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Open Space & Stewardship
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MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board
From: Lauren A. Wasilauski, Open Space & Stewardship Director
Date: April 21, 2023
Re: BA-02-23: The Bedens Brook Club
Block 31001 Lots 38 & 39 (240 Rolling Hill Road)
Minor Site Plan and Use Variance

This office has reviewed the following materials and offers the comments below:

- Minor Site Plan & Use Variance Plan, prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates, last revised 3/17/2023 (3 sheets)

A. Application overview

1. The Bedens Brook Club is a pre-existing non-conforming use, located in the R-5 zoning district.
2. The Applicant proposes to add lighting to two (2) existing tennis courts.

B. Tree Planting and Landscaping

1. Shade Trees: 14 trees per acre are required for residential and non-residential development per Township Code Section 16-5.6d.3. The Applicant is seeking a waiver from this requirement.
 - a. Based on the lack of any new disturbance, this office does not oppose this request.
2. Landscape buffer screening is required by Code Section 16-5.6d.13. Additional plantings should be added on the south side of the tennis courts in order to minimize glare to the nearby homes located south of the tennis courts on Rolling Hill Road & Southern Hills Drive.
3. Native plant species are required by Township Code Section 16-5.6.d.5.

4. All plant materials should include a two (2) year guarantee as required by Township Code Section 16-5.6.d.10:

“All plant material shall be guaranteed for at least two (2) years from the date of landscape inspection for approval and any plant material that does not survive within that time period or is in poor condition based upon the opinion of the Township Landscape Architect shall be replaced by plant material of the same size and species at the expense of the developer.”

C. Lighting

1. The Applicant proposes nine (9) posts with lighting fixtures to light two (2) existing tennis courts.
2. The lighting details show the proposed lighting as downward facing which this office appreciates.
3. However, the Applicant should add shields to the lights to only direct lighting onto the courts and to minimize any spillover to surrounding areas.
4. The lighting should utilize a color temperature that is no more than 3000 kelvins.
5. The lights should only be in operation when the courts are used, not automatically turned on every night.
6. The impacts of too much light at night (particularly “blue” or short wavelength lighting) have been documented to negatively impact human health, as well as wildlife and insects.
 - a. Princeton University’s Office of Sustainability recently released a short documentary detailing these negative impacts:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FW0WZX75Nmo>
7. This is particularly important because there is habitat for the federally threatened Northern myotis bat along the Club’s southerly border and properties south (see screen grab below).
 - a. This office encourages the Applicant to install a bat box on the property.

