

**PLANNING BOARD  
BOROUGH OF ESSEX FELLS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 13, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. The Open Public Meetings Act Announcement was read by Chairman Burchell, as required by law. Those present were Bob Burchell, Jody James, John King, Mayor Ed Davis, Jim Irwin and Brittany Gonzalez.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Chairman Burchell made a motion to accept the minutes of February 9, 2023, seconded by Ed Davis. Approved unanimously by those able to vote (Chairman Burchell, John King, Ed Davis, Jim Irwin and Brittany Gonzalez).

**Resolutions: None**

The next matter to come before the Board was the application of the Borough of Essex Fells for preliminary and final site plan approval for a water treatment facility, Oak Lane, Block 13, Lot 8.

James Bryce , Attorney for Essex Fells, outlined the need for the new water treatment building to treat the water for the presence of PFAS to maintain safe drinking water and emphasized the importance of completing the project in a timely manner.

The first witness to testify was Greg Hindy, 206 Devon Road, Essex Fells, New Jersey, Councilman of Essex Fell and oversees the Water Department. He discussed the site and the need for the facility to lower the parts per trillion of PFAS in the water for public health and drinking water. Mr. Hindy explained approval is needed as soon as possible to get the final permit before July 1, 2023 so the contract can be awarded and the town can take advantage of a portion of debt forgiveness. The site has been well investigated and it has been determined that this is the best spot due to its proximity to the existing structures (there is pipework to be built that is necessary to connect the two).

The next witness to testify was William Ryden, 383 Ridgedale Avenue, East Hanover, New Jersey, a Consulting Engineer for the Essex Fells Water Department for the past 15 years and he is licensed in the State of New Jersey. He testified that the town has gotten a permit and decision from the State DEP and the size of the building will be 3825 square feet.

The next witness to testify was Joseph Lakner, 96 US Highway 206, Flanders, New Jersey, Water & Sewer Engineer. He testified that Suburban Consulting Engineers have been hired to oversee the project. Mr. Lakner indicated they are waiting for approval from the town on the currently submitted plans (the permitting is based on this specific set of plans). Exhibit A-1 was introduced consisting of Sheet 17 of plans prepared by Suburban Consulting Engineers, Inc. dated July 29, 2022 revised through February 15, 2023 titled "Proposed Treatment Building Sections I."

The review memorandum prepared by Petry Engineering, LLC dated March 8, 2023 was discussed. The applicant is seeking waivers from the requirement to provide stormwater runoff quality control and from the requirement to obtain a lot surface drainage permit.

Questions from the Board:

Chairman Burchell discussed the removal of the 30 trees and their replacements; the aesthetic appearance of the building and the proposed chain link fence. He would like more larger and mature trees and shrubs; the building constructed to look more like a house than a warehouse and different fencing.

Questions from the Public:

A group called the Oak Lane Neighborhood (comprised of the four homes on the section of Oak Lane in front of the property where the new facility will go) spoke about their many concerns with the project. They were led by Kristin Pak from 21 Oak Lane who distributed a handout marked as Exhibit A-1 outlining their issues and went over the document.

Jill Janosv, 200 Devon Road, Washington Twp., New Jersey testified as a witness for the group; she is a certified Landscape Architect.

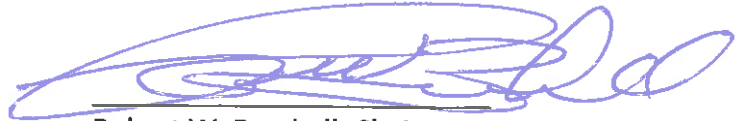
Karen Elliott from 23 Oak Lane spoke for the group as well, specifically about the road that would access the new building.

No additional comments, the Public Session was closed.

Open to the Board for a vote for approval of the plans.

On motion made by John King, seconded by Brittany Gonzalez to grant preliminary and final site plan approval and waivers subject to the following conditions: (1) compliance with comments 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.8 and 1.9 contained in the review memorandum prepared by Petry Engineering, LLC dated March 8, 2023. With respect to comment 1.4, a landscape plan shall be implemented including trees and shrubbery to provide supplemental screening for the benefit of adjacent residential uses in consultation with the Mayor and Council and subject to review and approval by the Borough Engineer as to location, type and timing of the plantings; (2) the applicant shall obtain all requisite governmental approvals including but not limited to NJDEP Treatment Works Approval and Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District approval and (3) the finish of the building shall be finalized in consultation with the Mayor and Council and the Borough Engineer was approved by a vote of 4 – 2. In favor: John King, Ed Davis, James Irwin, Brittany Gonzalez Opposed: Chairman Burchell, Jody James.

On a motion made by Jody James, seconded by Brittany Gonzalez, the meeting was adjourned unanimously at 9:35 p.m.



Robert W. Burchell, Chairman  
Planning Board  
April 13, 2023