A regular meeting of the **Building and Zoning Committee** for October 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 Jonathan Altshul, Township Manager; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; Scott Lynch, Fire Marshal/Director of Building & Codes; Robert Coyle, Director of Public Works; Joseph Stuckert, Street Light and Traffic Signal Superintendent. Also present was Ed Diasio, Esq., Township Solicitor.

Mr. Areman called the meeting to order at 8:30 p.m.

1. Zoning Hearing Board Agenda for October 13, 2026

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

      This application was represented by the applicant's attorney Matt McHugh, the applicant's traffic engineer Eric Ostimchuk, and President Kerry Harp.

      Mr. Areman acknowledged the applicant's efforts to take extra time to engage the community and perform additional work before presenting the project again for consideration by the Building and Zoning Committee.

      Mr. Diasio noted that the applicant is not requesting any further relief since the last time it was presented to the Committee. The applicant also prepared a traffic analysis, something that is not required as part of an application for zoning relief. It is generally something more appropriately addressed during the land development process.

      Mr. McHugh said the applicant has taken additional steps to engage with the community since the last time this project was before the Committee. The applicant held a larger community meeting that Mr. Lewis attended, along with some private neighbor meetings on Gribbel Road and Royal Avenue to walk their property lines and talk about their concerns. It has also created a website for this project to keep the community updated on the process and plans.

      Mr. Ostimchuck was engaged to analyze parking, site circulation and traffic on Royal Avenue and provided an overview of the findings and recommendations from the analysis:

      - Parking – The Academy had an agreement with Bishop McDevitt for overflow parking; however, now that Arcadia owns the property, it is using the facility more fully, limiting opportunities for shared parking. During a recent back to school event, the Academy was able to use the Arcadia parking lot, but Academy parking overflowed both the parking lot on its own property and Arcadia's property creating unsafe conditions.
      - Circulation – On a typical school day, there is a back up that occurs on Church Road out to Easton Road during pick up and drop off. Mr. Ostimchuck suggested that the applicant can alleviate the back up by creating better stacking for bus traffic and flow within the campus with a two way connection at Royal Avenue.

      Mr. Lewis asked how the study will address the backlog. Mr. Ostimchuk said this study is a bit different than a Traffic Impact Study, which will look more at off-site factors, this looked more at internal factors, looking at traffic counts at all access points, capacity, and site distance at access points. The purpose was to explain why the applicant is seeking the relief it is seeking – which is t address site circulation and traffic overflow. More information can be provided during the land development process.

      Mr. Lewis asked if the applicant has looked at the variances requested are the minimum variances necessary. Mr. McHugh said he spoke with Mr. Diasio and staff to confirm that they are the minimum variances needed and that they are appropriate.

      Ms. Stine confirmed the applicant does not plan to have traffic going through the bus drop off area when buses are picking up or dropping off students, as shown in the October 5, traffic analysis. Mr. McHugh confirmed that would be the case.

Mr. Chirico asked how the Academy will prevent people from parking on the grass or other locations of the property, as become habit. Mr. Ostimchuk said it will be an education piece from the Academy and possibly Township enforcement.

Mr. Lewis asked if the traffic analysis looked at Gribbel Road. Mr. Ostimchuk said it did not, but the applicant can look at it as part of the land development process.

Public Comment

Luis Cortez, Mulford Road, discussed his concerns about the playground being moved closer to his home. It is very loud and affect his need for sleep during the day. A large structure in his backyard would affect his enjoyment of his property due to blocking sunlight, stormwater, and other concerns.

Joe Holden, Elkins Park, parent of child at Ancillae, said he thought the improvements will reduce traffic and parking congestion around the school as well as for the school community.

Jean Brillman, Elkins Park, Cheltenham resident and parent of child at Ancillae, supported the plan because of parking and traffic concerns. She said Ancillae has communicated to parents about being good neighbors, but there is nowhere for them to go because there is so much traffic.

Jim and Diane Schott, Royal Avenue, said the traffic back up creates dangerous conditions and makes it difficult to get in out of their driveway. This plan will further exacerbate that and would like to see the bus plan improved. They suggested the applicant could consider improving the entrances and exits on Church Road. Objects to the location of parking garage and the increase of traffic on Royal Avenue. They questioned some of the assumptions of the traffic study.

Susan Millis, Gribbel Road, traffic congestion to the school backs up on Church Road, which blocks traffic on Gribbel Road, and her driveway. Said she does not believe the solutions will solve the traffic problems from the campus.

Meryl Fisher, Gribbel Road, said she has not seen a rendering of what the garage structure will look like. She would like to understand what she will see from her backyard.

Ms. Harp said there are multiple pick up and drop off locations for vehicles entering and exiting on Royal Avenue and Church Road, which will help keep the traffic flowing when the buses are loading and unloading. Enrollment is under 575, under the 625 permitted. The Academy is not planning to increase enrollment as part of this project.

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

b. Zoning Appeal #26-3823, St. John's Lutheran Church for 1220 Melrose Avenue.

The application was represented by attorney Andrew Slutsky and engineer Chad Brensinger. Mr. Slutsky explained that the application is looking to subdivide the property to sell the residence. There is no intention to construct any new structures or additions to either parcel.

Mr. Areman asked for clarification for the relief being sought for the daycare. Mr. Slutsky said the variance is being requested because a church use is not permitted by right in the district and would make the property nonconforming; however, a daycare is permitted as an accessory for a church. The relief is being sought out of an abundance of caution.

Ms. Stine asked about the proposed location of the play area. Mr. Slutsky said there a play area is not currently planned. The applicant will discuss the need for this variance with the Township and may withdraw that request. Ms. Stine said she would not support a variance to eliminate screening of a play area from residential uses if one were installed.

Mr. Areman questioned the need for variances being requested when they are not actually necessary – specifically the variance for screening of a playground that will not be installed.

Mr. Slutsky said it is his understanding that requests for relief can be withdrawn up to the hearing, without affecting advertising requirements.

Mr. Diasio suggested that the Committee consider a conditional vote without the extraneous variance and said he would work with staff and the Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor to ensure proper advertising protocol is followed.

Upon motion of Mr. Areman, the Committee unanimously voted 5-0-1, to conditionally take no action as long as variance the variance from §295-405.D.(4)(c) which requires screening for outdoor play areas is removed from the applicant's request. Mr. Chirico recused himself due to potential professional involvement with the applicant.

2. Zoning Hearing Board Decisions.
   a. Appeal #26-3820, Spotless Brand LLC for 2727 Cheltenham Avenue.

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

   b. Appeal #26-3821, Ava Kriegler for 101 Windsor Avenue.

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

3. Receipt of Monthly Citizen's Committee Meeting Minutes.
   a. Planning Commission – September 28, 2026.

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

   b. Board of Historical & Architectural Review – No September Meeting
4. Receipt of Staff Reports for August 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

   Darlene Melton, La Mott, asked why there is no report about how many in-kind projects are granted in the historic districts that do not need a Certificate of Appropriateness.

8. There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Areman, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

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Jonathan Altshul
Township Manager

Per: Alyson Elliott