

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS-MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 22, 2021

The public hearing was web-based on Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2574297243>

Meeting ID: 257 429 7243

I. CALL TO ORDER- Commissioner Antonio called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

1. Appointment of Alternates: Ali Rice promoted as a full voting member.

Present: Steven Antonio; Mark Freeman; JoAnn Hogan; Ram Kaza; Sharon Thomas; Tom Hazel, Assistant Town Planner; Kevin Fuselier, Principal Landscape Architect with SLR International Corporation; and Jeff Pinney, Athletic Director at Simsbury High School.

Absent: Joshua Michelson and Stacey Walczak

III. APPLICATIONS

1. Public Hearings

a) Application #21-13 of Simsbury Public Schools, Owner SLR International Corporation, Applicant, for a variance pursuant to the Simsbury Zoning Regulation Section 3.9 to allow grandstand and press box within the side yard setback at the property located at 34 Farms Village Road (Assessor's Map F11, Block 148, Lot 016). Zone R-40.

- Kevin Fuselier, Principal Landscape Architect with SLR International Corporation gave a PowerPoint presentation displaying the current conditions of the existing grandstand and press box and discussed the proposed reconstruction.
- The proposal consists of increasing seating to 1082 seats. The existing storage unit below the grandstand would be completely removed. The setback will be reduced, and its closest point would be 21.7 feet of separation at just one location, which is one of the required landings for the press box. The press box is doubling in length. The ADA ramp went from a switchback configuration to a linear, so it has been reduced. The railing for the top row of seating will be raised from four feet to six feet. The shed will also be removed. The whole structure will be closer to the track.
- Commissioner Kaza inquired if the shed was used for storing athletic equipment and what alternative would be provided if it is removed.
- Mr. Fuselier responded that the school would have to spend a lot of money to rebuild the shed and making it weather-proof. The track and field and football equipment are equipment that can be exposed to the elements and will be able to be stored under the grandstand.
- Commissioner Antonio commented that once the shed is gone, he doubts that they will grant them a variance to rebuild it.

- Jeff Pinney, the Athletic Director at Simsbury High School, responded that it is not big enough. It is a non-functional building for them, and they do not even use it for concessions. It made sense to remove it.
- Commissioner Antonio inquired if there was any way to address greenery behind the grandstand.
- Mr. Fuselier responded that an arborist could clear the decaying vines and adding a few trees.
- Bill Freeman, a property owner at 2 Welden Way, commented that anything the school can do to enhance that barrier visually and as a sound barrier would be greatly appreciated. He inquired about how low the grandstand would be.
- Mr. Fuselier responded that it would be about 34 to 33 feet high, and with the press box doubling in length it could provide more of a sound barrier. There is also a mesh windscreen being placed on the top row of bleachers which would provide additional visual privacy.
- Mr. Pinney commented that the 1968 design of the grandstand has very steep steps with huge spaces between the bleachers that parents have complained about the safety for their small children and it also impacts a disabled coach from an opposing team that they play against every year. The significance of the rise causes multiple volunteers to carry him to the press box. More ADA compliance would be appreciated.
- Mr. Freeman inquired if the removal of the shed would increase the noise.
- Mr. Fuselier responded that the new structure of the grandstand would have more dampening of noise than what is currently there.

MOTION: Commissioner Antonio made a motion to approve Application #21-13 of Simsbury Public Schools, Owner SLR International Corporation, Applicant, for a variance pursuant to the Simsbury Zoning Regulation Section 3.9 to allow grandstand and press box within the side yard setback at the property located at 34 Farms Village Road (Assessor's Map F11, Block 148, Lot 016). Zone R-40.

Commissioner Rice seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion and Possible Action

a) Application #21-13 of Simsbury Public Schools, Owner SLR International Corporation, Applicant, for a variance pursuant to the Simsbury Zoning Regulation Section 3.9 to allow grandstand and press box within the side yard setback at the property located at 34 Farms Village Road (Assessor's Map F11, Block 148, Lot 016). Zone R-40.

- Commissioner Antonio is very grateful for the revisions SLR did and made a reduction in non-compliance. He believes it is a great benefit to the neighbors and the school.

MOTION: Commissioner Hogan made a motion to approve Application #21-13 of Simsbury Public Schools, Owner SLR International Corporation, Applicant, for a variance pursuant to the Simsbury Zoning Regulation Section 3.9 to allow grandstand and press box within the side yard

setback at the property located at 34 Farms Village Road (Assessor's Map F11, Block 148, Lot 016). Zone R-40, with the stipulation that greenery, specifically arbor vianney will be planted to fill in the holes in the hedge and that the setbacks in their drawing will be maintained. The hardship being that it does not presently conform to ADA building codes compliant and there will be a maintaining of the setback that exists now.

Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Thomas abstained because it has to do with the property.

IV. GENERAL COMMISSION BUSINESS

1. Proposed 2022 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Calendar

MOTION: Commissioner Thomas made a motion to approve the proposed 2022 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Calendar as written.

Commissioner Rice seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF MINTUES of October 27, 2021 Regular Meeting

- Commissioner Kaza made a correction that there was a last name on both the present and absent list at the meeting.
- Mr. Freeman made a correction that he was present at the meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Antonio made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2021 regular scheduled meetings as presented with the correction of Commissioner Freeman being present.

Commissioner Kaza seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Thomas abstained because she was not present at the meeting.

Commissioner Antonio announced the Mike Glidden would no longer be serving the town and he will be missed as the Town Planner, and Cheshire will benefit from his service.

VI. ADJOURNMENT Commissioner Hogan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:33 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Blaze
Commission Clerk