

**Special Meeting of
ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW
Barrington, Rhode Island
April 3, 2014**

APPLICATION #3744

MINUTES OF THE MEETING:

At the call of the Chairman, Thomas Kraig, the Board met with Paul Blasbalg, Peter Dennehy, Elizabeth Henderson and David Rizzolo.

Also present were Solicitor Andrew Teitz, Building Official Robert Speaker, and secretary Audra Raleigh.

At 7:07 P.M. Mr. Kraig called the meeting to order.

Continuation of application #3744, St. Andrew's School, 63 Federal Road, Barrington, RI 02806, applicant and owner, for permission to provide rehabilitation to existing dormitory building and 5170 square feet proposed addition with associated grading, driveway, parking, storm water systems and utility expansion, Assessor's Plat 16, Lot 2, RE District, 63 Federal Road, Barrington, RI 02806, requiring relief for being within 100 feet of wetlands/waterbody.

Present: Sam Bradner, Birchwood Design Group, 46 Dike St, Providence, RI
Alan Nunes, Director of Facilities, St. Andrew's School, 63 Federal Road, Barrington, RI
Paul Carlson, architect, InSite Engineering Services, 1539 Fall River Ave, Seekonk, MA
Joseph Caldeira, Vision3 Architects, 225 Chapman Street, Providence, RI
Anthony DeSisto, DeSisto Law Associates, 450 Veteran's Parkway, East Providence, RI

The Board questioned the purpose of the need for additional space; Mr. Nunes replied that there are currently 25 students who can be housed in the dormitory (Bill's House) and they are looking to bring that figure up to 40 student beds. Currently, student housing is spread around the campus and they are trying to consolidate the housing, as well as allow opportunity to renovate the existing dormitories as needed. The intent is not to increase housing capacity, but the effect of adding spaces to Bill's house will be to leave available habitable units in other, older dorms which are being vacated with the move to Bill's House, but can be used either in an emergency, or to house students while other dorms are rehabilitated.

Mr. Carlson gave a brief overview of the 62 acres of the school's campus, noting that "Bill's House" is 9,600 sf., with a proposed addition of 8,000 sf. (4,000 each floor); the campus has 75 parking spaces. The project (as it relates to the wetlands) was approved by DEM. Mr. Carlson presented a slideshow, pointing out differences in elevation as well as wetland and buffer area (area was previously disturbed). There is a bio-retention area that is proposed to handle post construction runoff and it is actually less area than they have now for this purpose. He explained that they have many systems in place to handle

drainage in a more efficient way than now; capturing all of the new runoff.

Mr. Caldeira noted that the current building does not have space for new students. Their plan is to relocate existing student population into one building, which will also accommodate faculty and new students as well. This plan will allow for better management of the students. The existing building is 30 years old and needs updating in order to meet/exceed competing schools and to accommodate a larger student population.

Mr. Caldeira also noted that they looked at different options for the addition, but could not move the building forward out of the wetlands because they wanted to keep the parking they currently have and create an entrance for the building. They could not push the building back due to the sloping land. The Board questioned why the faculty entrance area could not be utilized for additional sleeping rooms, and he explained that the faculty needed internal access to the sleeping rooms, they needed to provide windows for daylight for the dorm rooms, and if they took away that whole “entrance area” and moved it forward, they would lose the handicap parking spaces and it would have an impact on ADA requirements.

The existing footprint of the building is 4,700 sf.; the proposed addition is 2,760 sf, bringing the total footprint of the building to 7,460 sf. The total square footage of the building is 17,607 (including the second floor). There is a patio on the back and common area inside. The common area has stairs that go directly outside and are needed as a means of egress. The school is willing to reduce/remove the stair tower to meet the Board’s wishes. Currently, the stair tower would need 9’ of relief from the wetlands setback.

Jim Meehan, CFO, St. Andrew’s School, was in the audience and spoke in favor of this application. Mr. Meehan spoke about national statistics related to enrollment, as well as noting that the current dorms are sub-standard by today’s guidelines (old, not handicap accessible). The school has a current capacity of 74 students, and would like to increase the capacity to 89 students. Average enrollment is around 58 students, while current enrollment is 64 students. The mission of the school is to enhance life; he encouraged the Board to look at the big picture—to have a thriving school in the town of Barrington.

The public portion of the hearing closed at 8:34 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Rizzolo made a motion to approve this application with the conditions that they adhere to the recommendations of the Conservation Commission (attached). Mr. Dennehy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously (5-0).

DISCUSSION:

The Board members stated they were in favor of approving this application for the following reasons:

- The addition to the dormitory (in relationship to the total property) is minimal.
- The applicant agrees to the conditions recommended by the Conservation Commission.
- The storm water runoff has been managed.

REASON FOR DECISION:

It was the judgment of the Board that the standards in Section §185-69 have been met: A) that the hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is due to the unique characteristics of the subject land or structure and not to the general characteristics of the surrounding area, and is not due to an economic

disability of the applicant; B) that the hardship is not the result of any prior action of the applicant and does not result primarily from the desire of the applicant to realize greater financial gain; C) that the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of this chapter or the comprehensive Plan; D) that the relief to be granted is the least relief necessary. Additionally, the standards for a dimensional variance set forth in Section §185-71 have been met because the applicant has proved that the hardship to be suffered by the owner, absent granting the relief, would amount to more than a mere inconvenience.

ADJOURN:

There being no other business, Mr. Blasbalg moved to adjourn at 9:49 P.M. Mr. Rizzolo seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Audra Raleigh, Secretary
Thomas Kraig, Chairman

cc: Andrew Teitz, Solicitor