

MINUTES OF MEETING
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
August 04, 2009

The Springfield Township Planning Commission (PC) held its semi-monthly meeting on the date noted above.

Chairman Bob Gutowski called the meeting to order at 6:59 PM, present were Angela Murray, Amanda Helwig, Joe Gerber, Bob Gutowski, Joseph Devine, David Sands, James Mascaro. Absent: George McDowell, Mary Holland,

Commissioner Doug Heller and Rob Dunlop the Staff Liaison represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) this evening.

Minutes

Minutes of the July 21st, 2009 meeting were read. A motion to approve the amended minutes was made by Angela Murray and seconded by Joe Gerber. All in favor.

Board of Commissioner Update

D. Heller

Com. Heller updated the Commission that discussion continues on the Lloyd Estate. Developers made a public presentation which the neighbors group responding in a list of items of concern. Springfield is currently awaiting clarification from Cheltenham Township on their position regarding the zoning of the portion of the tract in Cheltenham before Springfield Township takes a position.

New Business

ANDORRA WOODS HEALTHCARE CENTER
9209 Ridge Pike, Lafayette Hill

Ross Weiss, Esq.
Will Hilles, Hilles Architects

Discussion

The applicant's attorney discussed with Staff prior to tonight's meeting the need for an additional 15 parking spaces to service the newly renovated areas of the facility. Applicant was seeking a waiver of Land Development specifically for the installation of the 15 parking spaces and improvements to the existing detention basin.

The facility currently has 244 units this number shall stay the same. Number of employees shall stay the same. In discussion with staff the developer has expressed their willingness to dedicate the right of way on Ridge Pike and Northwestern Avenue to Springfield Township, who will in turn dedicate it to Montgomery County. The developer also has acknowledged they are willing to provide funds as a contribution to the township in lieu of installation of sidewalks.

It should be noted there are currently 4 handicap spaces on the premises as required by the ordinance with the installation of the new 15 spaces, 2 additional handicap spots will be provided. With the addition of the 15 spaces it will bring the property from non-conforming into compliance with the ordinance.

The PC expressed concern that the Storm Water Management Plan not only meet standards but exceed them and that the developer explore re-charging the ground water system. Because of the disturbance to the existing retention basin it was discussed that any mature trees that are removed be replaced with canopy trees along Ridge Pike. Plants listing in the plans should be replaced with native plant species: For example, Burning Bush is an invasive species.

Public Comment

John Schwartz of 277 Northwestern Avenue. Property owner indicated he currently can see the existing facilities lights from his property the current detention basin is over grown but does afford privacy to his property. Expressed concern over the type of lighting that will be installed in the new parking lot. PC clarified that lighting should be boxed lighting directed downward and indicated to the developer to evaluate lighting on the building to shield it in a downward direction. In discussing further the landscape buffer between the detention basin and his property Schwartz was concerned over mature tree removal. PC is recommending a Tree Protection Plan and a survey to be conducted by an ISA Certified Arborist.

Based upon discussion Joseph Devine made the motion and Amanda Helwig seconded. Opposed was James Mascaro who felt that the process was rushed through for the 15 parking spaces. Vote was 6 to 1. PC recommends approval of request for waiver of land development with the following provisions.

1. Full engineering review by Springfield Township Staff Engineer and approval.
2. Right of ways on Ridge Pike and Northwestern Avenue to be identified and dedicated to Springfield Township.
3. Sidewalks shown on the plan, and contribution to be made to Springfield Township in lieu of installation of sidewalks at this time.
4. Developer must comply with and exceed Storm Water Management requirements with reasonable costs to the developer.
5. As replacement trees for the refit of the detention basin, developer shall plant at minimum 8 to 10 native Canopy Trees along Ridge Pike frontage of the property.
6. Any plants noted in the planting schedule shall be replaced with native plant species.
7. Applicant will re-evaluate lighting on the building to determine whether shielding can be installed.
8. Full Landscape Plan including Tree Protection Plan showing mature trees and a catalogue of size and species. ISA Certified Arborist to review.
9. Correction on plan to Residential AA zoning.

Old Business

The PC has decided to move away from draft version 6 of the Springfield Township Historic Ordinance and has now taken under consideration the proposed ordinance provided by Michele LeFevre of the PHMC in summary, this ordinance shall create the Springfield Heritage Landmark List as well as the Springfield Township Historic Commission. The purpose of the commission shall be to nominate properties, and maintain the list of properties, educating of the public, and lastly, to advise the PC and BOC of Historic Resources.

The PC did a precursory review of this draft ordinance in discussion it was suggested there be a minimum of 5 members with 1 alternate that will vote only in the absence of the 5th member but may participate in group discussion. PC acknowledges they prefer any member of the Historic Commission to live or work in our community. In discussion on election of officers it was agreed, secret ballot was not necessary. Present during discussion of the Historic Ordinance was Dan Johnson who is also a member of the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike as well as the Springfield Township Open Space Committee.

Angela Murray proposed the meeting to adjourn, seconded by James Mascaro. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned 9:05PM.

The next PC meeting shall be September 1st, 2009, and shall be a Workshop Session to discuss the Historical Ordinance.

Amanda M. Helwig, Secretary