

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
June 1, 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 7:01 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 May 18th, 2010 meeting were read. A motion to approve the minutes with amendments the minutes was made by D. Sands and seconded by A. Murray. Motion approved unanimously. Abstained: Amanda Helwig

**Board of Commissioner Update**

**D. Heller**

- No new information to report to the PC

**Old Business**

- A. Murray distributed information on night lighting via e-mail, but could not find the safety specifications she was searching for. There appears to be no engineering standard for light intensity.
- Comprehensive Plan discussion continues. J. Holland recapped the goals of the PC's review of the Comprehensive Plan. Public outreach and meeting with focus groups is a priority and a list of local key people in the community as well as organizations in the community is being compiled. An email to the community with standard list of questions is being addressed. The PC is hoping to have this prepared for the August Township Newsletter. The Existing Land Use section was distributed and to be reviewed.

**New Business**

**Mount St. Joseph Academy  
120 W. Wissahickon Ave., Flourtown**

**Anthony Hibbeln, P.E.  
David Cavanaugh, R.L.A.**

The applicant appeared before the PC requesting a waiver of formal land development process for the re-configuration and expansion of the main parking lot on their 77 acre campus.

Mount St. Joseph Academy was built in the 1960's/1970's and at that time the 165 parking spaces was under the current code standard and without concern to storm water. In the 1990's a library addition was added with an additional 63 parking spaces and storm water was considered at this time. Also during this time, the Army Corp of Engineers made modifications to the Paper Mill Run to cross Stenton Avenue and help control flooding issues along Stenton Avenue.

The proposed modifications to the existing parking lot include improvements in traffic flow and safety. Upon entering the property an island will create two lanes of flow for entry and exiting the property, and a boulevard of trees. This will still lead to a loop for buses to wait, pick up and exit the premises. The loop will be modified with lanes for waiting buses, waiting cars and an interior free lane for exiting traffic. The idea is to segregate the buses from the cars. Cutting through the loop will be a pedestrian crossing area. The applicant did conduct 9 test borings and none of the test pits indicated any infiltration. Based on this, the engineer developed bio-swales throughout the parking islands with pipes to filter the water through to retention basins.

The current parking lot currently has no retention aspects. The increase in 26 bays was achieved from re-orienting the parking lot with islands at 14 space intervals. To date there are 226 spaces and proposed are 252. Part of the ZHB relief was for 9x18 parking stalls which was granted, to allow more spots but lessen impervious surface coverage. The bio swales in the islands which will have perforated pipe and will allow water to filter to a retrofitted drainage basin that created when the baseball fields were installed. This basin is being retrofitted to comply with Best Management Practices. At this time the applicant is willing to grant an easement to the Township to allow it to improve storm water management behind Windsor Road.

The applicant is seeking the waiver of Land Development because they have a limited opportunity to conduct the work during the summer months between June 14<sup>th</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup>. They have already received zoning relief for parking. Further they are seeking relief on the number of shade trees to be installed because the root systems would interfere with the pipe filtration systems to be installed in the bio swales. Therefore they would prefer to plant native shrubs in the alternative. In addition 90 trees are scheduled to be installed or transplanted including Pin Oaks. Fifty trees are to be removed, which will be replaced with more native species. The planting schedule has already been reviewed by B. Gutowski who commented that he was satisfied with the plantings.

A. Murray questioned why they applied so late. The applicant relayed they did not apply until March and have just now completed the process with the ZHB. A. Murray commented that this request is complicated and exceeds what should be allowable for a request to waive land development. A. Murray suggested that the applicant had sufficient time to present the plans and seek input from the PC during the period between application to the ZHB and application for the waiver. A. Murray noted that in the future the applicant seek PC input beforehand.

**Public Comment:**

Virginia Clarke of 41 Brookside Avenue, Erdenheim questioned when the basin was put in. Applicant relayed that retrofitting the existing basin will be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup> and under the supervision of the Montgomery County Conservation District and Township.

Mike Maxwell of 45 Brookside Avenue, Erdenheim commented that he is getting silt deposit in his rear yard and is concerned that it will continue or worsen with the proposed changes to the parking lot. Applicant commented that bio-swales will create improved water penetration. In addition, the retrofitting of the current basins includes for the naturalization of the basin and the recording of a maintenance plan .

**Discussion:**

M. Holland mentioned in discussion that the Comprehensive Plan identifies the Wissahickon Avenue frontage of this parcel as a pedestrian route and that there are sidewalks in place along Wissahickon Avenue to the east of the parcel, and a multi-use path along the Morris Arboretum property to the west. The applicant offered an easement for MULTI-USE PATH ALONG Wissahickon Avenue. J. Gerber recommended that the applicant be required to install a sidewalk the length of the Wissahickon Avenue frontage.

Motion to recommend to BOC waiver of Land Development conditioned upon addressing Township Engineers concerns, and documentation of intent to establish multi use trail or sidewalk easement to Springfield Township along W. Wissahaickon Avenue as well as easement of ground area behind Windsor Road for storm water management. Motion made by B. Gutowski and seconded by A. Helwig.

J. Gerber commented that Mt. St. Joseph has always kept their word and been cooperative with Springfield Township.

G. Schaefer thought it was a good plan, and was sympathetic to their timing issues. However echoes A. Murray's sentiments that the scope of the project was too much for a Waiver of Land Development. It should be the design of the project not the time implications driving the request.

B. Gutowski inquired if the neighbors were notified. R. Dunlop confirmed that neighbors were notified similarly to a ZHB Meeting.

J. Holland noted that her design staff could have reviewed and commented if the full Land Development had taken place.

Vote. 4 in Favor. 4 Opposed. Those opposed commented that the scale of the project was too large for a waiver of land development. Perhaps if they had come before the PC for comment before ZHB relief was pending, the PC could have made comments to improve the plans.

Motion to BOC for denial of the issuance of waiver of Land Development. 3 in Favor. 5 Opposed.

**Discussion:**

M. Holland commented in light of the fact that the overall project does increase storm water management on the site, and in light of the applicant granting multiuse trail or sidewalk easements along Wissahickon Avenue and behind Windsor Rd for further storm water management, she would be inclined to favor the waiver of Land Development.

Motion was again made to recommend that the BOC issue a waiver of Land Development conditioned upon addressing Township Engineers concerns, and documentation of intent to establish multi use trail or sidewalk easement to Springfield Township along W. Wissahaickon Avenue as well as easement of ground area behind Windsor Road for storm water management. Motion made by B. Gutowski and seconded by A. Helwig.

5 In Favor and 3 Opposed.

Noting to the BOC that this motion was made very reluctantly and that this level of land development warrants review but due to the time constraints the applicants are under and the historically dependable nature of the applicant the PC agreed to grant said request.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:15pm made by A. Murray and seconded by M. Holland. Motion carried unanimously.

The next PC meeting will be at 7:00 p.m., June 15th, 2010 at the Township Building

Amanda M. Helwig