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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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ZBA 2002-3
Petition of Boston Sports Club
150 Great Plain Avenue

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, January 17, 2002 at 7:30 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of BOSTON SPORTS CLUB requesting Site Plan Approval pursuant to the provisions of Section XVIA and Section XXV of the Zoning Bylaw to allow enclosure of 3 existing outdoor tennis courts (124 feet by 160 feet) and construction of a connection (97 feet by 28 feet) to the existing recreational facility, totaling 22,740 square feet of footprint and floor area, at its premises at 150 GREAT PLAIN AVENUE, in an Educational B District. The one-story building will have a height of 36 feet to roof peak. Associated landscaping will be provided.

On November 29, 2001, the petitioner filed a request for a hearing before this Authority, and thereafter, due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Presenting the case at the hearing was Gary Graham, principal of Graham/Meus Architects, who was accompanied by Linda Tetreault, Project Manager; Robert Oliva, Project Engineer from Hamwey Engineering; and Bruce Buckbee, Development Director for Town Sports International, which is the operator for the Boston Sports Clubs.

Using photographs of the existing building, Mr. Graham walked the Board through the project. There are two connected buildings. One contains four tennis courts and the other contains a swimming pool, two tennis courts, a locker room and other facilities. At the rear of the building, there are four outdoor clay tennis courts. The new building will enclose three of the courts, which will be a decrease in the impervious surface. The fourth court will be restored to natural conditions. The Wetlands Committee and the Design Review Board had many suggestions as to the landscaping in the area of the fourth tennis court. The last building in the complex is the Babson Skating Rick, which is managed by Babson College. The 384 space parking lot is located in front of the skating rink.

Grading and Drainage

Robert Oliva said the existing courts have extensive wetlands on two sides, with an intermittent stream in the rear. The stream is picked up by a 24 inch culvert, which leads to another wetland.

Mr. Oliva explained that the clay tennis courts have an impervious surface, which is slightly less impervious than a rooftop and pavement. Therefore, the drainage analysis carried less of a curve number on the impervious clay surface than for the rooftop, which produces an increase in runoff based on the surface.

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types. They have provided stone drip edges that the rooftop will drip into and will provide infiltration into the ground at a slow rate. The overall volume is at or below the dripping level, as are the peak rates, with the exception of a 100 year storm event.

The Board asked how the drip edges worked. Mr. Oliva said the stone drip edge has a width of four feet, a depth of 2.5 feet, is surrounded by a filter fabric, and acts as a channel. The water infiltrates into the ground. If the 100 year storm event is exceeded, the water will simply overflow into the wetland area.

A curb will be installed in the newly paved area pursuant to the Order of Conditions. There will be some grading starting at the low point, which will be connected to the culvert with a catch basin. The Order of Conditions also requires creation of a wetlands replication area since part of the existing wetlands will be filled. A portion of the existing intermittent stream will be involved and replicated with a new bank area. This will be picked up by the 24 inch culvert. A new water line will be installed, but construction is being handled by Babson College under a separate project.

Ms. Tetreault added that there would be approximately 38 different plant species native to the area in the replicated wetland area. The red maples and white pines will have a height of 6-8 feet to provide screening.

The Board asked where the HVAC equipment would be located. Ms. Tetreault said it would be located at the rear of the building, which will be screened by the wetlands plantings. No equipment will be located on the roof.

Traffic and Parking

Mr. Graham said a Traffic Analysis had been done as part of the PSI project. The Board asked if a parking demand analysis had been done for the facility. Mr. Buckbee said no such analysis had been done. The only time a conflict could occur would be if a major event at the skating rink coincided with an event at the Sports Club. An agreement has been reached between Babson and the Sports Club that major events will not be scheduled for the same time.

The Board asked if the existing parking lot satisfies the requirements of Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw. The Executive Secretary said it had when originally permitted, and that the Fire Department had no issues with lane width or turning radii. There is a provision in the original site plan approval granted to Babson Recreation Center for landbanking 12 parking spaces. These spaces have not been constructed so as not to increase the impervious surface, but are available, if necessary.

The Board noted the traffic analysis shows a minor increase in traffic. However, if an outdoor facility is being turned into an indoor facility, it should increase the use. Also, the reprogramming of the existing space currently occupied by two of the indoor courts to a more intensive use should also increase traffic.

The Board stated that the traffic analysis did not cover demand. Mr. Buckbee said the traffic analysis included trip generation, which would increase because the renovated space would be devoted to a facility for young children who do not drive. There would be less need for parking, but increased trip generation due to drop-off and pick-up of children by their parents. Mr. Graham added that this issue had been discussed with the Planning Board. The increased trip generation was included in the traffic study.

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Arlene Baker, 107 Wellesley Avenue, said the Planning Board had asked how many Sports Club members lived in Wellesley. The answer was 4,000 members, which is 10 times more than the available parking spaces.

Mr. Buckbee said there has rarely been a parking problem. It is not in the club's best interest for the members to have parking problems because if they do, they do not remain members. A member may have to walk from the far end of the lot, but 95% of the time, there is space.

Mr. Buckbee explained that during the course of a year, a club generally loses 30-35% of its membership. Members can join on a monthly basis, so it is difficult to give the Board an accurate count of members. There are about 400 lockers, which were planned for peak volume. There are 384 parking spaces including the 12 landbanked spaces..

The Board asked if anyone policed the lot. Mr. Buckbee said that his personnel and the Babson College Police monitor the lot. The Board asked if the spillover cars park along the entrance drive, and if so, how often this occurs, and is there any control as to parking on both sides of the drive. Mr. Buckbee said he could not answer those questions because he is not on site, but the general manager and the Babson Police patrol the premises.

Mr. Graham said they had worked closely with the Fire Department, particularly as to access at the rear of the building, and no parking problems had been mentioned by the Fire Department.

Health Department Concerns

The Board stated that the Health Department had commented about the wetlands areas being potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes, but had made no specific recommendations. They had also commented about the coffee bar proposed for the tennis court area. If food service is being added, a plan must be submitted to the Health Department and a food service permit must be obtained.

Mr. Buckbee said that only free coffee is available. No food would be available in any form. The Board stated that if, at any time in the future, any type of food service was added, permission and a permit from the Health Department would be required.

Lighting

The Board asked about lighting for the building. Ms. Tetreault said there would be wall mounted lights at the rear of the building. There will be no free standing light poles. The facility closes at 11 p.m. and the lights could be turned off at that time because there is no pedestrian circulation at the rear of the building. The Board decided that the lights would have to be extinguished no later than 11:30 p.m.

Construction Management

The Board asked how construction would be staged for the project. Ms. Tetreault said the heavy equipment would be parked in the paved area of the eastern parking lot, and construction materials would be stored in that location. There would be no entrance except from Great Plain Avenue. The building is pre-fabricated, so it should not take long to construct.

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Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 150 Great Plain Avenue on a 26.76 acre lot in an Educational B District. Babson College owns the property and leases the existing buildings to the Boston Sports Club, with the exception of the skating rink over which Babson maintains control. From 1974 to 1996, the premises were known as the Babson Recreation Center under the management of the college. From 1996 to 2001, the premises were leased to the Health Development Corporation, which managed the facilities under the name of The Wellesley Center. Currently, the Boston Sports Club, a division of Town Sports International, manages the facilities under a lease agreement with Babson College.

The petitioner is requesting Site Plan Approval to enclose three existing outdoor tennis courts and construct a connection from the enclosed courts to the existing facility. The total footprint and floor area will be 22,740 square feet. The height of the roof peak over the enclosed courts will be 36 feet with the flat roof at a height of 16 feet. The fourth tennis court will be returned to natural conditions. Associated landscaping will be provided.

The following engineering plans were submitted:

X1.0	Existing Conditions Plan	11/28/01, revised 12/19/01	John R. Andrews, Registered Land Surveyor
C1.1	Site Plan	8/9/01, revised 9/7/01, Revised 1/4/02	Fred A. Hamwey, Registered Professional Engineer
C2.1	Site Details, Notes & Legend	8/9/01, revised 9/7/01 revised 1/4/02	Fred A. Hamwey, Registered Professional Engineer
C2.2	Site Details	8/9/01, revised 1/4/02	Fred A. Hamwey, Registered Professional Engineer
L-1.1	Streambank Enhancement	8/2001	Budd Titlow, PWS
L1.1	Landscape Plan	1/9/02	Dan K. Gordon, Registered Landscape Architect

The following architectural plans, all stamped by Daniel L. Meus, Registered Architect, were submitted:

A1.0	Key Plan	11/28/01
A1.1	Floor Plan/Tennis Enclosure	11/28/01
A1.2	Floor Plan/Sports Club for Kids	11/28/01
A2.1	Exterior Elevations	11/28/01
A2.2	Exterior Elevations	11/28/01
A2.3	Exterior Elevations	11/28/01

The following written materials were submitted:

1. Official Development Prospectus with attachments, prepared by Graham/Meus Architects
2. Stormwater Drainage Analysis dated 1/4/02, prepared by Hamwey Engineering
3. Traffic Impact and Access Study dated April, 2001, prepared by TEPP LLC

The Design Review Board held a Preliminary Review on June 14, 2001 and a Final Review on December 13, 2001, at which time the Board voted to accept the submission as presented, subject to provision of a final planting plan, a final materials list, and any revisions made to submitted plans.

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On September 13, 2001, the Wetlands Protection Committee issued an Order of Conditions (DEP 324-369) for the project.

On October 4, 2001, the Planning Board issued a Special Permit for a Project of Significant Impact (PSI-01-01).

All submitted plans and written materials were sent to the Planning Board, Wetlands Protection Committee, Town Engineer, Board of Health and Fire Chief, as required by Section XVIA of the Zoning Bylaw. Written responses from each of the above were received and are on file in the office of the Board of Appeals.

On November 13, 2001, the Planning Board reviewed the project and reiterated its recommendations detailed in the Special Permit (PSI 01-01) and endorsed the comments of the Design Review Board.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the plans and materials submitted as well as the information presented at the public hearing. The petitioner's proposed enclosure of three tennis courts and connector structure totaling 22,740 square feet of footprint and floor area, at 150 Great Plain Avenue, in an Educational B District, constitutes both a Project of Significant Impact because the gross floor area exceeds 10,000 square feet, and a Major Construction Project pursuant to Section XVIA of the Zoning Bylaw because it includes the construction of 2,500 or more square feet of floor area.

It is the opinion of this Authority that the proposed plans and latest revisions comply with the Zoning Bylaws of the Town, protect the safety, convenience and welfare of the public, minimize additional congestion in public and private ways, insure adequate protection for water, sewerage, and drainage. Furthermore, compliance with Section XVIIIA, Section XVI, Section XXI and Section XXII of the Zoning Bylaw is ensured.

Site Plan Approval is hereby granted, as voted unanimously by this Authority at the Public Hearing, pursuant to Section XIVA of the Zoning Bylaw, subject to the conditions attached hereto as Addendum A.

APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION, IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A, SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

Cynthia S. Hibbard, Acting Chairman

Robert A. Bastille

Robert W. Levy

Cc: Planning Board
Wetlands Protection Committee
Inspector of Buildings
Shelley Kaplan, Babson College
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ADDENDUM A

1. All work shall be performed in accordance with the latest revised plans submitted and on file with this Authority.

2. All design and construction shall comply with all applicable state and local codes.

3. All requirements of the Town of Wellesley Fire Department shall be met including the requirement that there shall be no parking behind the existing Fitness Club Building for a distance beginning at the new hydrant shown on Site Plan (C1.1) to the end of the roadway.

4. All requirements of the Department of Public Works shall be met, including, but not limited to the requirement that water, sewer and electric connections, together with drainage connections, be made in accordance with DPW standards and installed and maintained at no cost to the Town of Wellesley.

5. The Order of Conditions (DEP 324-3~~76~~69) issued by the Wetlands Protection Committee on September 13, 2001, is hereby incorporated into this decision.

6. The Special Permit (PSI 01-01) issued by the Planning Board on October 4, 2001 is hereby incorporated into this decision.

7. If, at any time in the future, food service is offered within any portion of the facility, a plan shall be submitted to the Health Department, and a Food Service Permit shall be required.

8. All illumination at the rear of the new construction shall be extinguished no later than 11:30 p.m. on any day the Boston Sports Club is open to the public.

9. Upon completion of the project, a complete set of site utility plans shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works.

10. A copy of the Occupancy Permit issued by the Inspector of Buildings shall be submitted to this Authority at the time of issuance.