

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
April 20th, 2010**

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, with the following members present: Angela Murray, Amanda Helwig, Joe Gerber, Bob Gutowski, Mary Holland, George Schaefer, David Sands and Joseph Devine. Absent: James Mascaro. Commissioner Doug Heller and Rob Dunlop, Staff Liaison represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) this evening.

**Minutes**

Minutes of the March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 meeting were read. A motion to approve the minutes was made by J. Gerber and seconded by M. Holland. Motion approved unanimously.

**Board of Commissioner Update**

**D. Heller**

- On Thursday March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the BOC held an open meeting inviting community comment regarding Storm Water Issues. As a result of that meeting, the BOC determined two areas of concern in the township; Brookside and Windsor Roads in Erdenheim and Hemlock Rd. in Flourtown.
- After discussion the BOC agreed to post PC Minutes on the Township Website after they have been approved. The PC subsequently motioned to recommend minutes be posted from January 2008 to present on the online archive. Motion made by M. Holland and seconded by A. Murray. All in favor.
- The ZHB received variance requests from Mt. St. Josephs Academy to improve their parking lot. D. Heller commented that there is great improvement to the proposed changes and the plans will be coming before the PC in the near future.
- The BOC were given a presentation about the Village Overlay, Don Berger is to summarize and get back proposed changes to the PC.
- Analysis by the DVRPC of the proposed traffic flow of Bethlehem Pike is currently being formulated. The plans call for Bethlehem Pike to be reduced to one lane travel in each direction with a turning lane in the middle. Parking will alternate on sides of the street.

**Old Business**

A reminder to the PC that the May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Meeting will take place at 7 pm at the Morris Arboretum

**New Business**

**Yost Subdivision  
Hibbeln, P.E.**

**Anthony**

**411 East Mill Rd., Flourtown**

Applicant is presenting plans for Preliminary/ Final Subdivision Land Development of a two lot subdivision that would include for the construction of one new single family detached dwelling in addition to the existing dwelling located on 411 E. Mill Road in Flourtown. The current lot is 2.59 Acres, and the two lots to be created by the subdivision both exceed the minimum 12,500sq ft minimum. The new lot would retain frontage on Mill Road but would also have 25 ft of right of

way on Cedar Lane in the rear where the applicant proposes a back driveway in addition to the main drive which will exit the flag staff portion of the lot onto E. Mill Road. During their time of ownership the Yost's have planted over 80 trees on the property, and propose to retain as many trees as possible. The proposed home will be mostly one level, real stone exterior and cedar shake with a new garage and courtyard area to be created. The current home sits prominently on E Mill Road and the garage is a nonconforming use since it does not adhere to setback requirements.

## **Discussion**

Even though the property has frontage on Cedar Lane, the PC questioned the need to have a driveway all the way to E. Mill Road; the concern being increased need for storm water management. In response the applicant relayed that currently there is no storm water management on the site, nor the ability for water to percolate through the soil. Hydro conductivity testing has revealed a quartzite sand layer 6 to 7 feet down with excellent percolation rates. The site proposes three sites of water retention to this layer, one along the length of the driveway, a second to capture garage and courtyard runoff and a third to capture the home and backyard runoff. By creating these three subsurface retention spots, storm water management and percolation will be increased on site. The PC noted that neighbors should be advised and given opportunity to comment and acknowledge the proposed subdivision.

Waiver Requests Reference Letter dated April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 by Amy Riddle Twp Engineer.

- 1.) A motion was made to recommend a waiver of comment #8 - Requiring widening of the cartway width. Motion made by M. Holland and seconded by D. Sands. All in favor. This was done to keep in conformity with the rest of East Mill Road.
- 2.) A motion was made to recommend a waiver of comment #9, since the installation of sidewalks would not be consistent with the rest of the street, and that a note be made on the plan that the requirement of installation be placed in reserve. Motion made by J. Devine and seconded by D. Sands. Two opposed; A. Murray and M. Holland. M. Holland commented that as one of the goals of the PC connecting of major arteries in our community via sidewalks is one of the primary goals coming up with the Comprehensive Plan and we should not continue to place these requirements in reserve. A. Helwig commented that in this instance, there are no other sidewalks on that side of E Mill Road other than the Church at Bethlehem Pike and that there is an existing sidewalk on the other side of the street, and does not feel the need to have twice as much impervious coverage when there is already a safe walkway available.
- 3.) A motion was made to recommend a waiver of comment #11 requiring six street trees along E. Mill Road. In conjunction with increasing the number of trees to be planted under comment #12 from twenty four to thirty trees, and of the thirty trees, six of them are to be native canopy species. Motion made by M. Holland and seconded by J. Devine. All in favor. The applicant was instructed to try to plant more along the proposed new driveway and to introduce more hickory and oaks rather than smaller tree species.

A motion was made to recommend to the BOC to approve the plan subject to the above waivers and conditions and a letter of acknowledgement of the plan to be signed by the neighbors Haines and Connors. Motion made by J. Devine and seconded by A. Helwig. One opposed; M. Holland felt sidewalks should be installed.

**9425 Stenton Ave. Land Development  
Preliminary Plan**

**Dan Helwig  
Steven Jack, Architect**

Mr. Helwig and Mr. Jack provided an overview of the project aided by a power-point presentation. This proposed, multiple-dwelling development will include 30 condominium units located in one building with basement level parking. Common areas are limited to a community room with small galley kitchen and restrooms. Individual units would contain 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and living/dining room with approximately 1,500 sq. ft. of living area. 10 units would be located on each floor, although this represents the maximum number of units – if interest develops for larger units the total number of units may be less. The architectural concept has been created to offer flexibility in the configuration of the individual dwelling units. Mr. Helwig anticipates that there could potentially be demand in the future for larger units that will reduce the total number of units.

Since the last presentation of the plan several changes have been implemented representing the input of the Planning Commission and neighbors. Mr. Helwig summarized the following changes that are included on the revised plans:

- The rear roof line has been revised to include a hip-roof rather than a simple gable-roof – also, the third floor has been reduced in size in this area in response to concerns over the height of the rear of the building.
- Roof-top HVAC equipment location has been moved as far as possible from neighboring properties and screened.
- The rear entry area has been provided with a canopy.
- Shadow study has been provided to show impacts on surrounding properties.
- Arborist appraisal of existing trees has been provided showing which trees are suitable to integrate into the landscape plan.

After this overview the Planning Commission turned to Amy Riddle Montgomery's review letter of 4/16/2010 as a tool to focus discussion. Applicant agreed to comply with review comments except for the following noted items:

2.a. Applicant requests a waiver from providing a second Traffic Impact Study. The results of the Traffic Impact Study dated 10/22/2009 prepared by F. Tavani and Associates shows a relatively low peak hour traffic volume consistent with the waiving of this requirement.

3. Applicant asks for a waiver of the requirement of widening Stenton & Whitmarsh Avenues.

4. Applicant is requesting a waiver of this requirement, and is offering a fee-in-lieu of providing 90,000 sq. ft. of park & recreational land. Planning Commission agrees that resolution of this matter, and assessment of the fee should be done by the Board of Commissioners.

5.a.1. Landscape Architect for the applicant offered the opinion that installation of the required landscape softening buffer at the SE boundary of the property (border with Ganley and Steinbrook properties) would create a design that would likely be unsustainable due to density of plantings. Applicant seeks a partial waiver of this provision.

## **Public Comment**

### **Brian McGlynn, 30 Gordon Rd., Erdenheim**

Mr. McGlynn spoke in opposition to the project questioning why the Township would consider a fee-in-lieu of provision of Park & Recreational space. Mr. Helwig explained that this provision would make all re-development in the Township impossible if a fee-in-lieu was not possible. Mr. McGlynn also stated his opposition to the number of units granted to the developer. Mr. Helwig

replied by stating that the zoning ruling took into account the intensity of use that had been previously present on the property. Mr. McGlynn also asked the PC to re-examine the issue of installation of grass paver systems at the rear fire emergency access adjacent to Whitemarsh Ave.

**Paul & Christine Sandiford, 32 Gordon Rd., Erdenheim**

Mr. Sandiford relayed his belief that the new development will undoubtedly cause increased traffic congestion in the neighborhood. He also believes that stormwater problems will be increased for the down-hill neighbors causing increased property damage. Mr. Helwig responded by stating that the current plan shows improved stormwater performance compared to current conditions. He continued to refer Mr. Sandiford to the Traffic Impact Study previously provided. Mr. Sandiford replied that that study did not take into account current occupancy rates in the complex. Mr. Helwig countered by stating that current occupancy rates were low due to the fact that this re-development plan has been generally known for three years.

**Greg Landry, 108 Gordon Rd., Erdenheim**

Mr. Landry inquired about the design of the stormwater system. Mr. Helwig showed how curbs along the side of the property along Gordon Rd. kept stormwater from the neighboring properties. A bubble-up spreader is used to disperse water along the southwest corner of the property with the water flowing down Stenton Ave. to the Paper Mill Run. Mr. Landry also inquired about the landscape buffer between his property and 9425 Stenton Ave. Mr. Helwig's explanation was deferred until the general landscape discussion.

**Kim Cruickshank, 110 Gordon Rd, Erdenheim**

Mr. Cruickshank inquired further into the stormwater system. He also wished to obtain more information about the roof-top utilities. Mr. Helwig and Mr. Jack explained about the roof-top screening walls and agreed to increase the height to more adequately screen the roof-top HVAC condensers. Mr. Cruickshank also inquired about the lighting plan. Mr. Helwig stated that the lighting plan showed no deficiencies in the Engineer's review. PC members continued the inquiry by asking for an example of the lighting fixtures to be used. Mr. Helwig agreed to provide lighting fixtures which did not allow emittance of light upwards which included shields to keep light from intruding on neighboring properties.

**Landscape Plan Discussion**

**Dwayne McCarthy, RLA**

Mr. McCarthy provided an overview of the Landscape Plan. Regarding the existing vegetation along the SE boundary, Bob Gutowski agreed with the Arborist Assessment provided by J.R. Rockwell dated 2/15/2010 that very few species were worthy of inclusion in the new landscape plan. The new softening buffer design for this area was reviewed. Several PC members and Jean Holland agreed that the design was not sustainable. A good deal of discussion took place to determine if the buffer in this area could be thinned out and still provide the required buffer. PC members finally agreed that the buffer could be reduced by 1/3 and still provide an adequate buffer for adjacent properties. Applicant agreed to provide details on soil preparation, irrigation and a maintenance plan in conjunction with the 1/3 reduction of required plantings.

The buffer with the Gordon Rd. neighbors was the next area of examination. Messrs. Landry & Cruickshank voiced their concern over the adequacy of the buffering along the properties on Gordon Rd. In response to their concerns Mr. Helwig offered to extend the height of the fence in this area to as high as 6'. Under all circumstances the fence along the NW border of the property

will extend up at least 3' above the level of the pavement in the parking stalls. J. Holland of MCPC stated that this was the acknowledged planning standard for protection of neighboring properties from headlights in parking areas. Applicant agreed to increase the fence accordingly, and to revise the landscape according to the direction of the PC. The recommendation for the provision of parking spaces for over-sized resident vehicles that would not impact surrounding properties was also noted.

At this point Bob Gutowski asked for additional comments for the public – hearing no response he continued to ask if there were any motions regarding this application. David Sands made a motion to recommend approval of the preliminary plan seconded by Joe Gerber. This motion was approved by a vote of 4 yeas, and 3 nays. Due to amount of community involvement with this application Bob Gutowski asked that all recommendations of waivers be voted on by separate motions. The applicant agreed to comply with all comments included in the Engineer's letter of 4/16/2010 except for the following noted items

2.a. Applicant requests a waiver from providing a second Traffic Impact Study. Motion to recommend waiver approved by a vote of 6 yeas, and 0 nays with 1 abstention.

3. Applicant asks for a waiver of the requirement of widening Stenton & Whitemarsh Avenues. Motion to recommend waiver approved unanimously.

4. Applicant is requesting a waiver of this requirement, and is offering a fee-in-lieu of providing 90,000 sq. ft. of park & recreational land. Planning Commission unanimously recommends waiver of this requirement based on the payment of a fee-in-lieu.

5.a.1. Applicant seeks a partial waiver of this requirement. Motion to recommend partial waiver based on applicant providing two thirds of the required plantings along with an irrigation system and maintenance plan. Motion to recommend partial waiver approved unanimously.

David Sands put forth a further motion, seconded by Mary Holland that the Board of Commissioners consider the possibility of installing an approved grass paver system at the rear fire emergency access to the property off of Whitemarsh Ave, and the abandonment of the front drive which enters the property off of Stenton Ave. at the SE corner near the Ganley property since this drive will only be used infrequently so as to constitute unnecessary impervious coverage. Both actions would reduce impervious coverage, although the advice of the STEMS board is to keep both areas macadamized for access for emergency services. This motion passed by a vote of 4 yeas, 2 nays and 1 abstention.

Bob Gutowski summarized the discussion by stating that the design of the re-development has made improvement, but a design which includes such an intense land use naturally leads to many compromises within the Subdivision/Land Development Code – such as waivers of park & recreation land dedicated to the use of Township residents.

The next PC Members to report shall be D. Sands and A. Murray. Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:24pm made by A. Murray and seconded by B.Gutowski. All in favor. The next PC meeting will be at 7:00 p.m., May 4th, 2010.

Minutes for 9425 Stenton Ave. Plan Presentation Prepared by R. Dunlop  
Amanda M. Helwig, Secretary