

MINUTES OF MEETING
SPRINGFIELDTOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
May 1st, 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 7:00 PM, with the following members present: Amanda Helwig, David Sands, Bob Gutowski, Angela Murray, James Mascaro, Joseph Devine, George Schaefer, and Mary Holland. Rob Dunlop Staff Liaison, and Commissioner Tom Bell represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) this evening.

Minutes: Minutes of the April 17th, 2012 meeting were read. Motion to approve the minutes made by A. Murray and seconded by S. Schagrin. Minutes approved unanimously. 1 Abstained; M. Holland.

Commissioner's Report

The 507 Auburn Avenue Land Development was approved by a vote of 4-3 by the Board of Commissioners. The Applicant did agree to provide the 10 trees recommended by the Planning Commission.

**27 Bysher Ave. Flourtown, PA.
Subdivision**

**Pietro Bosca, Applicant
Dan Helwig, Rep.**

Applicant presented a preliminary subdivision / land development plan for the subdivision of an existing 22,945 sq. ft. lot into 2 building lots, 11,222.5 sq. ft. each respectfully. The applicant 's representative Dan Helwig relayed to the PC the background of the property, that the lots were previously subdivided and then through time the deeds were merged in the past. Mr. Helwig provided the PC with a plot map of the street illustrating that the proposed lot would be in conformity with the remainder of the street, and provided photos of the property illustrating the existing curb cut to the proposed lot. When the Applicant came into to apply for the subdivision staff advised to prepare preliminary land development plans. Mr. Helwig relayed that the Applicant intends to build a single story or cape style home to retire to with a detached garage. Until the subdivision was approved, the Applicant did not want to proceed with formal land development since he is unsure at this time specifically what he wants to build. For illustrative purposes however, the maximum allowable coverage has been illustrated.

In response to the April 23, 2012 Township Engineer Letter, the Applicant responded as follows;

1. Landscaping Plan. The applicant requests a waiver at this time since they are unsure of where or what style home will be built. Deferred until Land Development.
2. Cartway width. Applicant is seeking a waiver, since it would not be in conformity with remainder of street.
3. Street Trees. Applicant is seeking a waiver, until utilities are determined. Deferred until Land Development.

4. Stormwater Management. Applicant is seeking a waiver at this time. Plot is flat and low; storm water management would be under ground and dictated by final placement of home and garage. Deferred until Land Development.
5. Existing Features. Applicant is seeking a waiver and supplied an aerial map image of the property.
6. Will Comply. Applicant was just missing the existing sanitary line width.
7. Applicant is seeking a waiver of submission of erosion and sedimentation plan. A written narrative will be provided.
8. Has complied with Legal Descriptions.
9. Will comply with any further stipulations as maybe triggered by Subdivision.

The applicant did reach out to the neighbors, specifically Steve Wilmont whose property borders with the existing pine tree buffer. The neighbor was fine with the lot being developed as long as it was a single family residence.

J. Holland of the MCPC Reviewed her April 18th, 2012 Letter. She reiterated that a Landscape Plan is important and can provide substantive feedback to the Applicant. Three street trees should be put on the plan, subject to future approval. Lastly, that an aerial image is an acceptable substitution for the purposes of a subdivision being considered by the PC.

Motion to recommend approval of the subdivision plan by M. Holland and seconded by S. Schagrin. All in favor. 1 Recused. Applicant will submit extension letter for land development portion of application.

The PC discussed the subdivision and the land development. Applicant to be watchful of the trees on the property and recommended a certified arborist evaluate any trees that would be disturbed. The PC also gave guidance for the applicant to complete a storm water management plan, determine building location, produce a landscape plan, and to consult with neighbors concerning the buffers. PC also conveyed to the Applicant that they would be likely to recommend waiver of the Cartway Width and the Existing Features requests (#2, & #5).

**Boorse Tract-Change of Zoning
10 Camp Hill Road, Ft. Washington**

**Edmund Mullin, Esq.
Wayne Rosen**

Ed Mullins, Esq., presented to the PC the history of the property. Back in June 2007, the plan had preliminary approval, and then the market crashed. Since then, the property has been sitting due to the lack of desirability of 55+communities. The applicant is requesting a change from the AAA-AQ Age Qualified Residential Zoning District which was established in 2005 for this property by a modification removing the mandatory minimum age restrictions. The applicant proposes a new zoning designation for the tract called AAA-AT Age Targeted Residential Zoning which would have housing characteristics and community amenities geared towards older adults. Units would be in the \$350,000 price range, 3 bedrooms (not all with first floor bedrooms) and the association fee would cover all exterior maintenance. No pools or play structures would be permitted on the exterior common areas. The density would be exactly the

same; the only change is the removal of the deed restriction of occupants being 55+. The PC asked the applicant what other communities have this type of zoning. The applicant responded they have seen similar transitions in L. Moreland, U. Providence and Whitpain Townships to name a few. The PC relayed that the previous zoning change was not taken lightly. Per a By-Right Plan under the AAA Zoning 20 Lots would be permitted. Under AA 17 Lots would be permitted. The current zoning allows for 39 units.

PC Discussion

Chairman Gutowski relayed that he felt lower density was needed on the site. The change in zoning would afford no new benefits, there are no new improvements to the site and that a majority of the open space is in flood plain. A. Murray echoed B. Gutowski's sentiments and felt that just because there has been a change in the economy they shouldn't be able to change the zoning so easily. T. Bell asked with the AAA AQ zoning if there was an increase in open space. B. Gutowski responded that there was an increase in open space, though again the majority of it was in flood plain. T. Bell asked if the plan improved and created a sewer benefit to the neighbors. B. Gutowski relayed that there was the ability created to connect to public sewer by those in proximity that were currently on septic. T. Bell asked if there was a recreational benefit such as trails created by the development. B. Gutowski relayed that the applicant did propose to connect to a trail but this existed even with previous zoning. T. Bell asked if the Storm Water Management Plan meets all the requirements for Stormwater and R. Dunlop confirmed this to be so. G. Schaefer questioned the intensity of traffic. With the change to Age Targeted the development is open to all age ranges and families with multiple driving age children that would contribute to an already difficult traffic problem. B. Gutowski confirmed that the traffic study supplied by the applicant was for Age Qualified not for an Age Targeted community. A. Helwig questioned that with the change of zoning if the applicant could supply sufficient parking. The streets are not very wide for off street parking and the few additional parking areas did not seem sufficient.

Public Comment

2105 Fairwold Lane. Thomas Tynan. Felt that reducing the age will allow for teenagers and additional vehicular traffic, including school buses. He also feels the plan should have more open space.

2103 Fairwold Lane. Sandra Gillanders. She asked if the elevations would remain the same. Also, would she and the neighbors be forced to connect to public sewer? R. Dunlop responded that township code says you can be forced to connect if a sanitary line becomes available within 200 feet. Ms. Gillanders asked if the township had any provisions to help the public connect to the sanitary line. R. Dunlop said he would look into it. Richard Gillanders then asked if a home is 200 feet from a home that does hook up, can they be forced to also hook up to public sewer. R. Dunlop relayed that only home owners from the dedicated main must connect, not those 200 feet from a private extension.

2213 Camp Hill Road. Frank Vitale. Conveyed to the group that it was his understanding that the County would give the neighbors 10 years to comply with hooking up to public sewer.

2107 Fairwold Lane. Judith Armas. She asked if the Township would finance it over 10 years for them. She also relayed that it was already dangerous pulling out of Fairwold in the morning traffic and asked if there are plans to install a traffic light for the development. R. Dunlop said there were no plans for a traffic light and that would be a PennDot issue since it's a state road. He did not believe there was financing options by the township but that he would look into it.

265 Northwestern Ave. Brennan Preine. Seems to him the developer saw a market need in the past and responded to that need in creating the AAA AQ zoning which had the additional benefit of higher density and hence a more lucrative development. This proposed change in zoning to AAA AT is targeting the same people that would purchase in AAA. They are just trying to alleviate themselves of a self-imposed zoning that has become undesirable. The PC needs to look at the zoning of the Township as a whole and preserve the AAA. Based on his understanding, one could argue this as a case of spot zoning, which is not in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan. This proposed plan remains too dense compared to the properties that surround it. He warned the PC to protect the zoning code.

PC Discussion

B. Gutowski reminded the PC that there was a preliminary plan that had been approved by the BOC with conditions. But he would expect that the preliminary plan would vary very little from the final approved plan. A zoning change is not a plan approval. AAA AQ was approved, but has significant differences from AAA; density, setback, and yield plans

Chairman Gutowski put it out to the PC for a motion to recommend approval of the zoning change from AAA AQ to AAA AT. No Motion.

Chairman Gutowski put it out to the PC for a motion to recommend approval of the zoning change from AAA AQ to AAA AT with conditions. No Motion.

Chairman Gutowski put it out to the PC for a motion to deny approval of the zoning change from AAA AQ to AAA AT. Motion by A. Murray and seconded by G. Schaefer.

Discussion

The PC feels that with any change in zoning there should be dialogue with the neighbors and benefits given to the township. This zoning does not seem to be the proper zoning for this location. There is concern that this type of development is overly dense for the site, and there will be an increase of traffic intensity. While the PC acknowledges there are tax revenue increases, and sanitary sewer connections that become available, the negatives seem to outweigh the positives. There was a lot of discussion, time and thought when the prior PC approved the AAA AQ zoning. A "spot change" in zoning does not feel appropriate at this time, nor does the need for this type of zoning seem to exist anymore.

All in favor to deny the zoning change from AAA AQ to AAA AT. 9 in Favor. 0 Opposed.

Old Business

R. Dunlop distributed the Approved Plant Materials List for the PC to review prior to next meeting. He is looking for a motion at that time to adopt the list.

R. Dunlop also supplied Sketch Plan packages to the PC for the Lloyd Estate on Willow Grove Avenue. The Developer will be coming before the PC on May 15th again.

Motion to adjourn made by B. Gutowski and seconded A. Murray. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned at 9:08 pm

Minutes by A. Helwig, Secretary