

Minutes from the
DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
November 26, 2012

The Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular Meeting was held at 7:00 p.m., Monday, November 26, 2012 in the Doylestown Township Municipal Building, 425 Wells Road, Doylestown, PA. Members of the Planning Commission in attendance included: Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, Vice Chairman; Kenneth L. Snyder with members; George Lowenstein, Edward Redfield and Thomas Kelso. Also in attendance was Township Manager; Stephanie J. Mason, Board of Supervisor Liaison; Richard F. Colello and Township Planning Consultant; Ms. Judy Stern Goldstein

Review of Minutes:

In the form of a motion by Mr. Redfield; seconded by Mr. Kelso the October 22, 2012 Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular meeting minutes were approved with the following corrections...

Page 1: Review of Minutes – change vote to 3-0-2.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

Public/Commission Comments: None

Shelbourne Development Group – Preliminary Land Development

Joseph A. Zadlo of Shelbourne Healthcare Development Group thanked the commission and township for their cooperation with the project. He was also appreciative with the quick response in providing comments from the review letters during Hurricane Sandy. Since meeting with the commission on October 22nd, the applicants have no objections to comments provided in all review letters received and noted three items.

Item 1: Septa Bus Stop

Thomas M. Hanna of Gilmore & Associates spoke with Brendan Miller of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) to discuss a possible bus stop off 55 route of Route 611 adjacent to the property's driveway. A field review will be performed the week of November 26th of adjacent intersections. Background information was provided relating to shift hours and staffing. A decision will be made by SEPTA whether to remove an existing bus stop upon reviewing the route plans. Mr. Lowenstein questioned if the bus will pull over for pickups. Mr. Hanna answered; he doesn't believe it will be necessary due to the existing 8 to 10 foot wide shoulder located near the proposed bus stop.

Ms. Mason provided Mr. Hanna with a copy the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) memo regarding a study performed with SEPTA in creating appropriate bus stops for his review.

Mr. Zadlo indicated the applicants have every intention in cooperating with the township regarding the installation of a bus stop off the property.

Mr. Kelso questioned if a bus shelter will be provided. Ms. Mason answered; a shelter is incorporated in the DVRPC's guidelines and suggested the applicants add a bus shelter design to their final land development plan.

Item 2: Trash Service

Mr. Zaldo explained due to the configuration of the site, the applicants will contract a trash service where flip top drum will be wheeled back and forth to the curbside.

Item 3: Sidewalks

Upon further research, Mr. Zaldo found there are no sidewalks located along Route 611. The revised plans show a sidewalk running along the existing swale. Mr. Hanna explained it would be a challenge in having the sidewalk cross over the swale. The difficulty is with installing a large pipe and additional grading.

Mr. Lowenstein questioned if there is a safe solution in getting to the nearby shopping center and will the existing crosswalk stripping be removed. Mr. Hanna responded; as per Dave Tomko's suggestion, a curb cut will be shown on the other side at the property line for future sidewalk connection. Also, if the curb ramp cannot fit, the cross walk will be taken away. Mr. Hanna is currently reviewing the plans for a solution. Ms. Stern Goldstein commented the sidewalk issue is complicated, but can be overcome. However, the applicants will need to consider the township's plans for a corridor in the future as a pedestrian connection. Ms. Stern Goldstein believes the Thompson Organization received a waiver for a sidewalk as a fee in lieu, so monies can be set aside for future consideration.

A discussion ensued between the commission, Ms. Stern Goldstein and Ms. Mason on the best option to construct a sidewalk connection.

Mr. Kelso is happy with the overall plan as long as the applicants work towards in providing a pedestrian connection and bus stop. He suggested a small 8 foot wide bridge be constructed over the swale.

Mr. Colello questioned the danger in making a left hand turn off the egress and will a "Right Turn Only" signage be provided. Mr. Zaldo answered; Penn Dot has control of what happens with the driveway and a permit will be required. Mr. Hanna added Dave Warner is preparing a traffic study and will be meeting with Penn Dot. A highway occupancy permit will be required to improve the driveway. Mr. Hanna added Mr. Warner believes with the center lane and enough gaps in traffic between the two traffic signals, a left hand turn is possible. Mr. Hanna will re-address the issue at his next meeting with Penn Dot. Mr. Zaldo stated if Penn Dot's suggests signage be provided, the applicants will abide.

As per neighboring resident's request, Ms. Mason asked Mr. Hanna to review the buffering section of the landscaping plan for clarification. Mr. Hanna explained there are few trees in which the applicants are obligated to replace. They will be planted adjacent to the residential properties as an addition to the existing trees. Not all trees will fit, so a donation along with a waiver request will be presented. There is 113 feet from the property line to the edge of the parking facility with another 60 feet to the building to create a fair enough distance. Ms. Stern Goldstein noted a recent change in the ordinance requires an applicant to submit a plan regarding the care and maintenance of the buffer yard.

Public Comment:

Resident; Gordon J. Farabaugh of 321 Bunker Hollow Road questioned if according to the site plan, trees closest to the property are the existing trees. Mr. Hanna answered; there is a stipulation 50 foot buffer as a setback which cannot be built on. The applicants are currently at 113 feet. There will be additional buffering of trees provided beyond the 50 feet requirement.

Resident; William P. Long of 325 Bunker Hollow Road questioned if there are any other variance issues needed to be address. Mr. Zadlo answered; a waiver request requiring showing existing features by survey of 400 feet of the property line in lieu of an aerial photo was presented. Ms. Mason added the waiver request is for the subdivision land development requirements. Mr. Long then questioned if a berm will be presented as part of the plan to serve as a buffer from the residential properties. Mr. Hanna answered; a berm will not be proposed. There is an existing swale located adjacent to the trees, which drains a portion back to the site into a retention basin. Ms. Stern Goldstein clarified the berm was part of an ordinance stipulation years ago. If the berm were to be provided, it would assist in the death of existing trees. Ms. Stern Goldstein then provided Mr. Long with the applicant's landscaping plan for his review and noted the plan will be quite effective.

In the form of a motion by Mr. Kelso; seconded by Mr. Lowenstein the Doylestown Township Planning Commission recommends the Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors approves applicant: Shelbourne Healthcare Development Group's Final Land Development Plan to construct an assisted living facility. The applicants received, understands and will comply with the November 14th Pickering, Corts & Summerson, November 16th Pennoni Associates, Inc., November 15th Boucher & James, Inc., November 16th SC Engineers, Inc., November 7th Bucks County Planning Commission and November 16th Michael Baker, Jr. Inc. review letters. Further, applicants will continue to work with the Township on establishing a formal bus stop located on the northbound lane of Route 611 adjacent to the property.

Motioned carried 5 to 0.

McOwen/Orhberg – Minor Subdivision \ Lot Line Change

Thomas L. Coolbaugh, PLS of TLC Surveying, Inc. presented the commission with the McOwen/Orhberg Minor Subdivision plan on behalf of property owner; Ester W. McOwen of 42 Pebble Woods Drive. The plan proposes to convey a portion of lot TMP 9-34-38 and the remainder to lot TMP 9-34-37 by consolidating three lots into two with no improvements to be made. The minor subdivision plans have been prepared by TLC Surveying, Inc. dated September 18, 2012, last revised on November 8, 2012.

Mr. Coolbaugh explained The Orhbergs owns a 55 foot wide strip across from the two properties. The plan proposes to keep the 55 foot portion of the property and sale the balance to Ms. McOwen for future septic system installation. There are no improvements planned other than a lot consolidation change. The plans have been revised as per November 13, 2012 Pickering, Corts & Summerson, Inc. review letter. Also, Ms. McOwen will comply with comments made in the November 12, 2012 Boucher & James, Inc. and November 2, 2012 Bucks County Planning Commission review letters.

Mr. Kelso questioned the purpose of the plan. Mr. Coolbaugh answered; the original owner subdivided the property before selling to The Orhbergs. The properties have all been recently subdivided. Ms. McOwen clarified originally the property was to be used as a road, but nothing is able to gain access.

Ms. Stern Goldstein questioned the proposed installation of a septic system. Mr. Coolbaugh explained recent preliminary testing show favorable surroundings for a septic system.

In the form of a motion by Mr. Kelso; seconded by Mr. Lowenstein the Doylestown Township Planning Commission recommends the Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors approve applicant: McOwen/Orhberg Minor Subdivision plan for a lot line/consolidation change. The applicants received, reviewed and will comply with comments made in the November 12, 2012 Boucher & James, Inc. and November 2, 2012 Bucks County Planning Commission review letters. Further, applicants agreed to change their plans in accordance to the November 13, 2012 Pickering, Corts & Summerson, Inc. letter.

Motioned carried 5 to 0.

For Discussion

New Britain Township \ 133 Ferry Road, Wordsworth Property

Ms. Mason submitted for Commission's review the October 24, 2012 memo from Pine Valley Crossing Associates, LP with regards to the Sketch Plan application filed with New Britain Township to subdivide the property and construct a 42 single family home community.

A representative from Shelbourne Healthcare Development Group interrupted the meeting to approach the commission for their permission/direction in planting extra trees required of the plan on the adjacent neighbor's properties and assisting in the removal of two black walnut trees. Ms. Mason advised all agreements be placed in writing as a condition of approval and contact Township Solicitor; Jeffrey P. Garton for the record. Mr. Kelso suggested noting the township will have no involvement in agreement between Shelbourne and adjacent neighbors.

The meeting resumed with..

Mr. Kelso suggested a letter be submitted to New Britain Township indicating the township looks forward in continuing working towards bike & hike improvements and a development that can create a positive impact. Ms. Mason agreed to draft a letter for Ms. Stern Goldstein's review.

Ms. Hendrixson informed the commission; Pool's Corner invited the commission to their Thursday, November 29, 2012 meeting beginning at 4:30pm. Ms. Mason added a public meeting is scheduled at 6:30pm.

December 11, 2012 Planning Commission Regular Meeting

The Commission agreed by consensus to cancel the scheduled December 11, 2012 Planning Commission Regular meeting if no pending applications have been submitted.

Mr. Colello questioned if the Commission is still planning to televise a 10 or 15 minute informational meeting for Doylestown TV (DTV) explaining the duties of the Planning Commission in 2013.

Adjournment - 7:55 p.m.