

TOWN OF FARMINGTON
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

December 13, 2021

Present for the online web conference meeting was Chair Schoenhorn, Commissioners Callahan, Llewellyn, Nadim, Phillips and Alternate Commissioners Brockelman, Marsh and Walsh. Town Planner Rutherford, Sr. Assistant Town Planner Cyr and Clerk Michaud were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in the Development Conference Room were Town Planner Rutherford, Sr. Assistant Town Planner Cyr and Clerk Michaud. All others were present online.

Chair Schoenhorn appointed Alternate Commissioner Marsh to vote in place of absent Commissioner Carrier.

Secretary Callahan read the legal notice into the record.

PUBLIC HEARING

Town of Farmington – 10 Monteith Drive

Town of Farmington application for variance to maximum building height from 35 feet to 47 feet for new high school building at 10 Monteith Drive, R40 zone. Attorney Kenneth Slater, Halloran & Sage, represented the Town of Farmington. He introduced the project and stated the high school is a vital part of the community and the Town would like to modernize the school. Ryszard Szczypek, TSKP, reviewed details of the site plan for the new high school including the new location of tennis courts, and existing buildings to be saved; the 900 wing and 1928 building. The new school will have one entrance and the compact design creates a more efficient use of space and provides improved security. Mr. Szczypek showed the portions of the building that will exceed the height limit of thirty-five feet. Kimberly Wynne, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, presented the design needs and requirements of the high school, how the existing school does not meet the current needs and then how the new building design will improve learning. Meg Guerrera, Chair of the High School Building Committee, spoke on behalf of the Committee, the process to get to this point and how the new building design is the only solution that addresses the statement of needs. Attorney Slater spoke to safety needs and the hardship narrative dated November 23, 2021. The Board asked why it was necessary to have the additional height in the area(s) proposed, rather than a larger footprint that is just two stories tall. Mr. Szczypek responded by reviewing the plans and how they meet the needs assessment for the new school and further discussed the inefficiencies and building sprawl when limited to the two-story height. Mr. Szczypek further noted the compact footprint is essential to allowing the new building to be constructed while the existing building remains in full use. The Board did not have additional questions after the detailed presentation.

Sam Reisner, 41 Main Street, spoke in support of the application.

Rafeena Bacchus Lee, 3 Hamilton Way, spoke in support of the application.

Beth Kintner, 24 Farmstead Lane, spoke in support of the application.

Emily Kaliney, 30 High Street, spoke in support of the application.

Ned Statchen, 6 Bella Lane, spoke in support of the application.

Jessica Lister, 8 Candlewood Lane, spoke in support of the application.

Peter Jones, 21 Briarwood, spoke in opposition to the application expressing concern with the height and location of the building.

Greg DellaBianca, 19 Briarwood, spoke in opposition to the application expressing concern with the height.

Public correspondence received for the record prior to the meeting in support of the application from Marcus Fairbrother, 12 Candlewood Lane, Chris Fagan, 4 Longridge Court, Bridget Moss, 24 Basswood Road.

The Commission asked the height of the existing school. Mr. Szczypek responded the 1928 portion of the existing school building is the same height of the new building.

The public hearing closed at 8:09 p.m.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Phillips/Nadim) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Town of Farmington application for variance to increase the maximum building height from 35 feet to 47 feet for new high school building at 10 Monteith Drive, R40 zone as presented and on file in the Planning Office.

Members voting in favor of the application felt there was substantial show of hardship, there is a small percentage of the proposed building subject to the request for variance and given the layout of the site this is the optimum configuration of the building.

NEW BUSINESS

2022 Meeting Schedule

There was a brief discussion about a potential scheduling conflict for the March meeting and budget workshops but that the Board's meetings through April will likely continue to be held online only.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Callahan/Llewellyn) it was unanimously

VOTED: To adopt the 2022 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting schedule as submitted.

MINUTES

Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion made and seconded (Callahan/Nadim) it was

VOTED: To approve the October 18, 2021 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting minutes.

Chair Schoenhorn thanked the Commission members leaving the Board for their dedication and service.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m. (Phillips/Callahan)

SJM