



Village of Bartlett  
Plan Commission Minutes  
March 11, 2021

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J. Lemberg called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Roll Call

Present: J. Lemberg, Chair, A. Hopkins, M. Hopkins, J. Miaso, and T. Ridenour

Absent: J. Kallas, D. Gunsteen

Also Present: Planning & Development Services Director, Roberta Grill, Village Planner, Kristy Stone, and Associate Planner, Devin Kamperschroer

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the November 12, 2020 meeting minutes.

Motioned by: J. Miaso

Seconded by: M. Hopkins

Roll Call

Ayes: M. Hopkins, J. Miaso, T. Ridenour, and J. Lemberg

Abstain: A. Hopkins

The motion carried.



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**(#21-03) Bartlett Fire Training Facility**

**Site Plan Amendment**

**Special Use** – To allow an accessory structure to exceed 35' in height

**PUBLIC HEARING**

The following exhibits were presented:

**Exhibit A – Picture of Sign**

**Exhibit B – Mail Affidavit**

**Exhibit C – Notification of Publication**

**D. Kamperschroer** this property was re-zoned to the P-1 Public Lands District in July 2007 by ordinance #2007-76. The petitioner is requesting a special use permit to allow the height of the 41-foot 9-inch training facility to exceed the maximum 35-foot height requirement in the P-1 zoning district. The parking area on the site would be extended eastward where a concrete pad would be constructed to provide space for a fire truck to maneuver on one side of the structure. Due to the construction of the pad, 4 parking spaces would be removed from the northeast row of parking. The fire station parking lots would contain a total of 23 parking spaces, which meets the zoning ordinance requirement of 23 spaces. Fire training events would take place 6 to 8 times a month with burning events taking place 4 times per year. As a condition of approval, the Fire Protection District would be required to contact the Bartlett Police Department in advance of training events to be prepared for calls from the public regarding smoke traveling from the structure. The smoke generated from these events would not exceed the level of smoke produced from a residential fireplace. The fire protection district follows regulations from both the Environmental Protection Agency and National Fire Protection Association, which require the use of class A combustible materials such as hay, paper, and wood. The facility is meant for training purposes only and would not be habitable. When the facility is not in use the windows would be shuttered and locked, and the doors would be locked. The petitioner would be adding landscaping to the new parking island. All other landscaping, including the landscaping on the berm along West Bartlett Road, would remain as required per the approved 2007 landscape plan. The staff recommends approval of the petitioner's requests for a site plan and special use permit subject to the conditions and findings of fact detailed in the staff report.

The petitioner, **Chief William Gabrenya** came forward. **J. Lemberg** asked if there were any questions or motions by the Committee. **M. Hopkins** asked how will the neighboring properties be affected by the smoke generated 4 times a year? **Chief Gabrenya** stated that only class A material would be burned in the building, like what would be burned in a fireplace. Typically, we would be burning hay and are only burning enough inside the structure to produce low visibility so that we can practice our search and rescues. Once we open the building it is a very light/white wispy smoke that dissipates very quickly. I would anticipate that it would not even be seen coming across W. Bartlett Road. **M. Hopkins** will the heat and smoke generated blacken the building or will the color of the building stay red as shown on the renderings? **Chief Gabrenya** there is a little bit of heat produced in the burn rooms, but it will not have fire blowing out of the windows. There is a 10-year paint warranty on the building, so that should stay intact. **A. Hopkins** looking at the site plan, you are going to be reducing parking spaces. How many parking spaces are taken up by the staff that is there currently and will there be other communities using this as well? **Chief Gabrenya** there would be 4 people stationed there with 4



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cars. We have 23 parking spaces. There are a lot of parking spaces for the amount of people that are stationed there. When we have other people coming from other stations, they are coming down in the apparatus that they are assigned to that day. Typically, when we are going to train at this facility, we might have crews from station 1 and station 2 that are coming to this facility to train, but they are going to be in their engines and ambulances. That is why we are creating this big concrete pad so that we can position the vehicles. **A. Hopkins** how many apparatuses can fit on the concrete pad? **Chief Gabrenya** about 4 to 5. There is quite a bit of room in that area. **A. Hopkins** I am always concerned about parking. I think in our village code it needs to be increased. Is 4 to 5 firefighters fully staffed? **Chief Gabrenya** yes, that is fully staffed. **A. Hopkins** no other firefighters can be put out there. **Chief Gabrenya** no. **A. Hopkins** I just want to make sure because if more firefighters get hired out there, more parking spaces would be needed, but it seems like that is not going to be an issue. **Chief Gabrenya** there are 23 parking spaces. **A. Hopkins** are you only burning hay and not wood because I am concerned about that area of town, which has an older senior population that there would be breathing issues. I do not know if you could burn other things down the road. I am really concerned for the residents and businesses that are in that area. **Chief Gabrenya** Spring Lake Estates is a quarter mile away. It would be nearly impossible to have any affects from a quarter mile away. We fall under the National Fire Protection Association guidelines and OSHA guidelines. We are only allowed to burn class A materials, which is no different than what are burned in a fireplace. **A. Hopkins** Carol Stream has a similar tower. **Chief Gabrenya** correct, in a neighborhood. **A. Hopkins** is there any reason that Bartlett could not team up with Carol Stream if you are only using this for burning 4 times a year? Would it make sense to use the Carol Stream facility? **Chief Gabrenya** there are several reasons that we do not go to Carol Stream. One is that we have to pay overtime to do that in the amount of \$50,000 a year and right now and their facility is out of service because they cannot conduct live fire training there. Their structure is a very large concrete building and because they were burning in their structure, over time, it had an effect on the brick and mortar. My understanding is that some of that has started to crack. Until they get those repairs made they are not allowed to do any burns in that structure. It is not feasible for us. I am not going to take a unit out of service to send people to Carol Stream. That would reduce services to our community. **A. Hopkins** does there need to be an ambulance available when a burn is going on and if so, are we reducing service to our community? **Chief Gabrenya** are you asking if we are required to have an ambulance present whenever we are conducting training at that facility? **A. Hopkins** I am concerned about our residents and firefighters if something happens and they have to be transferred to the hospital. There should be an ambulance on site to transfer them. **Chief Gabrenya** I am also concerned about our firefighters. All of our firefighters are paramedics, which is the same type of service that is on an ambulance. The only thing that an ambulance does is allow us to transport that person to a hospital. We only have 2 ambulances in town and 3 suppression vehicles because technically, we have 14 or 15 paramedics working every day. Depending on where the call is, there are always paramedics available. **A. Hopkins** that is a concern to me. If you are going to be having training out there, you still have to be able to provide ambulance service. If you are doing training and a call comes in, who is going to the call? That is a safety issue. This structure is made of shipping containers. **Chief Gabrenya** correct. **A. Hopkins** Are there any other facilities that use shipping containers? **Chief Gabrenya** yes, there are other communities including Orland Park and Lombard that use shipping containers because they last a long time and do not have the same issues as with brick and mortar. **A. Hopkins** is there a typical foundation with concrete and footings? **Chief Gabrenya** correct. **A. Hopkins** that location on W. Bartlett Road is not aesthetically



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pleasing. Would this type of structure using shipping containers be permitted for a business or resident? **R. Grill** we actually have a commercial entity in town that has already requested to utilize shipping containers as part of their development. **A. Hopkins** would they keep the outside open or put something on the outside? **R. Grill** the unit would probably be 3-sided with 1 side open. St. Charles has a double-decker bar using shipping containers. It would be permitted as long as it meets all of our building regulations. **T. Ridenour** I understand when we use the term burn it is simply to create reduced visibility inside the structure so that the firefighters can practice their necessary drills under low visibility and not a fire per say inside the building. **Chief Gabrenya** that is correct. The intent is to provide reduced visibility so that we can practice search and rescue, and deploy hose lines. I understand the concerns, but this is going to make Bartlett a safer community. We do not have a place to train in this community. We do not have a place to throw ladders or deploy hose lines, or where I can take somebody off a second or third floor balcony. This would provide a location for us to train and be a safer community. **T. Ridenour** I think it is a good idea.

**J. Lemberg** opened up the public hearing portion of the meeting.

**Jay Langfelder** of 1665 Penny Lane, Bartlett came forward via Zoom and stated that he was concerned about the cost of the training tower where we currently have training towers located in Carol Stream, West Chicago, Elgin Community College, and Streamwood being built and to be completed by April. March 20, 2018, the community and taxpayers of the Bartlett Fire Protection District where we were generous in supporting the referendum to continue the level of service. The community was given the unfunded liability schedule of an aging fleet and the increased expenses and emergency alarms to the slow growth of revenue for the fire district and the community supported and voted for the referendum. I am a strong proponent for a fully-trained staff in emergency situations when it comes to efficiently spending our resources. The upkeep and replacement of the fleet takes precedence over a proposed training tower. In the meantime, since the last time I spoke at the Village Hall meeting, I talked to Danny Stelter of the Carol Stream Fire Department. He is the supervisor and heads the tower at Carol Stream. He informed me that that tower is operational, but is closed twice a month. Last year they were closed due to COVID, but he was very positive on the training facility and the opportunities it provides for their fire district. My main concern is the replacement of vehicles. To my understanding, through a Freedom of Information Act, the fire district provided that this facility is costing taxpayers \$300,000. I do understand from the last meeting that grants are provided for this facility. Those are my main concerns as a resident of the Bartlett Fire Protection District.

**George Lebron** of the Timberline Subdivision came forward via Zoom and asked what was the purpose of this new facility and what harmful affects would it have to the air around our neighborhood? **Chief Gabrenya** the only thing we are allowed to burn in a building like this, which would only happen about 4 times a year, are class A combustibles, which is no different from what would be burned in a fireplace. We would be using hay because it is easily accessible and produces a white smoke to lower visibility so that we can practice search and rescue. **R. Grill** this is going to meet all EPA regulations, correct? **Chief Gabrenya** yes, we are under strict guidelines by OSHA, EPA and the National Fire Protection Association.



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**M. Hopkins** the special use is for 41 feet and 9 inches, but it is measured in the drawings to the top of the footing. Can we be sure that is okay if later on the top of the footing is 6 inches above grade? **R. Grill** yes, 6 inches would be fine.

**J. Lemberg** asked if there were any further questions or comments? No one came forward.

**J. Lemberg** closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

**J. Miaso** made a motion to pass along a **positive recommendation** to the Village Board to approve case **(#21-03) Bartlett Fire Training Facility** for a site plan amendment and special use to allow a structure to exceed 35 feet subject to the conditions and findings of fact outlined in the staff report.

**Motioned by: J. Miaso**

**Seconded by: M. Hopkins**

Roll Call

**Ayes: M. Hopkins, J. Miaso, T. Ridenour, J. Lemberg**

**Nays: A. Hopkins**

**The motion carried.**



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**Old Business/ New Business**

**K. Stone** we have a business in the Bluff City Industrial Park that will be coming in next month for PUD Plan, General Site Plan, and Special Use Permits for outdoor storage and wood product production. The following month, we will probably have a large development at the northwest corner of W. Bartlett Road and Route 59.

**J. Lemberg** asked if there was a motion to adjourn.

**Motioned by: A. Hopkins**

**Seconded by: J. Miaso**

**Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.**