

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

MINUTES
Monday, March 7, 2011

The Town of Bloomfield Zoning Board of Appeals held a meeting on March 7, 2011, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, Council Chambers in Bloomfield, Connecticut with the following members present:

Present:

Jacqueline Isaacson, Chairperson
Donna Banks
Robert Cromwell
Pamela Gray
Fannie Pittman
Bill Starkie
Lucille Wactowski

Also Present: Michael Kosilla
Maureen Sullivan,
Recording Clerk

Absent: Kim Chamerda

Ms. Isaacson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Ms. Gray read the Legal Notice that appeared in The Hartford Courant.

1. Request by Carlos Cruz/The Metropolitan District for a Variance for front, side and rear yards and lot coverage for a pumping station located between Lots 7 and 1108 Bear Ridge Drive, R-40 zone.

Mr. Carlos Cruz of The Metropolitan District Commission discussed the proposal to replace the existing pump station with a new above-grade structure to upgrade the facility. He described the size of the proposed structure and the fiber cement siding that is being proposed for the outside. He stated that the existing pump station equipment is approximately forty years old and that it is located in an underground vault. Because of the confined space regulations two workers are required to perform routine maintenance on the station. Because the MDC is looking to cut costs wherever it can, which will in turn save the customers money, they are hoping to upgrade the existing pumps with three electric pumps which are much more efficient than the existing ones, and they can be maintained by one person. In order to provide water pressure in the event of an extended power outage the proposed structure will house a diesel generator and fuel tank. He further stated that the MDC has prepared risk analysis data to assess all of their pump stations.

Ms. Libby Baldwin from the engineering firm of Tighe & Bond discussed the existing and proposed pump stations. Drawings and renderings of the pump station were shown to the Board. Ms. Baldwin described the minimal size of the lot (1038 sq. ft.) and the lack of options that they had for placing a structure to house the pumps on it. The three different options for screening and fencing the structure were shown to the Board.

Mr. Starkie asked about the noise from the pump and generators. Mr. Cruz stated the pumps are quiet. The generator need for the generator was discussed. Mr. Starkie stated this is a very quiet neighborhood and any disruption would be unacceptable. Mr. Cruz stated that the new generators that were installed in other pump stations were tested at about 70 decibels which were barely audible from outside of the structure.

Mr. Cromwell commented about the building's lack of aesthetics. Ms. Baldwin stated there are concerns about putting windows in a pump station because of security concerns. She added that false windows were something that they could look at. Mr. Cruz added that there is always a security concern because the water being pumped is drinking water. The functioning of the stations pumps will be electronically monitored from a central station.

Mr. Starkie stated he drove by the facility and did not see it. He believes that the neighborhood was looking for it to remain the same. With this plan, it will be seen right away.

Mr. Cruz discussed the building aesthetics and how they might be improved.

Ms. Wactowski asked if there are security cameras at this location. Mr. Cruz replied there are no cameras now, however it can be considered.

Mr. Cromwell stated the other system worked since 1970 and asked if this system could be put underground. Mr. Cruz discussed the expense and that manpower would be an issue. Ms. Baldwin stated the applicant also wants to put in a standby generator and that generator would have to be above ground.

Questions from the public:

Mr. Kevin Gough of 5 Bear Ridge Drive asked about the number of failures to the system that has been in place since 1973. Mr. Cruz did not have the history of failures on the site but would be able to come back with that information. Mr. Gough asked if it was the intention of the MDC to put people out of work in this economy because only one person will be able to handle the maintenance. Mr. Cruz stated that no jobs will be lost as a result of the new pump station, but that the MDC would like to become more efficient. Mr. Gough asked about the water pressure when the system goes out. Ms. Baldwin discussed the residual pump station pressure at the time of an electrical outage. Mr. Gough stated that he has lived in his home for 18 years and never had any problems with water pressure. Mr. Cruz discussed the fact that during prolonged outages the MDC will redirect water and use temporary pumps at other locations to provide the needed pressure so a customer may not notice a severe drop in pressure. He explained the technology of the new system.

Mr. Gough asked if the MDC investigated purchasing the vacant lot across the street and moving the pump station there. Mr. Cruz was not aware that there was a vacant lot available, and that they could look into it, but in order to keep the costs down it would probably not be feasible. He stated that not only would there be the added cost of the land but that the water main would have to be moved across the street and then into the lot, into the pump structure, and then back into the street.

Mr. Jenkins of 68 Adams Road asked how close the pump station will be to his property. He stated that he has maintained the property for 11 years and has never seen anyone maintain the pumps. Mr. Jenkins asked how this station will be maintained. Ms. Baldwin showed Mr. Jenkins property line in relation to the pump station. The 3.5 foot distance from the proposed pump structure to Mr. Jenkins property line was discussed. Mr. Cruz thanked the neighbor for maintaining the area and said that it will be in charge of the maintenance on all of the pump stations from now on. Mr. Jenkins reiterated his concerns about the maintenance.

Ms. Isaacson asked if the pump station building could be smaller. Mr. Cruz discussed the size of the generator and the fuel storage tank and the size needed to cover them and the pumps. He stated that if the generator and tank were placed outside the building could be smaller but then you would have the generator, and fuel tank outside which would lead to more noise. Mr. Jenkins asked how long it will take to construct the pump station. Ms. Baldwin replied once construction begins it will probably take 9 months to complete. The grading and landscaping in front of the structure was discussed. The need for a parking space for the MDC vehicle in front

of the structure was discussed. Mr. Cruz stated that the vehicle used to replace a pump was typically a Ford F550, which is a pretty large truck, and they thought that it would be better to get the vehicle off of the street.

Mr. Gough asked about the location of the pumps. Mr. Cruz discussed the property.

Mr. Starkie once again discussed the neighbor's property and the fact that the proposed structure was only 3.5 feet from the property line.

After further discussion Mr. Cruz stated that after hearing the neighbors concerns that they would be willing to look at other designs that would incorporate their suggestions and then come back to the ZBA at the April meeting.

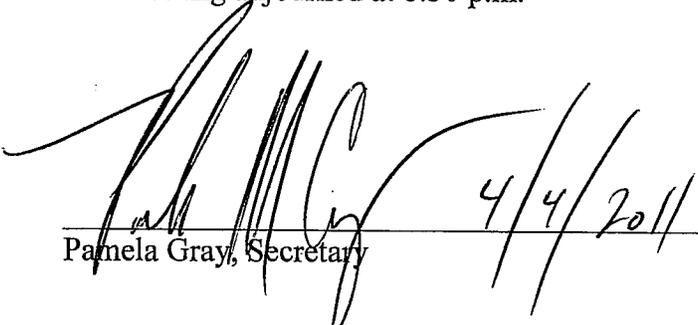
Ms. Gray made a motion to table the application to the April meeting. Mr. Cromwell seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

2. Minutes of February 7, 2011.

A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded.

Ms. Gray made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. Ms. Pittman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Pamela Gray, Secretary

4/4/2011

Maureen Sullivan, Recording Secretary