

READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
March 8, 2021

The Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Duffy 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.

VICE CHAIR DUFFY ANNOUNCED THAT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE EXECUTIVE ORDERS SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR AND IN AN EFFORT TO FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES RECOMMENDED BY THE CDC, THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY FOR ALL BOARD MEMBERS, BOARD PROFESSIONALS, APPLICANT AND APPLICANT'S TEAM, ANY INTERESTED PARTIES AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO VIEW MEETINGS LIVE USING WEBEX WHICH ALLOWS THEM TO "RAISE A HAND" AND CONTRIBUTE WITH VOICE AND VIDEO DURING THE PUBLIC PORTIONS OF THE MEETING. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO ARE CALLING IN BY PHONE WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE WHEN CALLED UPON TO SPEAK.

ROLL CALL

Board Members in Attendance:

Albanese, J.

Cook, J.

Duffy, E.

Filler, C.

Fort, B.

Mueller, A.

John, C.

Rohrbach, T.

Hindle, J.

Board Members Absent

Allen, J.

Monaco, R.

Others Present:

Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Esq., Board Planner Michael Sullivan, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, Board Environmental Consultant Jack Szczepanski, Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman, Board Aviation Consultant Nick Brown and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

MINUTES

Mr. Mueller recused. Ms. Filler moved, and Mr. Cook seconded a motion to approve the February 22, 2021 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented for Board consideration.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ordinance Referral

Ordinance# 02-2021

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 148 of the Land Use Ordinance of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey pertaining to Stormwater Management.

Ms. Rohrbach noted a minor typographical error.

Mr. Cook moved, and Ms. Rohrbach seconded, a motion to advise the Township Committee that the Board finds Ordinance #02-2021 as amended to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albanese			X					
Allen						X		
Cook	X		X					
Filler			X					
Fort			X					
John			X					
Mueller			X					
Duffy			X					
Monaco						X		
Rohrbach Alternate #1		X	X					
Hindle Alternate #2			X					

PUBLIC HEARING

Solberg Aviation Company

Appl# PB18-014- Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan- Paving and Rehabilitation of Runway and associated improvements
 Block 56 Lots 3 & 6

Mr. Albanese and Ms. Fort recused themselves from the application and left the meeting.

Board Attorney Drill stated that on February 22, 2021 the Board retained an aviation planning consultant, Nick Brown from Crawford Murphy & Tilly. Mr. Brown provided an overview of his education, work experience and professional expertise. The Board accepted Mr. Brown as an expert witness.

The applicant's attorney Martin Newmark questioned if Mr. Brown had any New Jersey experience. Mr. Brown sated that he had done work with Teterboro Airport.

Mr. Brown was sworn in for testimony.

Vice-Chair Duffy explained that they would resume where they left off at the last meeting with questions from the public for the Applicant's engineer Mr. Yap.

John Kalinich, Monfort Lane asked for clarification on the sponsorship for the project. Mr. Yap explained that the project is 90% funded by the DOT (Department of Transportation) and the applicant/owner would be responsible for the remaining 10%. Mr. Kalinich questioned if the grants were for the planning or construction. Mr. Yap stated that there are three grants for both the design and construction. Mr. Kalinich asked Mr. Yap for some additional clarifications on the plans, the type of aircraft that could utilize the airport and the size of the runway protection zones. Mr. Kalinich also questioned if the coordinates of the runway end points align with the center line of the existing runway. Mr. Yap confirmed that the survey is based upon the center line of both ends of the runway. Mr. Kalinich also noted a deviation in the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) document and the plans regarding the runway width. Mr. Yap noted that it was accepted by the DOT (Department of Transportation).

John Broten, Dogwood Drive questioned if Mr. Yap had ever been on a case where a Planning Board member had to recuse themselves during the hearing process. Mr. Yap confirmed that he had.

Michele Jaunarajs, Pulaski Road questioned the environmental impacts of the proposal. It was noted that the applicant's environmental consultant would address that.

Diana Schulze, Thor Solberg Road questioned why it is necessary to pave the turf portion of the runway for safety. Mr. Yap explained that having a continuous surface provides consistency and an added level of safety.

Barbara Nastro, Glenmont Road questioned how much additional lighting would be added. It was noted that this was discussed at length at the last meeting.

Doug Dole, Minsi Road questioned how often the existing turf area is used for airplane takeoff or landings. Mr. Yap noted that he did not know. Mr. Dole also expressed concern with planes potentially taking off and coming in at a lower altitude.

Carolyn Fimbel, Forty Oaks Road questioned how the water runoff would be handled. Mr. Yap confirmed that there will not be a change in the runoff as a result of the project.

Michele Jaunarajs, Pulaski Road questioned the impact of construction vehicles using the Township Roads. Mr. Yap explained that since the last meeting they had a discussion with the Board's traffic engineer, and it was determined that the suggested traffic route for construction vehicles would be to utilize Readington Road to Thor Solberg Road.

Nick Brown, the Board's aviation consultant requested clarification that the proposed end of the paved runway section as it will be built coincides with the location of the currently published arrival threshold of Runway 4. Mr. Yap stated that there is a difference of 735

feet. In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Yap confirmed that this would not alter the airport safety zone.

Mr. Brown questioned if the FAA runway protection zone was also analyzed. Mr. Yap stated that it was not analyzed because they did not move the location of the end of the runway. Mr. Yap confirmed that both runway protection zones are on airport property.

Mr. Yap stated that he reviewed the grading at the end of the runway with the Board's planner Michael Sullivan after the last meeting and confirmed that there would not be any drops greater than two feet.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan confirmed that there was no additional relief needed for the runway grading.

Mr. Yap explained that the existing plans do not account for any stockpiling or spreading out of any soils that are excavated from the project.

Bill Romaine, the Applicant's environmental consultant was accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Romaine explained that he has done extensive studies on the site over the past 10 years. He stated that he reevaluated the site based upon the proposal to determine if there were any significant environmental habitat changes particularly in the area of the proposed paving and concluded that there were no significant differences. He further explained that he also conducted a desktop analysis to determine whether there were threatened, or endangered species associated with the project site. He stated that the conclusion was that the impacts to the environmental resources on the airport property associated with the paving of the runway were de minimus.

The Board questioned if there would be any potential impacts to the nesting season during construction. Mr. Romaine explained that there will not be a significant impact.

Vice-Chair Duffy opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Romaine.

Michele Jaunarajs, Pulaski Road questioned if there would be any environmental impacts to well water, deer or mosquitoes. Mr. Romaine noted that there will not be any greater risk for spills as a result of the proposal. He also stated that there is not any anticipated impact to deer and explained that the stormwater system is not designed to hold water, so there is not expected to be an increase in mosquitos.

Dennis Fimbel, Forty Oaks Road questioned if Mr. Romaine dealt with air quality. Mr. Romaine stated that that he is not an air quality expert.

Holly Roth, County Road 523 questioned if there were any underground water pumps in use related to the wetlands. Mr. Romaine stated that he was not aware of any. Ms. Roth also questioned if the planes were checked for Spotted Lantern Flies when coming into the airport. Mr. Yap stated that he did not know.

John McDonough, the Applicant's planner and landscape architect was accepted by the Board as an expert witness.

Mr. McDonough submitted exhibits that were marked into evidence as follows:

- A-2 Aerial View of Subject Site Looking North
- A-3 Aerial View of Subject Site Looking South
- A-4 Street View of Thor Solberg Looking South
- A-5 Street View of Thor Solberg Looking North

Mr. McDonough provided testimony as follows: The entire airport site is approximately 753 acres. The improvements proposed are being done for enhanced safety without increasing the intensity of use. The proposal includes two lots which are 433.49 acres in size. The area where the detention basin is proposed is open and generally flat and will be in the natural low point of the land.

Mr. McDonough reviewed the variances that the applicant is seeking as follows:

- §148-51. E- Front yard setback for an accessory structure
- §148-60.1. A- Maximum change in elevation that exceeds two feet

Mr. McDonough noted that both variances relate to the proposed detention basin.

In response to a question from the Board Attorney, Mr. McDonough confirmed that the survey prepared by Morgan Engineering dated 8/10/20 confirms that the property line is at the center line of Thor Solberg Road.

Mr. McDonough provided planning testimony explaining that the proposal will enhance the airport safety with upgrades that will bring a continuity and consistency to the runway surface that is not presently there. He further explained that all improvements are linked to an airport that currently exists, there will be no increase in air traffic, no tree removal, and nothing that would alter the airport safety zone. Mr. McDonough also noted that the intent of the landscaping is to emulate the existing meadow.

The Board took a break at 9:15 p.m. and returned at 9:25 p.m.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan requested clarification on the relationship of the improvements to the variances.

The Board expressed concern on how the design of the basin and grade change would impact the view from Thor Solberg Road.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan questioned how the basin would be configured if they tried to reduce the differential in the topographical change to comply with the ordinance. Mr.

McDonough stated that it would flatten and spread it out noting that there are also wetlands constraints.

Vice Chair Duffy opened the public portion of the public for Mr. McDonough.

Carolyn Fimbel, Forty Oaks Road requested clarification on the depth of the basin.

Michele Jaunarajs, Pulaski Road asked for clarification as to the location of the proposed detention basin. Ms. Jaunarajs questioned what the basin would be filled with. Mr. McDonough stated that it is not a concrete structure and will have a sand bottom. He also explained that the stormwater will fan out in a non-concentrated manner and recharge into the natural ground.

John Kalinich, Monfort Lane questioned if the person who took the drone photo exhibits had received a waiver from the FAA. (Federal Aviation Administration).

Doug Dole, Minsi Road questioned if there would be a fence around the basin. Mr. McDonough stated that there would not be.

Jack Szczepanski, the Board's environmental consultant asked for clarification on the depth of the sand layer in the basin. Mr. Yap confirmed that the sand layer was reduced to six inches. Board Engineer Rob O'Brien noted that the slope will still be a six-foot elevation change.

Michele Jaunarajs, Pulaski Road questioned if there were any safety concerns due to the depth of the basin. Mr. McDonough confirmed that it would not be a wet basin.

Nick Brown, The Board's airport planning consultant asked for clarification as to whether the runway protection zone would remain on the airport property.

Mr. Yap noted that within the 1997 Airport Master Plan there is a drawing (Figure 5-3) that shows the runway protection zone on the airport property. Mr. Yap confirmed that it is consistent to what is being proposed in the application.

Jay Troutman, the Board's traffic consultant stated that since the last meeting he had done some investigation of the area and spoke to the police department. He explained that it was determined that the best access route to the site for the construction trucks would be Route 523 or Readington Road to Thor Solberg Road. He noted that they would only have to be on Thor Solberg for 400 feet to access to the airport site. Mr. Troutman confirmed that he would draft the wording of the condition for the resolution.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan stated that an outstanding item in his report was the extent of the roadway dedication noting that more specific information was needed.

Board Engineer Rob O'Brien stated that 25 feet is the standard for right-of-way dedication but noted that it depends on the specific situation and the criteria that you are looking at.

Board Planner Michael Sullivan stated that when reviewing the application documents, they noticed a discrepancy between the survey and the engineer's plans regarding the location of Runway 10-28.

The Applicant's attorney confirmed that the Applicant agrees that any approval of the pending application involving Runway 4-22 would not constitute an approval of a relocation of Runway 10-28. Vice Chair Duffy stated that this should be referenced in the resolution and noted on the plans.

The Board took a break at 10:30 p.m. and returned at 10:35 p.m.

Vice Chair Duffy opened the public portion of the meeting for comments.

Mike Zegar, Brookview Road was sworn and questioned the maximum size aircraft that could take off and land on the current paved runway. Mr. Yap confirmed that it will be the same type of airport that currently utilizes the airport. Mr. Zegar also questioned when construction would begin. Mr. Yap stated that if the applicant received approval, they would begin construction within approximately 6-8 weeks.

Michele Jaunarajs, Pulaski Road was sworn and suggested that construction be suspended during the balloon festival.

Doug Dole, Minsi Road was sworn and expressed concern that if the airplanes will be flying lower it will cause an increase in noise to the surrounding homes. Mr. Yap noted that the new lights will allow pilots to have better guidance and more consistency.

The applicant's attorney Mr. Newmark asked Mr. Dole if when he made his comment, he was under the assumption that the runway was 3,000 feet.

Vice Chair closed the public portion of the meeting.

The Board determined that there were a few items that required additional clarification so requested that the applicant return to provide the required information to resolve these issues.

Attorney Drill noted the items as follows:

- The extent of the right-of-way dedication
- The condition regarding the construction traffic pattern
- On site versus off site soil disposal

Vice-Chair Duffy stated that public questions and comments would be limited to these three items that are left to be resolved.

The applicant's attorney agreed to grant an extension of time for the Board to act until June 30, 2021.

It was announced that the application would be carried to the meeting on April 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. It was noted that it would be a virtual meeting and there will be new log in information for the meeting that will be provided on the agenda that will be posted on the Township website. It was also noted that those without computer and internet access can call the Board Secretary directly to obtain the call-in information. No additional notice will be provided.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Cook moved, and Ms. Filler seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Lehberger
Planning Board Secretary