

**MINUTES OF MEETING
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
February 7th, 2012**

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: Amanda Helwig, Mary Holland, David Sands, Bob Gutowski, Angela Murray, James Mascaro, Joseph Devine, and George Schaefer. Rob Dunlop Staff Liaison and Commissioner James Dailey represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) this evening.

Minutes: Minutes of the January 17th, 2011 meeting were read. Motion to approve the minutes made by A. Murray and seconded by J. Mascaro. B. Gutowski abstained. Minutes approved unanimously.

Commissioners Report:

Commissioner Dailey

Storm Water Management has become a regular agenda item. The Township has received advice from the Army Corp of Engineers in evaluating storm water management issues in the Township. Of the 11 Hazard Grants applied for the one that looks the most promising is the one for Hemlock Road in the Flourtown Gardens.

The newly formed Human Relations Commission is seeking applicants. They want a diverse representation from all over the Township to serve, applications are being taken.

New Business

**Lloyd Estate- "Laverock Hill"
1777 E. Willow Grove Ave**

Ross Weiss, Esquire & Bud Hanson

The Applicant presented a sketch plan for the proposed development of the 42.4 acre estate which is located both in Cheltenham Township and Springfield Township. The sketch plan that was presented illustrated 156 townhomes. 44 homes on ~9 acres on the Cheltenham side and 112 homes on ~ 33 acres of the Springfield Township side. The plan also works to preserve the 11,539 square foot Manor House as was constructed in 1918 on the Cheltenham Township side.

Ross Weiss relayed to the PC the evolution of the proposed sketch plan over the past 4 years. The Applicant originally had no plans to preserve the Manor House, but after discussions with Cheltenham Township and the Neighbor Groups they were asked to incorporate the buildings and the stone wall along Willow Grove Ave into their plans. Over the last few years the plan has overall decreased in density. The Applicant is hoping to move towards a zoning amendment by June of this year. Their goal is to have a uniform plan for the property acceptable to both Townships and the neighbors.

The current plan presented to the Springfield Township PC was designed to take into consideration Cheltenham's concern for density and traffic. In order to preserve the Manor House, the creative thought would be to develop the building into professional offices / income producing property. Perhaps the auxiliary buildings could serve as an office for the Home Owners Association for the townhome community. The Applicant indicated all roads will be private roads. They also for the first time presented Ranch House Lane on the Springfield side as a possible emergency access, and assured the PC that a Traffic Study and Economic Impact Study would be submitted as well. The proposed townhomes would start in the \$300,000 range.

PC Comments:

- 1.) Impervious coverage would need to be determined; auxiliary parking, garages etc.
- 2.) Storm Water Management Plan, particularly break out discharge to each sub watershed.
- 3.) Address the steep slope concern (current plan is reflective of a flat site not a steep slope site)
- 4.) Would prefer not to take a Fee in Lieu for Open Space
- 5.) Maintain old growth trees and current buffers
- 6.) Retain brick wall along Willow Grove Avenue
- 7.) Retain Manor House and Auxiliary Buildings
- 8.) Property is appropriate for Low Density, it is currently not served by Public Sewer

Public Comments:

8204 Newbold Lane Karla & Raymond Tennyson Commented concern about Ranch House Lane being opened up.

8101 Newbold Lane Robert Bolden Commented that Willow Grove Avenue is a sloping and narrow road. The vehicular traffic generated by the proposed 156 townhomes and the proposed change to the Manor House to professional usage would generate far too much traffic. Light or no light this would be a dangerous situation. Traffic and density are two huge issues. A townhome community is not keeping with the density of the location and the developer has not addressed the slopes at all. He is respectfully against their proposal.

8400 Newbold Lane Charles Bishop Also voiced concern over the traffic situation and the existing status of Willow Grove Ave. He was concerned about school age children walking along Newbold Lane a very narrow street as it is. He commented that currently no Public Transportation services the neighborhood.

8108 Newbold Lane Steven Hilkowitz Also reiterated there are no sidewalks along the Cheltenham side of Newbold Lane.

1681 E Willow Grove Ave Scott Laughlin Acknowledged there have been meeting between the neighbors and the developers and a steering committee. They have decreased their requested density. Wanted to point out that all previous plans to this one had a single entrance / exit on Willow Grove Ave. Now, there are two primary and an office building access. This is the first the neighbors have seen a proposed use of the Manor House for professional offices. The neighbors feel this will hurt the value of a residential neighborhood. He also pointed out that the Gardens designed by Ellen Biddle Shipmann are slated to be covered by a parking lot per this proposed sketch plan.

1799 E Willow Grove Ave Michael Harkins Lives in the property between the Estate and 309. He is concerned about runoff and sewage. His home is on one of the lowest points and his property is currently a sink for all runoff. He also currently has a 30,000 gallon cistern on his property that services the estate. While it is likely the Manor House would be taken off the system, he is worried there would be damage to it. He also has a shared driveway to access his home that he would like to be more clearly addressed for a safe means for him to exit and enter his property.

Discussion:

The PC discussed the public comment and reiterated to the Applicant their previously stated concerns; Park & Recreation Issue; linking the Cresheim Trail in, Storm Water, Sanitary Sewer, Traffic Study, Density of the Development, etc. It is important to note that when A. Murray questioned Mr. Weiss who drew up the sketch plan, the Applicant admitted it was an Engineer and not done by a Planner. The PC felt a Planner would better understand the PC's concerns in assisting to prepare a better sketch plan. Mary Holland emphasized that a high-density housing development was not appropriate for this location because it is located far away from any

commercial districts and is not served by any form of public transportation. The current zoning for the property, “AA” residence district – low-density housing, is the proper use for the Lloyd estate.

New Business

Bob Gutowski relayed that the Urban Forestry Intern who has been evaluating the tree canopy map for the Comprehensive Plan would like to give a presentation to the PC in April.

Old Business

Comprehensive Plan Update

- The PC received a compiled synopsis of the commentary received.
- PC Members are encouraged to review the summary and its implementation into the ETCI Document and get comments or revisions to Jean Holland on or before February 14th.
- The next PC Meeting will take place on February 21st at 6:30 PM only if “The Traditions” is an agenda item. If it is not an agenda item we will meet at 7:00 PM as usual.
- *PC Members are asked to Review Chapter 3 for next meeting*

Motion by J. Mascaro, and seconded by J. Devine to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned 8:58pm.

Minutes by A. Helwig, Secretary