

**CLAYTON PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 28, 2022**

John Alice swore in new member Rachel Wise

The regular meeting of the Clayton Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 PM. Invocation was given and we had a Salute to the Flag.

SUNSHINE LAW

The public notice of this meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act of 1975 has been properly given in the following manner:

- A. Posting written notice on the Official Bulletin Board in the Municipal Building.
- B. Mailing written notice to the South Jersey Times and the Franklinville Sentinel.
- C. Filing written notices with the Clerk of the Borough of Clayton.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Abate, Culver, Miller, B. Saban, T. Saban, Thomas, Vondran, Wise, Moorhouse
Absent: Bianco, Chapes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were not ready.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

St. Paul's Baptist Church – Block 604, Lot 1 – Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval
James Carter, Esquire of Hoffman DiMuzio appeared on behalf of the applicant. They are asking to put a two-story addition on to the existing church. There are some bulk issues. We have some witnesses here tonight. One is Greg Simonds, P.E., Greg Straga, the builder, and Deacon Alfred Leigh. John Alice, Solicitor, swore in all three witnesses along with the board's professionals, Stan Bitgood, P.E., and Paul Breier, P.P.

Greg Simonds, P.E., advised they are asking for preliminary and final site plan approval. The site is approximately three acres and there is an existing two story church building. It has 2,088 square feet. They are proposing to construct a 1,381 square foot two story addition along with a 501 square foot court yard. They are also asking for an alternate approval of 789 square feet if we intend to go for NJDEP approvals. The court yard is within their footprint. If they want to make it a little bigger or square it off, they have to go to the State for approvals.

Building coverage is 2.8 of the site. Impervious coverage is 11.7% of the site. Eighty eight point three of the site is pervious, grass, and woods. Building mounted lighting is proposed. No other major improvements on the site are proposed. There are no

improvements to the parking lot other than signage which is required by the County. There is a sidewalk proposed out front of the new addition.

Forty one parking spaces are provided where 34 spaces are required. They are asking for a variance from the front yard setback. The existing building is 8.8 feet and 9.3 feet from the front line. The proposed addition is 11.3 feet and above .2 feet from the front line. The required front yard setback is 20 feet and additional testimony will be provided for the variance as well.

Mr. Carter added that the variance they are seeking is for the front setback. They addressed Stan Bitgood's letter dated February 10, 2022. They are within the 20' setback. Brief discussion took place about meeting the required setback. There are wetlands behind the building for the majority of the property. They can't go back any further. They also need the hallway of the new addition to tie into the existing building. John Alice, Solicitor, asked that they display the plans to the public. The above was repeated for the audience.

In regards to drainage for the court yard, they will use a pump so it can be pumped out. They will discharge on-site. Stan Bitgood, P.E. asked that they slope it away from the building.

Mr. Carter indicated that they will add the deed book and page of the proposed easements to the plans upon execution and they will provide copies of the executed easement agreements with the County. They will also comply with the spot shots for grading be added at 10 feet perpendicular to all foundation walls of the addition.

There are issues with parking. They will comply with items C and D of Mr. Bitgood's review letter. They are asking for a waiver for the parking lot to be 20 feet from a public street. Mr. Simonds added that it is an existing parking lot. There are wetlands being the parking which is close to it and the buffers. They can't move the parking lot back without getting additional approvals from the NJDEP and creating additional substantial cost to the project. They need 38 spots and they currently have 41 spots. If they push the entire parking lot to meet the 20 foot requirement they will lose approximately 17 spots which will put them below what is required. They are also looking to configure the lot so it meets code. The County granted an urban special exemption waiver for the parking lot and the easement along the front. We are proposing one-way circulation with the entrance closest to the church with the exit at the far end with a right turn only. In regards to sidewalks, they are proposing to work the sidewalk around the tree. It will not disturb the existing tree.

In regards to the stormwater management, the application itself states that the disturbance will be 17,099 feet and it should read 1,799 feet. It was a typographical error. Currently it drains into a ditch at the rear of the property from West Academy St. and West Clinton. The condition was observed today and it was dry. There is approximately 282 feet from the rear of the existing church to the property line and 88 percent of the property is woods and/or wetlands to absorb the additional runoff. They are proposing approximately 2,000

sq. ft. of additional impervious space. The State's stormwater regulations require when you add over 10,800 sq. ft. of additional impervious to stormwater management. He spoke with Greg Sawyer regarding any drainage issues associated with this property and he was not aware of any. They feel there will be minimum impact on the surrounding properties and the roadways. They are not aware of any emergency or fire access issues. They can have access from Aura Road and from the existing parking lot. There is a fire hydrant in the existing parking lot as well. There is no fire suppression system proposed. The Board Solicitor asked the secretary if anything was received from the Fire Official and he was advised no. John Alice asked that the applicant communicates with the Fire Official to make sure there is access, etc... The Board Chairman agreed.

They believe that landscaping will be an improvement at the site. They agree to work with the board's professionals. It is the intention of the church to match the existing façade with the stucco. They want to do some siding and will let the builder address it. Brief discussion took place about the site plan and surrounding areas.

Greg Straga who is the builder involved in this project spoke. Mr. Straga has a degree in engineering and has worked all his life in the construction industry since 1977. Mr. Straga has worked on a larger scale of doing this type of work. He is not a professional engineer or architect. A professional architect did do the drawings.

In regards to the bulk variance they are in the existing setback for the proposed addition. It is not feasible to push it back approximately eight feet because there is wetlands buffer behind them. The State of NJ required them to move an additional distance forward. There is no moving backwards and they can't move forward. They had the building redesigned in its current configuration. They made some design changes to that design decreasing the court yard to make the final adjustment to fit the NJDEP requirements.

They wanted to be able to connect the two buildings on both levels. The upper level has a foyer in the front then the inaudible through the building and the sanctuary on the way back. There is also a small strip along the back where the Pastor has his small office. There is a very small spot for his Administrative Assistant. The only place they could branch off was off to the new building is in the foyer. They pushed back as far as they can in that foyer. They can't move back because they will cut off their access between the two buildings.

As part of constructing the building, the foyer currently has a stairwell that goes down to the basement in the existing building. That stairwell is not code compliant. They are going to block that stairwell off and have a corridor that ties to the foyer and uses a good portion of the foyers width to make the connection and then goes back at the end of that corridor is a stairwell that goes down in the new building. Mr. Straga was asked to repeat it and show it to the audience on the plan. There will be a ramp on the right side of the building that comes up to the front door. Currently there is no access to the lower level. When this is built, the sidewalk that extends across the new addition which is parallel to Aura Rd, it will turn and go back and form a handicap compliant ramp that will go down (the left side of the addition) and across the back of the building in the courtyard. Once

you are at the level you are in the courtyard. They couldn't have a handicap ramp that switched back and went into the lower level wall because that's where the bathrooms are. Mr. Carter asked that what they are proposing to build here is ADA compliant and that a person in a wheelchair would be able to get from the parking lot to the lower level of the addition and also have access to the lower level of the existing building. Mr. Straga also talked about the parking. John Alice advised that it may be better for the Deacon to speak about this.

Deacon Alfred Lee has been a member of St. Paul's since 1964. The existing building was there and he attended services in there since the age of 18. He was there up until the pandemic and now he is back. There is an option to attend virtual services. He did that himself during the pandemic now they are back to in person. He also makes use of the downstairs when there are no services. He was 18 when he first joined St. Paul's and he is 76 now. What he could do then he can't do now. They don't have a lot of young people in the congregation. We need restrooms upstairs and more space. They need space for classes and activities also. He loves the current facility but it was built 112 years. We are asking for an expansion to provide more comfort and to be able to do more than what we are doing. There is also a plan to bring in additional people evangelistically and hopefully bring in more people. This additional space will provide for what they need to do.

John Alice, Solicitor, asked pre-pandemic if parking was adequate, inadequate, or more than adequate and what do you think it's going to be going forward. Deacon Lee answered there is enough parking when people park in the street. John Alice added that they are looking to keep everyone on the lot. There are usually just a couple cars parked on the street. The lot is not full but people like to try and park in front of the doors as opposed to down the end of the parking lot. Mr. Carter asked if parking was not allowed in the street would the current parking lot be adequate and Deacon Lee responded yes.

Stan Bitgood, P.E. asked that the applicant or engineer provided the documentation from NJDEP in which they directed that the building be moved further from the wetlands. It is a perfect justification as to where the building is ending up but he doesn't have any documentation. Mr. Carter advised that he agrees to provide that documentation and believes there are emails as well. Mr. Bitgood asked if the stormwater drainage will drain away from the court yard and he was advised yes. Stan Bitgood would also like the architect to confirm that there will be a required egress for the building that it would be acceptable to have a pumped drainage court yard rather than a direct free run off. If you have people trying to exit in a hurry and if the pump is working it's a problem. They will have the architect provide it. Stan added that there are three doors there and if they are egress points it needs to be safe for everyone if the pump doesn't work. He doesn't see that the stripes can't be extended to the 18 feet in regards to parking which will help channel the one way traffic through it.

Stan feels the parking is substantially adequate. Stan confirmed with Greg Simonds that they are taking the sidewalk away from the curb. Greg Simonds responded yes. Stan added that they do need the Fire Official to weigh in.

Paul Breier, P.P. added that everything in is letter has been addressed. He just wants to confirm a few things. Item #5 he asked that new stripes be put down in addition to the ADA spaces being compliant. He questioned about the façade because both stucco and siding was mentioned. Mr. Carter responded that a decision has not been made. This approval if they get it is going to have certain costs associated with it and that will determine how much funding is available stucco v. siding. The goal is for the addition to be consistent with the existing building as much as possible. Joe Abate added that the church can make the decision.

Joe Abate asked about the parking lot waiver. Mr. Carter indicated it was related to the 20 foot setback on the parking lot and with that they will lose 17 spaces. Mr. Carter advised that is correct. Joe also asked if they are approved tonight when are they going to be begin construction and when will it end. Greg Straga answered that they have to get through the estimating part. The materials are difficult but he is available to do the job. Joe Abate also added that there are a lot of people that attend church and that the only concern he has is he hopes that they will have a parking lot attendant to especially help with the people who park their cars over on the 55 and over side. That is really the only concern he has. Maybe the attendant can encourage people to park in the parking lot. Bill Culver asked if they are going to just stay with the existing parking lot and they were advised yes. They added that it is going to be re-striped. He asked if the court yard is going to be pavers. It's going to be concrete walls and concrete slab with a trench drain to pick up the rain water and divert it.

Sue Miller asked about them adding three bathrooms and they have a private pump system right now. It is sized to handle the three additional bathrooms or can you connect to a pipe on West Clinton. They responded that they did coordinate with the Public Works Superintendent to make sure all connection fees are good and to discuss the service of the pump and the lines which could increase the pump that is required. She was just looking at the cost since everything has increased 30-40% over the normal cost. Stan Bitgood, P.E. suggested that the testimony that the non simultaneous use would indicate that the sewage use should not increase.

MOTION TO OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

M/ Vondran, S/ T. Saban

Ayes: Unanimous

Jeffery Scholz – 272 West Academy St. – He has lived across from the St. Paul's facility for over 30 years. They have always been a great neighbor. He can also attest to the personal and professional character of Mr. Straga which is impeccable. He hopes that the board will vote favorably in regards to this application.

Laura Hampton – 36 Maple St. – She asked if she understanding that they cannot drive the vehicle down behind the back of the new thing to drop off handicapped people to get into the new addition. Do we have to walk them back there. Currently there is no ADA access to the lower level. There is a ramp on the outside of the existing first level. We

are proposing a ramp on the outside of the proposed addition to get to the lower level. He referred to the site plan. She understands but thinks that's a long way to push a loved one in a wheelchair. John Alice asked if there is better access now and she said no.

MOTION TO CLOSE TO THE PUBLIC

M/ Vondran, S/ Miller

Ayes: Unanimous

MOTION TO APPROVE PRELIMINARY & FINAL SITE PLAN APPROVAL – ST. PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH - BLOCK 604, LOT 1

M/ Miller, S/ Vondran

Ayes: Abate, Culver, Miller, B. Saban, T. Saban, Thomas, Vondran, Wise, Moorhouse

MOTION TO OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

M/ Miller, S/ T. Saban

MOTION TO CLOSE TO THE PUBLIC:

M/ Vondran, S/ Thomas

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

DISCUSSION:

None.

RESOLUTIONS:

#06-2022 – Granting Preliminary Site Plan Approval – Clayton Healthcare, LLC

M/ T. Saban, S/ Vondran

Ayes: Abate, Culver, Miller, B. Saban, T. Saban, Thomas, Vondran, Moorhouse

Abstain: Wise

#07-2022 – Granting Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval – Station Drive, LLC/Fairview Development

M/ T. Saban, S/ Vondran

Ayes: Abate, Culver, Miller, B. Saban, T. Saban, Thomas, Vondran, Moorhouse

Abstain: Wise

ADJOURNMENT

M/ Vondran, S/ Miller

Ayes: Unanimous

Submitted by,



Debbie Schlosser

Planning Board Secretary