

EDGEWORTH BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
August 10, 2022

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MEETING was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Chairperson Keane presiding and the following members of the Commission and officials of the Borough present: Mr. Patrick Keane, Mr. Patrick Auth, Mr. David Aloe, and Mr. John Schwend, Borough Manager. Chairperson Keane led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES of the Regular Meeting held on May 11, 2022 presented to the Commission. After some discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Aloe with a second from Mr. Auth to approve the May 10, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. All present voted in favor of the motion.

The following visitors were present:

Mrs. Andrea Aloe – 504 Beaver Road, Edgeworth  
Mrs. Gail Murray – 605 Maple Lane, Edgeworth  
Mr. Michael Cevarr – 445 Maple Lane, Edgeworth  
Mr. Kirk Fordham – 445 Maple Lane, Edgeworth  
Ms. Teresa Duff – 820 Ohio River Boulevard, Sewickley  
Mr. James Mohn – 257 Scaife Road, Sewickley Heights  
Mr. Jim Miller – Sewickley Academy  
Mr. Joe Galbraith – Gateway Engineers  
Ms. Rachel O’Neill – Reed Smith  
Mr. Frederick Gregorich – Edgeworth Borough

NEW BUSINESS:

PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION – SEWICKLEY ACADEMY- 624 BEAVER ROAD SPORTS COMPLEX: Mr. Jim Miller came before the Commission to present an overview of development plans to Nichols Field Sports Complex, located at 624 Beaver Road, and owned by Sewickley Academy (the Academy). He highlighted maintenance issues with the current space, which houses tennis courts, a grass soccer field, and a grass baseball field. Additionally, there is limited parking on site, as well as concerns with student and visitor safety when accessing the property. Proposed changes include synthetic turf soccer and baseball fields, additional parking, upgraded lighting, and a field house. Mr. Miller noted that an indoor training complex is also shown on the drawings, however the structure would be part of a future phase of the project. The Academy has contracted Gateway Engineers to address the Borough’s requirements for erosion and sedimentation and stormwater management, as well as for securing necessary National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). Mr. Miller stated that proposed stormwater management systems would be more effective at reducing runoff impacts compared to the existing conditions on the property. Additionally, as the site is located within a flood plain, Sewickley Academy has begun the process of applying to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to request a modification to the flood plain maps in order to adjust the elevation of the flood plain.

Mr. Miller then discussed proposed upgrades to lighting on the property. As the Academy has very few evening events, stadium lighting would only be in use on a limited basis. He explained that the Academy is currently completing photometric studies to assess lighting impacts on neighboring properties. LED

zero cut-off lighting is proposed for the athletic fields, as well as for any other security lighting necessary on the property, to reduce glare. He concluded his presentation by stating that Sewickley Academy aims to reduce any impact on surrounding neighborhoods and the community as a whole, and will continue to consider resident concerns throughout the planning and application process.

Mr. Schwend then provided a list of outstanding items and areas of concern from the Borough, including:

- Lot lines must be corrected on drawings to properly show the property boundaries. Mr. Aloe stated that all plans must accurately reflect the true property lines.
- A sanitary sewer line must be installed and connected to the existing infrastructure at Shields Lane;
- FEMA has identified the property as being located in a flood plain. The Academy has submitted a request for a change of elevation and map revision, which must be approved by FEMA before the Borough can issue a permit for development in a flood plain. Mr. Joe Galbraith of Gateway Engineers addressed this point, and stated that survey and drainage data was used to assess actual elevations of the property. Based on the data compiled, Gateway Engineers has determined that large portions of the site would no longer be included in the flood plain designation. Mr. Shawn Wingrove, representing the Borough Engineer, stated that upon initial review, some modifications were required to the H&H report submitted by Gateway Engineers. As there is no regulated timeline for FEMA to review submitted requests, the process could take numerous months. Mr. Aloe expressed concern with the notion of modifying the flood map, and stated that the field has flooded on numerous occasions in recent years. He recommended that the applicant reassess the conditions in the area;
- The Borough Geotechnical Engineer, Mr. Joseph Boward, has requested additional core borings and further specifications regarding proposed walls on the plans, as well as stated that all grading work should be completed with a professional geotechnical engineer on site. Mr. Galbraith stated that Gateway Engineers has since met with Mr. Boward and borings are now sufficient. Additional details requested by Mr. Boward will be provided;
- Regarding stormwater management, the proposed development will require a Joint Waterways Encroachment Permit from the DEP. The plans also do not meet Borough ordinance requirements of maintaining a thirty-five-foot riparian buffer bordering Little Sewickley Creek;
- Allegheny County Planning Department's review noted concerns over development within the flood plain, and stated that the H&H report submitted by the applicant must indicate no increase in flood level discharge;
- The Borough ordinance requires sidewalks to be provided, however no sidewalks are noted on the plans. A waiver from Borough Council would be required in order to not install sidewalks along Beaver Road and Little Sewickley Creek Road. Mr. Schwend stated that Mr. David Martin, an Edgeworth Planning Commission member who was not in attendance, expressed concern regarding student and visitor safety when accessing the property with a lack of sidewalks and cross walks.
- The applicants would require numerous variances from the Zoning Hearing Board, including impervious surface coverage, setbacks of retaining walls and other structures, lighting at lot lines, height of the proposed field house and press box, size of the proposed scoreboard signage, and limitations regarding the expansion of an existing nonconforming use.

Mr. Aloe highlighted a condition of a previously approved land development at the site regarding tax revenue on the assessed value of the property. Ms. Rachel O'Neill of Reed Smith stated that the Academy is aware of the previous condition. Mr. Auth asked about the capacity of bleachers around the proposed athletic fields. Mr. Miller stated that the baseball field bleachers will seat about 250-350 spectators, while the soccer field bleachers will seat approximately 300-400 spectators. Mr. Auth asked whether the traffic

impact study took those capacity numbers into account when assessing parking and overall traffic to the site. Mr. Miller said that further details can be provided in the future. Mr. Keane noted the numerous variances that would be required for the development to occur, and stated that eliminating the reservation of space for a potential future phase of development would solve many of the dimensional variances that the Academy is seeking. Mr. Auth stated that eliminating the sports complex building could allow the Academy to reconfigure the fields and address numerous concerns.

Mr. Keane then opened the floor for public comment. Mr. James Mohn stated that the applicant presented an ambitious plan with significant grading and site disturbance next to Little Sewickley Creek. He expressed concern with potential negative impacts to the Creek and surrounding neighbors. Additionally, he asked whether the Academy has created a master plan in order to properly analyze the overall vision for the site. He noted that the indoor training facility is noted on the plans and would have significant impact on the aesthetics of the site, however it is unknown whether the Academy will proceed with future phases of the project. Mr. Mohn argued that without knowing the Academy's full vision of their properties, it is difficult to fully understand the impact that any development will have on the area. He also expressed concern with the removal of a house currently located on the property that he feels holds historical value. He asked if the Academy considered options that included keeping the house. Mr. Miller stated that the Academy is currently working on a master plan, and has gone through numerous design iterations for the athletic complex site. Additionally, the house on the property has significant water damage and structural issues, and while it may hold historical value in the area it is not listed on the national historic register. Keeping the house on site would require extensive repair, while also limiting parking options on the site. Mr. Mohn argued that the Academy should present previous design iterations in order to promote transparency in the process.

Mrs. Gail Murray asked how the development of the athletic complex benefits the residents of Edgeworth, and agreed with the notion that the Academy should present a master plan for all properties. She noted that another property which she feels holds historic value, located at 627 Beaver Road is also owned by the Academy, and stated that the Academy should provide development plans for that property as well.

Mr. Mike Cevarr agreed with the concerns already stated, and also expressed concern with traffic. He stated that parking and traffic in the area around Nichols Field is already congested, and increasing the number of visitors to the site will make the problem worse. He also stated that he is part of a group of concerned community members called "Preserve Edgeworth," who are concerned with the demolition of structures which they feel that hold historic value in the area, including the house on the Nichols Field property and the house located at 627 Beaver Road. He encouraged the Academy to be a good neighbor by engaging the community to find a solution that includes preserving the houses. Mr. Aloe stated that increasing parking spaces on the property will eliminate the number of visitors parking on Borough streets and in residents' driveways, therefore creating a safer environment for residents and visitors both.

Mr. Kirk Fordham stated that the scope of the proposed development is not well known in the area, and suggested that many community members would be concerned with the development if they were aware. He argued that the development will change the character of the community, and suggested that the Academy reconsider their plans. Mr. Miller stated that the Academy is open to listening to residents' concerns and working with the community.

Mrs. Andrea Aloe stated that the proposed field house is a substantial structure compared to what is existing on the site. She also asked why the Academy feels that increased lighting and capacity is necessary on the site if the fields are not regularly used. Mr. Miller stated that the plans are sized for tournament requirements. Mr. Schwend stated that in order to promote transparency, the Academy could consider providing information about when and how often that the fields would be in use, and also

address concerns over how fields will be used for non-Academy purposes. Mr. Miller stated that soccer takes place in the fall, while lacrosse and baseball are spring sports.

Mr. Fordham asked for a timeline for the application process. Mr. Schwend stated that this meeting of the Planning Commission was the official filing date for the land development application, and Borough Council must approve or reject the plan within ninety days. The Planning Commission is an advisory body that will make a recommendation to Borough Council. Additionally, the Academy will apply to the Zoning Hearing Board for numerous variances. The Zoning Hearing will be scheduled within sixty days of the application date. All meetings will be advertised and are open to the public.

A motion was made by Mr. Aloe with a second from Mr. Auth to table the consideration of the preliminary and final land development application for the Sewickley Academy sports complex located at 624 Beaver Road until the September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting. All present voted in favor of the motion.

There being no further business, the meeting on motion duly made was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.  
-John F. Schwend, Secretary