

MINUTES OF MEETING
SPRINGFIELDTOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
July 17, 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: David Sands, Bob Gutowski, Angela Murray, James Mascaro, Joseph Devine and Mary Holland. Rob Dunlop Staff Liaison represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) this evening. BOC President Bob Gillies represented the Board of Commissioners.

Minutes: Minutes of the June 6, 2012 meeting were read. Motion to approve the minutes with amendments made by Angela Murray and seconded by Dave Sands. Minutes approved unanimously.

Commissioner's Report

None

Success Kidz, Inc.
1100 E. Mermaid La., Wyndmoor, PA

Damian & Nina Pitts

Nina Pitts, CEO of Success Kidz, Inc. provided an overview of the request for waiver of land development regarding the use of 2,400 sq. ft. of the existing office/warehouse building at 1100 E. Mermaid La., Wyndmoor as a day-care center for children between the ages of 3 and 5. Rob Dunlop summarized the conditions placed on the use-variance granted by the Zoning Board – the operator of the business must arrange for 16 reserved parking spaces and make arrangements with the building owner to provide adequate additional parking during special events. Stephen Kurtz, owner of the property was in attendance and stated that special event parking would not be a problem given the fact that the Kurtz family now owns three properties between 1100-1200 E. Mermaid La., with several hundred off-street parking spaces.

Members of the PC inquired what the maximum occupancy for the business would be. Ms Pitts answered that the building area would limit the number of children to 55, but that the business plan would be for approximately 40 children, with 4 staff members. Hours of operation would be from 8:30 AM to 3 PM, although it is possible that closing time could be as late as 6 PM to accommodate parent's work schedules for evening pick-up. Bob Gutowski asked if there would be an outside play area provided. Ms. Pitts answered that this would not be provided, and was not required by the terms of PA State licensing for day-care centers. Bob Gutowski asked if there were any residents present who wished to comment on the application – no audience members responded. Jim Mascaro then made a motion for recommendation of approval of the waiver request restating the conditions imposed by the ZHB on the use. This motion was seconded by Angela Murray and approved unanimously.

**Traditions of Springfield
350 Haws La., Flourtown, PA**

**Robert Gundlach, Esq.
Richard Stoneback, P.E.**

Rob Gundlach provided an overview of the preliminary Subdivision/Land Development Plans for the subdivision of the existing 10.1 acre Harston Hall Nursing Facility property at 350 Haws La., Flourtown, PA. The newly subdivided parcel is proposed to be consolidated with the lot at 402 Haws La., Flourtown to create a 4.73 acre property, upon which the Applicant proposes to construct a 108 unit “retirement home” situated in a 108,084 sq. ft., four-story building with 102 off-street parking spaces (19 parking spaces will be held in a reserve for possible future construction if needed). Mr. Gundlach indicated that the applicant is requesting a motion on recommendation at tonight’s hearing on both the subdivision and the land development, although only the subdivision of land is likely to happen soon. He also noted that Anthony Hibbeln, P.E. was in attendance tonight representing Genesis/Harston Hall because the approval of the sidewalk at Haws La. is necessary for approval of the separate land development application regarding expansion of parking at Harston Hall.

Rick Stoneback, P.E. provided an overview of engineering features of the project including stormwater management, sanitary sewer, utilities, landscaping and road/sidewalk improvements. The latest review letters from the Township Engineer was completed on 6/14/12. Applicant agrees to comply with all comments except the following items:

- 5.** PC recommends granting Applicant’s request for a partial waiver from widening Haws La. to 30’ with an associated 50’ right-of-way in the area of the Manor House. Applicant has agreed to widen Haws La. at all other points.
- 7.** PC recommends granting a waiver of provision of land for park and recreational use based on provision of a fee-in-lieu to be determined by BOC.
- 8.** PC recommends granting a partial waiver only along the common boundary between lots #1 and #2 based on landscape plans submitted.
- 9.** PC recommends a partial waiver to allow the relocating of one street tree away from the street frontage in the area of the entrance opposite from Wedgewood Rd. for reasons of vehicular and pedestrian visibility/safety.
- 10. & 11.** PC recommends waiver based on alternative tree protection plan to be developed by applicant in consultation with an ISA certified arborist. Applicant also agreed to provide regular inspections by an ISA certified arborist during construction to make sure that tree protection plan is being properly implemented.
- 12.** PC recommends a partial waiver for tree replacement reducing the number of replacement trees from 568 to 94 based on the landscape plans submitted.
- 13.** PC recommends waiver based on provision of aerial photo.

Bob Gutowski commented that overall this project could make a big impact on stormwater flows further downstream towards Flourtown Gardens/Hemlock Rd. with already significant flooding issues. Bob asked if the stormwater co-efficients used were for woodlands, or lawns. Mr. Stoneback stated that all co-efficients used for existing flows were based on Woodlands.

Bob Gutowski asked if Mr. Gundlach could explain exactly the type of facility that constitutes a 'retirement home'. Mr. Gundlach replied that the facility would be for independent senior living with congregant dining. Units would have small galley kitchens intended for only light cooking – snacks, or breakfasts. There would not be full medical services offered, except for having a nurse aide on duty. The nurse aide would help direct residents to other necessary medical services. It is possible in the future that a relationship with Harston Hall Nursing Center could be initiated that would provide for more extended medical services. In addition to meals, housekeeping, laundry service and a shuttle would be offered. No assisted living would be offered.

Jean Holland inquired what state licensing would be required and what the terms of the rental agreement would be. Mr. Gundlach replied that no licensure is required by the state for a retirement home of this type. Leasing would be done on the standard basis of requiring a security deposit equal to two month's rental.

Bob Gutowski asked what the total occupancy would be. Rob Gundlach responded that there are proposed 84 one bedroom, or efficiency units with 24 two-bedroom units. Because it cannot be known whether, or not each unit will be occupied by one person, or two, total maximum occupancy cannot be stated. But, if the building were fully occupied the total would be approximately 150 residents. Mr. Gutowski stated that, in light of this fact, was provision of parking really adequate. Mr. Gundlach elaborated that off-street parking had been one of the main points covered by the zoning application. At the end of the zoning process a stipulated agreement was in place that limited the number of spaces for resident parking at 34. The traffic/parking study done by David Horner, P.E. listed maximum usage at between 44 and 66 spaces occupied. 102 spaces have been provided to account for possible heavy visitation days. In addition to this 19 reserve spaces are on the plan to be activated if the need for these spaces emerges in the future.

Chair Gutowski concluded his questions by stating that this type of proposed use is new to the Township. Is there any other possible adaptive use for the facility in the future, other than conversion to market-rate apartments? Mr. Gundlach stated that if the proposed use did not take-off that a possible conversion to nursing home use was possible – although it would require a great deal of interior alterations to be possible. There are other facilities of his type throughout the country that have been very successful. In this area there aren't any examples. Mr. Nelson Hartranft has dedicated a great deal of study to the proposition. With his long experience in the field of eldercare, he believes that this type of facility will become more necessary in the future. Hearing no more questions from the PC Chair Gutowski asked for Public Comment:

Judy Patitucci, 101 E. Wissahickon Ave., Flourtown

Ms. Patitucci stated that she has worked as an aide in the past at many nursing facilities. She believes that the plan is flawed because it does not provide any medical, or personal care options to residents. She also stated that the use would make traffic concerns in the area worse. Visitor parking should also be increased to meet peak demand.

Sarah Gabriel, 1008 Fraser Rd., Erdenheim

Ms. Gabriel asked the PC to enforce requirement for Park & Recreation land. Bob Gutowski explained that there was not enough space for a park for public use to be established on the property. The fee-in-lieu would be used to help purchase/develop land elsewhere for public use. She asked if the use of pervious pavement for the project would help with stormwater concerns. Rick Stoneback explained the proposed system captures all run-off from paved areas into underground facilities for dispersal/detention. So in effect it works as well as a pervious pavement system and will be more durable over time. Ms Gabriel also asked that as many trees as possible be saved from the existing wooded area.

Gretchen Slapinsky, 910 Harston La., Erdenheim

Ms. Slapinsky introduced herself as both a neighbor of the property and a member of the Springfield Township School Board. She stated that members of the community and parents of school-age children were very interested in getting a continuous sidewalk in place along the south side of Haws La, from Fraser Rd. to the Erdenheim Elementary School – which is directly adjacent to the Traditions of Springfield property. She also stated that she hoped that a park & rec. fee-in-lieu would be only applied to community recreation facilities and not used for general Township expenses. Mr. Gillies assured Ms. Slapinsky that the funds would be used only for park & rec. purposes. Ms. Slapinsky had concerns for the installation of a retaining wall at the south end of the property potentially damaging trees on Springfield Township School District property. Mr. Gundlach assured her that such improvements would only be installed after an agreement with the STSD had been reached. She closed by thanking the PC for their work with the developer especially in the area of stormwater management.

Hearing no more discussion on the application Chair Gutowski asked for a motion regarding the application. Jim Mascaro moved that the PC recommend preliminary approval for the application based on waivers requested from the Township Engineer's 6/14/12 letter noted above. This motion was seconded by Joe Devine and approved by a vote of 5 yeas, 1 nay (Mary Holland opposed).

Comprehensive Plan Update

Jean Holland distributed a draft future land use map for the Township. Members will take a look at the map and other materials posted on-line in preparation for the 8/7/12 PC meeting which will be devoted to working on the Comprehensive Plan Update.

At 9:48 PM Joe Devine made a motion to adjourn – this motion was seconded by Angela Murray and approved unanimously.

R. Dunlop

