

Board of Adjustment
September 27, 2011

Present:

Members: Brenda Tillberg, Bob Stetson, Peter Grant, Ted Desmond, Paul Jackman

Witnesses: Jim Dumont, Nick Mayer, Peter Meyer, Katie, Raycroft-Meyer, Kenneth Thompson, Eve Thompson, John Moyers

Meeting Called to order at 7:33 by Brenda Tillberg

Continuation of Application # 11-35 of Terasem Movement TransReligion Inc. for conditional use approval for change of use from office/residential/community facility mixed use to solely community facility use located at 2 park place (parcel #235032). The property is located in the Residential, Office, Commercial zoning district. Said application requires approval under Section 341 Conditional Uses.

Brenda Tillberg swore in all the witnesses. Jim Dumont passed out a proposed parking map for the parcel, while the board members reviewed the map Jim discussed where the proposed parking would be. Bob and Brenda questioned how they would access the new parking spaces, as the current area is grass. The next concern by the board was where they would put the snowfall. Jim talked about the realistic number of parking spaces that would be used and the reasoning behind making 18 parking spaces. Peter Meyer came up and talked about the new location of the parking places, and how these new spaces conflict with current traffic patterns. The location of the new parking spaces would "completely fracture the site," and does not feel like it is a very good plan. Other questions Peter Meyer had were regarding handicapped spaces, and the size of the parking space. Brenda questioned Jim regarding what the current parking situation such as how many cars are currently attending. Bob's concern was the placement of the septic tank, currently the septic tank is in the driveway therefore people are driving over it. The current map shows that parking would now be over the septic tank. In a separate permit for another applicant that was not allowed, and why should this be allowed? Jim referenced Steve Revell as the installer of the septic and the septic was designed for this.

Ted's concern was the traffic flow of this plan. Jim noted the concern of the neighbors; he noted the requirement of the parking spots, but only using them on an as needed basis. Katie Raycroft-Meyer responded to Jim that this would not be something that protected the neighbors, while Peter Meyer said that this area and this current plan is flawed and the site doesn't support the parking without taking a piece of the green away. Jim responded with that this map was created in response to what the neighbors wanted.

Bob questioned the use of the space as a community facility, which was correct. Peter Grant then asked what the current use is. Jim responded that the use would be strictly a single use building labeled as a community facility which is creating the number of parking spaces. Jim then suggested that under section 320 (9) they could create an exemption for this property which currently is 50% multi-purpose use changing to 100%

community facility. Brenda noted that they are dealing with a community facility, stating that the current problems are traffic flow, and number of spaces.

Brenda asked more questions about the parking and Bob spoke about the concern he had with the traffic and felt that there was a better way to design this, and therefore wasn't thrilled with the plan. Bob feels that there are not 18 usable spaces with this plan. Jim's response was that Steve Revell was asked to help create a plan with spaces that were not visible. Ted demonstrated on the map where particular traffic issues would be and suggested where the parking places could be with a better traffic flow. Brenda had a question regarding the definition of a setback and considering that the parking lot was not a structure would the setbacks even need to be considered. All the sides with a residential surrounding would mean that they should have a 25 foot buffer, and the other boundaries should be 10 feet. Peter Grant responded to this asking if this would be considered a parking lot?

Bob Stetson moved to postpone this hearing to a date certain of October 25, 2011 at 7:30pm to have the applicant provide a new revised parking and traffic flow plan. Peter Grant seconded the motion.

Discussion.

Peter Grant noted that you could make an exception for a church or another place of worship therefore giving it an exemption for the parking spaces. Paul then said that they would have to actually define this as a church in order to make the exemption. Jim noted that the problem wasn't that they needed more parking spaces, but that the zoning ordinance says that they need to have these parking spaces. Katie felt that the parking wouldn't be controlled and people couldn't be told where to park. Nick noted that the parking would be used one day per month and one hour on that day, and if it is written in the zoning bylaws could there be exceptions made for a church with the building currently at 50% church use.

Eve Thompson expressed concern about the traffic pattern, entering into a busy part of North Street with Rite Aid and Almost Home.

Brenda Tillberg amended the motion to include landscaping. Bob Stetson seconded the amendment. Motion passed (5-0) with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30.