

TOWN OF STOW
STOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL PERMITS
MARCH 1, 2010

The public hearing was held in Stow Town Building and was opened at 7:30 p.m. on the application filed by the **Stow Elementary School Building Committee** for special permits as follows: under Section 7.2.3.1 of the Zoning Bylaw, "Parking Regulations", to allow a reduction of 49 parking spaces from the 149-space requirement, and under Section 5.1.1.7, "Flood Plain/Wetlands District", to allow construction of a building within said district, all in connection with **construction of an addition and renovation of the existing Center School at 403 Great Road**. The property contains 827,952 sq. ft. and is shown on Stow Property Maps U-9 as Parcel 44 and U-10 as Parcel 9.

Board members present: Edmund Tarnuzzer, Michele Shoemaker, Charles Barney (associate), William Byron (associate), Andrew DeMore (associate).

Ms. Shoemaker chaired and read the notice of hearing as it had appeared in *The Stow Independent* on February 10 and 17, 2010. The hearing notice had been forwarded to all abutters by certified mail, return receipt. Those abutters present were Peter J. Laskey, 25 Packard Road and Peter Laskey, 37 Packard Road. Also present was Ernest Dodd of the Planning Board. Representing the applicant were the following: Ellen Sturgis, Committee Co-Chair; Stephen Quinn; Michael Wood, Nashoba Regional School District Superintendent; Symmes Maini & McKee Associates architects James Warren and Philip Poinell; project manager Paul Griffin. Several interested residents were also in attendance.

Ms. Shoemaker recited the requirements to be met for grant of special permit.

James Warren of SMMA conducted the presentation. The proposed project is on the existing Center School site on Great Road. He pointed out on drawings certain conditions present on the property. The proposed project involves construction of an addition and renovations to the existing school. The addition will consist of a two-story classroom wing and single story high-bay community space to include a gymnasium, cafeteria, mechanical and administration spaces. The primary entrance will be off Great Road with a parent drop-off/pick-up area. The secondary driveway to the site is off Hartley Road for school bus access. There are currently 40 existing parking spaces. It is proposed to create 100 spaces with 43 off Hartley Road, 55 off Great Road, and handicapped spaces.

Mr. Warren then addressed the special permit request under Section 5.1.1.7. A portion of the proposed addition and the proposed maintenance building are to be located within the Flood Plain/Wetlands District. A meeting was held with the Conservation Commission to define the wetland boundaries. An Order of Resource Area Delineation was issued in November that determined that the District does not represent an area subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission. The proposed buildings are therefore outside the limits of on-site resource areas and not located within an area subject to flooding as defined by FEMA. Abutter Peter Laskey of

25 Packard Road inquired into the 100-ft. buffer from wetlands. Mr. Warren explained that work is allowed within that buffer, according to State regulation. The Conservation Commission has a 35-foot no-disturb area regulation. Representatives will meet with the Commission tomorrow to request a waiver regarding that issue. It is unsure if the Commission will restrict activity within the area. Ernest Dodd of the Planning Board did not believe there was violation of the Flood Plain/Wetlands District as the proposed structures are not within the flood plain as defined by FEMA maps. Mr. Laskey inquired into any drain work between the two existing ponds. Mr. Warren responded there will be a connection with the drain system between the ponds.

Mr. Warren then returned to the parking space matter. The request was made through the special permit process as outlined in Section 7.2.3.1 of the Zoning Bylaw. There is a question if a variance from the requirements is that which should be petitioned.

The parking area shown off Hartley Road is intended for staff vehicles. Overflow for staff would be at the Great Road parking site. It was believed that 100 spaces are appropriate for this project. There are site constraints with the new structures, playing fields, septic system, etc.

Mr. Dodd noted the Planning Board will be hearing this matter later this week. He believed that a variance is in order rather than special permit. There may be questions about the number of parking spaces that should be required. He requested that the Board of Appeals continue this hearing until the Planning Board has had an opportunity to discuss the matter further.

Mr. Warren reviewed the minimum parking required under Section 7.3.3.4. The site is designed to accommodate some of the overflow connected with special events. Up to 94 spaces could be provided along the access from Hartley Road and the bus turn-around circle. Staff spaces would be freed up for after-school events.

Mr. Tarnuzzer inquired into the Hartley Road parking area. Mr. Warren responded there are elevation and slope issues that prevent a larger area. It was said that 75% of staff consists of teachers. Pre-K and kindergarten personnel will park off Great Road as that is close to those designated classrooms.

Mr. Byron inquired into the rated 416 capacity of the gymnasium. The bleacher seats would accommodate 80 persons. It was explained there will be an operable wall between the gym and cafeteria. The performance area could be expanded into the gym, but that is not practical because of the distance between the two areas. Those at the extreme rear would be too far away to see or hear because of being on the same flat surface. Ellen Sturgis added that this area is intended for student assembly rather than public assembly. Any large events would be held in the Hale School facility. The cafeteria section will serve lunch in three sessions to accommodate the various grades.

Mr. Warren said that the existing leach field was constructed in the 1950's and does not meet current regulations. The new field will be mounded with a retaining wall because of

existing conditions and will be elevated by three to five feet. The retaining wall presents access issues.

The representatives stated the attempt is to size the site to the 180-day school activity as regards parking spaces. They are trying to reach the likely number from a daily situation prospective. Mr. Tarnuzzer noted that it is possible to reach 194 spaces, according to the plans. It was pointed out that 100 spaces would be striped, with the others not so defined. Snow storage would be off the driveway and parking areas and are shown on plans submitted to the Planning Board.

Mr. Dodd again requested the Board continue this hearing until after the Planning Board hearing for site plan approval is closed. He noted that the applicants will require a variance with regard to noise level. He suggested that could be combined with a variance request from Section 7.2.3.1 that addresses non-conforming uses. The interpretation was that the school is not a non-conforming use, therefore, a special permit does not apply. There was mutual agreement.

Ms. Shoemaker declared the hearing continued to April 5, 2010. It was expected there will be petitions for variance regarding parking spaces and noise level on the same date.

The hearing was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. to be continued to April 5th, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine A. Desmond
Secretary to the Board