

RAMSEY ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Minutes of the Special Meeting
Held November 30, 2010

The **Chairman, Howard Cantor** called the regular meeting of the Board of Adjustment of the Borough of Ramsey to order at 8:04 PM. Howard Cantor announced that notice of this meeting, stating its time and place, has been published in *The Record* and *The Ridgewood News* in accordance with the Sunshine Law and that notice was also posted on the bulletin board of the Municipal Building. The Chairman also pointed out the location of the fire exits.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

James Forbes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE	PRESENT	ABSENT
Howard Cantor, Chairman	X	
Luke Chamberlin	X	
Richard Daul, Alternate No. 2	X	
James Forbes, Vice Chairman	X	
Gary Gyss	X	
Abbas Safai		X
Thomas Scuderi, Alternate No. 1	@ 8:07	
Angela Strollo	X	
David Torchin		X
Deirdre Dillon, Council Liaison	X	
Robert E. Landel, Board Attorney	X	
Richard Mammone, Zoning Officer	X	
Barbara McCausland, Board Secretary	X	

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Castle, Brian & Alison Leentjes, Block 3603, Lot 1. Variance for use and site plan approval of outdoor activities.

James Jaworski, Esq. is representing **The Castle**. **Mr. Jaworski** said there were residual issues that were outstanding at the October meeting. There were issues with the go-karts specifically with noise, fuel, pollution, and service. **Mr. Jaworski** said they come tonight with the solution to those problems. **Mr. Jaworski** said they are now intending to go with an electrical, battery powered system (go-karts). There will be twice as many go-karts needed because when one is being charged there must be another ready for use.

Jay Troutman was sworn in by **Mr. Landel**. He is a principal with the firm of McDonough & Rea Associates, Inc. **Mr. Troutman** has been practicing as a traffic engineer for 23 years.

Mr. Troutman gave his analysis of the traffic impact which can be expected from the proposed recreational facility (The Castle) **Mr. Troutman** stated traffic conditions can be improved for vehicles turning from Route 17 northbound to Constantine Drive by clearing existing vegetation to improve visibility. **Mr. Troutman** answered questions on parking issues on and off-site. **Mr. Troutman** also stated the Home Depot access roadway is adequate to accommodate additional traffic that will be generated by the proposed recreational use. The shoulder lane on Route 17 north coming from Spring Street be a continuous acceleration deceleration lane all the way to Constantine Drive.

Gordon Meth (Borough Traffic Consultant) was sworn in by **Mr. Landel**. **Mr. Meth** said it might be advisable to think about a sidewalk connection from the off-site parking to the site. **Mr. Meth** said with the angle of turn into Constantine Drive and the grades involved and lack of advance site distance his observations are that a prudent driver will come to a complete stop before making the turn. **Mr. Meth** felt it would be prudent to convert the shoulder (lane) into an auxiliary lane for safety access. **Mr. Meth** remarked any type of development using this property will have the same issue to face.

Ms. McKenzie wanted to comment on the issue of parking for meetings & assembly. **Ms. McKenzie** said the assumption for that parking standard is that you are going to have to have seating so you can consequently fit more people into the space; it would be ambitious to have that level of parking for a site that has to provide space for the equipment that people are going to use. **Ms. McKenzie** said she is inclined to think you don't want to over park the site, she thinks that they want a decent sized building that looks nice and if you require too much of the site for parking you are going to have less of a building but still quite bit of activity so **Ms. McKenzie** isn't sure that is what they want in the end.

Alan Bragg 25 Franklin Street was sworn in by **Mr. Landel**. **Mr. Bragg** spoke about his personal observations of the site.

Joe Carey 498 Island Road was sworn in by **Mr. Landel**. **Mr. Carey** asked if there was any trip origin analysis done for the site. **Mr. Troutman** answered, no. **Mr. Carey** said his concern with traffic is basically the impact on local roadways. **Mr. Troutman** said he did a trip generation in the traffic report.

Alan Bragg 25 Franklin Street. **Mr. Bragg** said it was noted by the Environmental Commission that there are buried drums or some types of containers of unknown origin. **Mr. Bragg** recommends that the Board that before an approval is made an independent professional soil testing organization do a random test on the property for contaminants and pollutants. **Mr. Bragg** also stated a title search be done on the property going back to 1910 to find out the use that property had as there was light industry, repair facilities or

factories in this vicinity during that time period.

Mr. Braggin gave his personal opinion on why this application should be denied. **Mr. Braggin** remarked if this application is approved and if certain issues occur after it is approved it is too bad. If there are issues of traffic accidents, accidents on site issues of loitering, and teenage kids "hanging out" causing problems it is a done deal. **Mr. Braggin** stated this is just another diversion for our local students. **Mr. Braggin** also said that this is an amusement area that doesn't fit into the scheme of the community of Ramsey and he believes it is a misuse and should not be granted.

Joe Carey 498 Island Road. **Mr. Carey** said he has heard nothing but positive comments from his neighbors about the type of facility that is being proposed. The concerns of noise, use of fuels on the site and safety from the train tracks the applicant appears to have a great deal of experience and great concern of issues that might arise will be dealt with. He seems to be aware of any potential issue and appears to have a game plan. **Mr. Carey** said the Board has made a number of stipulations that would take care of most of the other issues.

Mr. Braggin said he brought up an issue (undetermined containers) that should have been brought up by the Environmental Commission to this Board. **Mr. Braggin** felt he was obligated to bring this forward. **Mr. Braggin** said the fact that the Board knows now and has been acknowledged by the applicant that there are undetermined containers he believes prior knowledge of undetermined buried drums that was noted by the Chairman of the Environmental Commission to hold approval until such time that an investigation is conducted to preclude any contamination of the site.

Mrs. Strollo stated she will follow up on this issue with a letter from the Environmental Commission of their findings to the Board.

Conditions of approval are as follows:

- Fencing in the rear of the property (amusement area)
- Fire chief's approval for emergency access which includes the bridge
- Preservation of the buffer zone
- Mayor and Council/number of machines
- Helmets to be provided for optional use
- Lighting plan approval by the engineer
- Application to DOT for the auxiliary lane
- Conservation easement required in area designated by LOI
- Battery operated electric cars
- Sidewalk off-site and on-site to the parking lot
- Employees and staff will use overflow parking lot during peak hours if necessary
- Time of operation is 10 AM to 12 AM

BOARD ACTION

A roll call vote to approve this application is as follows:

Board Member	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Howard Cantor	X			
Luke Chamberlin		X		
Richard Daul	X			
James Forbes	X			
Gary Gyss	X			
Abbas Safai				X
Thomas Scuderi	X			
Angela Strollo	X			
David Torchin				X

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Adjustment meeting was adjourned at 10:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara McCausland
Board of Adjustment Secretary