Becker | 1(9-11) | |
| Cook | 2(4-10, 11-13-recused) | |
| Filler | 1(6-12) | |
| Hendrickson | 1(8-28) | |
| Hindle | | |
| John | | |
| Mueller | 2(7-10, 8-28) | |
| Panico | 3(1-9, 5-22, 11-13) | |
| Villa | | |
| Izzo | 1(11-13- recused) | |

Others Present:

Attorney Joe Tauriello for Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger.

RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented for Board consideration.

TRC UPDATE

There was no TRC update.

ADJOURNMENTS OF ANY SCHEDULED HEARINGS OR MOTIONS

There were none.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no public hearings.

NEW BUSINESS

Readington Township School District

Capital Project Courtesy Review- Ground Mount Solar Arrays at Holland Brook School, Three Bridges School, Whitehouse School, and Readington Middle School

Kevin Settembrino, AIA was present on behalf of the Readington Township School District. Mr. Settembrino explained that ground mount solar arrays are proposed at Three Bridges School, Whitehouse School and Holland Brook School and solar canopies are proposed for Readington Middle School. Mr. Settembrino gave a brief presentation explained the proposal at each location as follows:

Three Bridges School

- Ground-mounted solar array comprising 420 panels totaling 200 KW (kilowatt) plus associated signage located along the eastern boundary of the property.
- Seven EV(electric vehicle) chargers within the parking lot located south of the school building.

The Board questioned where the electrical equipment would be located and if it would be tied in to the existing electrical system. Mr. Settembrino stated that the project has not been fully engineered at this time noting that the school will be obtaining a PPA (Power Purchase Agreement) with a solar company through the competitive contracting process in accordance with the school public contracts law.

The Board expressed concern about possible noise from the equipment.

The Board questioned if they had a manufacturer for the EV Chargers. Mr. Settembrino stated that it has not been determined at this time.

The Board questioned if any shielding was proposed for any possible noise pollution. Mr. Settembrino stated that they would be required to be in conformance with state statutes regarding noise.

The Board questioned the setback requirements.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Settembrino confirmed that fencing would be provided.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Settembrino stated that additional buffering could also be provided.

Whitehouse School

- Ground-mounted solar array comprising 310 panels totaling 175 KW plus

associated signage located along the western property boundary to the north of parking lot and bus lanes.

- Seven EV chargers along the eastern edge of the parking lot, southwest of the school building.

The Board questioned why a canopy was not considered. Mr. Settembrino stated that the ground mounted was most economical for the district.

The Board questioned the proposed signage. Mr. Settembrino stated that it will be informational signage.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Settembrino explained the reasons roof arrays were not proposed.

The Board questioned if they did a load analysis on the roofs or looked at timelines for replacement of roofs. Mr. Settembrino stated that there was no load analysis done.

The Board noted that the area at this site was wet and additional stormwater management features may be required.

Mr. Settembrino stated that as part of due diligence, LUA (Land Use Assessments) were done by an environmental company for all of the sites.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Settembrino explained how the project would be funded.

The Board questioned whether installing an overhead canopy instead would be less maintenance in the long run.

Holland Brook School

- Ground-mounted solar array comprising 580 panels totaling 275 KW plus associated signage located east of the school building and north of the baseball field.
- Seven EV chargers adjacent to the bus lane to the south of the school building.

The Board questioned if there were any concerns with the location of the ball field.

The Board questioned if anything was put underneath the ground mounted array. Mr. Settembrino confirmed that there is no concrete or impervious material placed underneath.

Readington Middle School

- Solar canopy array comprising 895 panels totaling 425 KW over the bus parking area located on the eastern portion of the property.
- Thirty-one EV chargers are also proposed within this parking area.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Settembrino confirmed that the project is not part of a grant or community solar project.

Mr. Settembrino stated that as part of their due diligence the district did land use assessments, easement title searches, electrical infrastructure analysis, preliminary geotechnical investigation, and underground utility reviews.

The Board questioned the cost savings to the Township. Mr. Settembrino stated that he did not have an aggregate number as it would change every year.

The Board suggested that they also consider doing an analysis of the roofs to determine the viability of roof mounted solar.

Chair Hindle read a portion of the memo provided by the Township Planners.

Chair Hindle opened the meeting to questions from the public.

Eric Zwerling stated that the existing solar panels meet 35% of the electric needs for the district and this project will bring it to 85%.

Steve Foster commended the school district for their efforts on this project and the potential for education of the students.

Mr. Mueller moved, and Mr. Hendrickson seconded, a motion to confirm that the Readington Township School District capital improvement project was not inconsistent with the Master Plan. The roll call vote follows:

| Member | Motion | 2nd | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent | Not Eligible | Recused |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Allen | | | X | | | | | |
| Becker | | | X | | | | | |
| Cook | | | X | | | | | |
| Filler | | | X | | | | | |
| Hendrickson | | X | X | | | | | |
| Hindle | | | X | | | | | |
| John | | | X | | | | | |
| Mueller | X | | X | | | | | |
| Panico | | | | | | | | |
| Villa | | | | | | | X | |
| Izzo | | | | | | | X | |

Readington Township

Block 21.12 Lot 25-17 James Street-Request for Amendment to Map and Resolution of Prior Preliminary & Final Subdivision Approval

Mr. Mueller and Mr. Panico recused themselves from the application.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien explained that it was determined there was an error made in the original subdivision plan because the existing markers on the property were not located when the plan was done. He stated that to correctly amend the plan, everything is shifted 10 feet to the west. He confirmed that the lot areas did not change and that the structures are not affected.

Chair Hindle stated that Attorney Drill prepared a resolution in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Filler moved, and Mr. Hendrickson seconded a motion memorializing the resolution for Readington Township amending the subdivision map for 17 James Street. The roll call vote follows:

| Member | Motion | 2 nd | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent | Not Eligible | Recused |
|-------------|--------|-----------------|-----|----|---------|--------|--------------|---------|
| Allen | | | X | | | | | |
| Becker | | | X | | | | | |
| Cook | | | X | | | | | |
| Filler | X | | X | | | | | |
| Hendrickson | | X | X | | | | | |
| Hindle | | | X | | | | | |
| John | | | X | | | | | |
| Mueller | | | | | | | | X |
| Panico | | | | | | | | X |
| Villa | | | X | | | | | |
| Izzo | | | X | | | | | |

Mr. Mueller and Mr. Panico returned to the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Chair Hindle reviewed the old business and provided updates on the following:

1. Sign Ordinance-Ongoing
2. Municipal Resiliency Planning-Ongoing
3. New Stormwater Regulations-Ongoing
4. Tree Ordinance-Ongoing
5. Application Checklists-Ongoing

Chair Hindle stated that she received a note from the Director of Land Use Christina Schwartz that the existing tree ordinance is in conformance with the state ordinance.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Hindle stated that a document regarding the MS4 Permit was provided to the Board for their review.

Chair Hindle also advised that the Solberg Hunterdon Airport public involvement planning meeting was rescheduled to December 6th at 7:00 pm at the Readington Middle School.

It was discussed that the review of the zoning along Main Street in Whitehouse Station and

Three Bridges will be a goal for 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Panico moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Lehberger
Planning Board Secretary