

A regular meeting of the **Building and Zoning Committee** for August 2026, was held tonight via web conference, Chairman Matthew Areman presiding. Members present were Commissioners Brockington, Lewis, Stine, Cheramie Walz, and Chirico. Commissioner Norris was absent.

Staff members present were Alyson Elliott, Acting Township Manager; Scott Lynch, Fire Marshal and Director of Building & Codes; Samantha Brinker, Stormwater Coordinator; Robert Coyle, Director of Public Works; William Salvatore, Director of Parks and Recreation; Joseph Stuckert, Street Light and Traffic Signal Superintendent; Kyle Dermer, Highway Superintendent; Robert Dominick, Parks Superintendent. Also present was Ed Diasio, Esq., Township Solicitor.

Mr. Areman called the meeting to order at 9:22 p.m.

Ms. Mary Wylesol, who was having technical difficulties during Citizen's Forum at the Public Works Meeting, was given three minutes to speak. She expressed her concerns with the Melrose Pool agreement.

1. Zoning Appeal #26-3818, Ancilla-Assumpta Academy for 2025 West Church Road, Wyncote.

The application was represented by attorney Matthew McHugh, Esq., Shannon Heybach-Park, P.E., Civil Engineer from Bohler, Jeffrey Klein, Architect, and representatives from Ancilla-Assumpta, Kerry Harp and Maureen Mirabella.

Mr. McHugh and Ms. Park provided an overview of the project, which would involve the construction of a 13,443 sq. ft. gymnasium/athletic facility addition to the existing building and a two-story parking garage with 94 parking spaces in the rear of the property. Additional improvements include widening the existing asphalt driveway and improvements to the athletic field. The applicant requires the following variances:

- 1) A variance from Section 295-502.A., to permit a building coverage of 22.4% whereas a maximum building coverage of 15% is otherwise permitted.
- 2) A variance from Section 295-502.A., to permit an impervious surface coverage of 44.3% whereas a maximum impervious surface coverage of 35% is otherwise permitted. The Property is existing nonconforming with an impervious surface coverage of 40.6%.
- 3) A variance from Section 295-502.A., to permit the front yard setback from Royal Avenue to be 35 feet to the proposed retaining wall whereas a front yard setback of 50 feet is otherwise required.
- 4) A variance from Section 295-2601.A., to permit a driveway width of 24 feet whereas a maximum driveway width of 18 feet is otherwise permitted.
- 5) A determination that the maximum parking requirements of Section 295-2301.D.(6) of the Zoning Ordinance do not apply to parking structures or, in the alternative, a variance from Section 295-2301.D.(6) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit greater than 120% of the required minimum parking.

Mr. Areman asked what prompted the desire to increase parking onsite by 50%. Mr. McHugh said this is an established school located in a residential neighborhood and concerns have been expressed that traffic backs up and effects parking throughout the neighborhood. Increasing parking could help with these issues, without burdening the neighborhood. Mr. Areman asked if any studies were done that would suggest people would park less in the neighborhood. Mr. McHugh said there were no particular studies done, but they have engaged a traffic engineer and are happy to get their input on this if needed. Mr. Areman asked if the applicant met with neighbors to get feedback from them. Mr. McHugh said they have held community meetings and the biggest concern expressed was the stormwater issues and landscaping, which will be addressed during the land development process.

Mr. Lewis said during this process, he wants to protect the character of the neighborhood, value of homes, traffic, and stormwater. It is important to meet the needs of the residents and he wanted to understand the cumulative impact of the five variances being requested and whether the project will change the look of the neighborhood, resolve identified traffic problems, and whether this project will create other problems in the neighborhood.

Mr. McHugh said the school wants to be a good neighbor as the campus evolves to mitigate the impact of the development. The parking and drive aisle variance is intended to address parking in the neighborhood and traffic back up during pickup and drop off. The applicant wants to ensure it is accommodating the use on the property, rather than spilling out into the community. The project will add impervious field and building coverage, and upgrades to stormwater management to meet or exceed regulatory requirements to reduce the rate and flow coming off the site. Mr. McHugh does not agree with the interpretation of the ordinance, as parking is not adding impervious because it is a parking structure on top of existing impervious surfaces.

Ms. Stine asked about how the applicant will address stormwater management, particularly with respect to an 18-24" outlet pipe from the field that directs stormwater toward Royal Avenue and causes flooding. Ms. Park said this is being surveyed, but ultimately there would be an underground basin, which would connect to the main with no outflow. Ms. Stine said there were a lot of questions at last week's Planning Commission meeting about traffic flow, and she was hoping to hear answers to these questions, but so far, no answers have been presented. Ms. Stine said she is skeptical that the driveway widening is the minimum zoning relief required to solve the bus issue and asked whether the applicant explored solving this issue by looking at some of the queuing issues and bus drop off safety at the front of the property, potentially without widening the driveway. Mr. McHugh said they have engaged a traffic engineer earlier in the process to discuss the concerns brought up at the Planning Commission meeting. They are aware of the site concerns and are continuing to evaluate these challenges.

Both Ms. Stine and Mr. Areman expressed concern that the Board is being asked to make a decision without having all the information with respect to site circulation and driveway width.

Mr. Chirico expressed concerns with widening the driveway without knowing if it will fix the traffic problem. He also expressed concerns about the impervious surface and addressing stormwater runoff.

Ms. Cheramie Walz said she thinks this application for zoning relief is a bit premature and is concerned that the applicant is not far enough along in the process to apply for zoning relief. She challenged the applicant to see how the immediate neighbors can be included in this process, since this is a residential neighborhood.

Kerry Harp, Ancilla representative, said Ancilla invited neighbors on both Mulford and Gribbel to a community meeting to hear their concerns about the potential project. The architects also walked the site with neighbors.

Mr. Areman asked if the applicant would be willing to table this application until next month so it can provide additional information to the Committee regarding whether the variances are truly necessary; stormwater management concerns; additional communication with the neighbors; and decisions on the buffers. Mr. McHugh said the applicant would be willing to postpone the Zoning Hearing for a month to provide additional information.

Mr. Lewis said it is very important for the neighbors to have more opportunity for engagement in this process.

Public Comment

Jim Schott, asked about the need for a gym and said that in 1989 there was approval to build a gym and an agreement was made to share parking with Bishop McDevitt and asked if this agreement was still applicable.

Diane Schott, said she would like to see consistency with the 1999 Zoning relief Findings of Fact that the buildings be faced in masonry stone and designed consistently with the exterior of existing buildings on the premises; noise relief consistent with the Findings of Fact; property boundary distance consistent with the Findings of Fact; concern with high density screens; and stormwater runoff.

Pamela Tucker, Royal Avenue, expressed concern about traffic on Royal Avenue from this project and said she did not receive notification from the applicant about neighbor meetings about this project.

Upon motion Mr. Areman, the Committee voted unanimously to table action on this application to allow the applicant time to provide answers to outstanding questions and ensure that zoning relief being requested is appropriate.

2. Zoning Hearing Board Decisions.

a. Appeal #26-3816, Burlington Stores, Inc., for 2471 Cheltenham Avenue, Cheltenham.

Ms. Elliott said the relief was granted with minimal conditions.

Upon motion of Mr. Lewis, the Committee unanimously voted to take no action.

3. Receipt of Monthly Citizen's Committee Meeting Minutes.

a. Planning Commission – July 27, 2026.

Upon motion of Mr. Areman, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

b. Board of Historical & Architectural Review – No Meeting.

4. Receipt of Staff Reports for June 2026.

a. Planning & Zoning Monthly Reports.

Upon motion of Mr. Areman, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the Planning & Zoning Monthly Report.

b. Report of the Building Inspector.

Upon motion of Mr. Areman, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the Report of the Building Inspector.

c. Report of the Code Administrator.

Upon motion of Mr. Areman, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the Report of the Code Administrator.

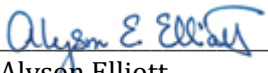
5. Old Business – None.

6. New Business – None.

7. Citizen's Forum.

Sam Thacker, Melrose Park, asked the Board of Commissioners to clarify on the record when the Board of Commissioners made a decision that there would be a pool at Melrose since it was referred to as a community amenity at the December 17, 2025, legislative meeting and as a pool at the March 4, 2026, Zoning Hearing. He also questioned whether the pool would be built in Phase II or Phase III. He noted that the Board of Commissioners said that the community would have adequate time to provide comment on the amenity.

8. There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Areman, the meeting was adjourned at 10:19 p.m.


Alyson Elliott
Acting Township Manager

Per: Ashley Lupino