



July 7, 2022

Richard Owen, Chair
Ewing Township Planning Board
2 Jake Garzio Dr
Ewing, NJ 08628

RE: PB-22-005; PB-22-006; PB-22-007; PB-22-008
Courtesy Review - Ewing High School
900 Parkway Ave; Block 86, Lot 487

Owner:
Ewing Public Schools
2099 Pennington Rd
Ewing, NJ 08618

Applicant
FVHD Architects
1515 Lower Ferry Rd
Ewing, NJ 08618

I. Proposal Summary:

The applicant has submitted four applications proposing various improvements at Ewing High School at 900 Parkway Avenue. Proposed improvements in the rear yard include a hardscaped commemorative plaza, picnic pavilion, flagpole, and gas generator. A new digital messaging sign is proposed in the front yard on Parkway Avenue. The site is located in the R-2 Residential Single-Family Detached Zone (R-2), where public schools are a conditional use.

II. Submission:

1. Four (4) Land Development Application Forms submitted 6/24/22.
2. Four (4) Campus Site Plans prepared by Edwards Engineering Group, Inc. dated 6/16/22.

III. Waivers and Variances

1. *Sign requirements (§215-37(D)(2)(a)):*
 - a. Ground signs shall be appropriately landscaped at the base. A waiver is required.
2. *Sign requirements (§215-37(P)(10)):*
 - a. Maximum permitted ground sign area is 20-sf, where 20-sf exists and 40-sf is proposed. A waiver is required but should be provided for aesthetics.
 - b. Maximum permitted ground sign height is 6 feet, where 9 feet is proposed. A waiver is required. Testimony should be provided as to why such a large sign.

IV. Planning Review

General Comments

1. The proposed improvements are primarily located in the center of campus behind the high school except for replacement of the existing digital sign on Parkway Avenue. Most of these improvements will not be visible from public areas and they are unlikely to have an impact.
2. The proposed gas generator appears to meet the Township's daytime noise requirements at the property line according to the site plan. Additional testimony is recommended as residential properties on Farrell Ave may lie within the nighttime noise range as defined in §240-6 *Maximum Permissible Sound Levels*.
3. Total lot coverage – existing and proposed - should be calculated and indicated on the site plans. However, while a variance would be required if exceeding the 40% maximum condition, the school has the privilege of being an inherently beneficial use as established by New Jersey courts. Further, the proposed project addresses stormwater runoff generated by the increased lot coverage, and the applicant plans to comply with NJDEP stormwater management rules. We defer to the Township Engineer with regard to stormwater management compliance. Sustainable practices should be encouraged.
4. The required maximum building coverage is mislabeled on the application form. The maximum permitted building coverage for school property is 20%, where 16.53% is proposed. No variance is required.
5. We note that the Township Master Plan sets an objective to participate in school facility planning to encourage community-based school design and program/facility sharing. However, the proposed facilities do not seem particularly applicable to this objective. The proposal is consistent with the Township Master Plan.

Signage

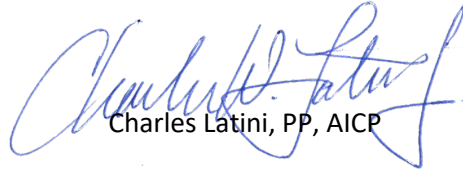
1. The proposed sign area measures eight (8) feet by five (5) feet. Maximum permitted sign area is 20-sf, where 20-sf exists and 40-sf is proposed. A waiver is required. Testimony is recommended.
2. The entire proposed sign structure is nine (9) feet tall by thirteen (13) feet wide. Maximum permitted ground sign height is 6 feet. A waiver is required. Testimony is recommended.
3. Township sign requirements require ground signs to be landscaped. A waiver is required. Given the size of the proposed sign if approved, we recommend landscaping be provided.
4. The Township requires that digitally illuminated signs change no more frequently than once per hour. The applicant has requested leniency from this requirement and has proposed to work cooperatively with the Township Zoning Official in the case of public complaints. We see no issue with this request, but additional testimony is recommended.

V. Conclusion

The signage application (PB-22-008) requires waivers from the sign requirements as discussed above. We are willing to work with the applicant on landscaping of the sign and potential integration into the streetscape to address the visual impact of its size if deemed necessary by the board. We have no other pressing concerns with the other applications.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 212-203-5137 or via email, cwl@latinigleitz.com

Sincerely,



Charles Latini, PP, AICP