

**Minutes of Meeting
Springfield Township Planning Commission
June 3, 2014**

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 7:04 PM, with the following members present: Amanda Helwig, Bob Gutowski, James Mascaro, Angela Murray, Mary Holland, David Sands, Joseph Devine, Steve Schagrin, and George Schaefer. Robert Dunlop represented the Township, Fritz Ohrenschall and Brandon Rudd represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC).

Commissioners Report: No Report. New Commissioner not appointed at this time.

Minutes: Minutes of the May 6th, 2014 meeting will be held for approval until the next PC Meeting.

New Business

**St. Joseph Villa
110 W. Wissahickon Ave.
Preliminary / Final Land Development**

**Charles Durkin, P.E.
Mike Rybczynski
Sister Dorothy Apprich**

Sister Dorothy presented revised plans for a parking lot development at the existing nursing facility. The new 140 space (31 in reserve) parking lot will be accessed from W. Wissahickon Ave., 150 feet west of the existing access road. The new plans have been reviewed by Sister Elizabeth Clarke, who is part of the Earth Center, which raises awareness about changes that impact the Earth. This review was also done in conjunction with Bob Myers, a Professor at Chestnut Hill College. Feedback and ideas from both were incorporated. The Applicant also invited the neighbors to preview the plan and incorporate their concerns and feedback. Sister Dorothy feels that they have acknowledged concerns of the PC and the Twp. Engineer. The Applicant is present to 1.) Respond to Township Engineer Letter. 2) Clarify the need of parking spaces. 3) Address the Township Engineer's letter of Tues., June 2, 2014.

Sister Dorothy turned the presentation over to Mike Rabinsky, who conducted the Demand Study. The study was driven by safety concerns for the property. Currently there are 142 employees (driving), SSJ employees 24, Rehab (contracted) 11, Volunteers 22= 199 spaces needed during a Day Shift. Add in the evening & night = 242 spaces are needed. During the sample period, they documented visitors of 66 to 96 to come up with a final number of 339. The Applicants ultimate goal would be to eliminate parking along the drive to Bethlehem Village which is noted in the study as "Section F" with 37 spaces. Currently the Applicant only has 61 legal spots. Per code, they need 197, so they fall 136 short. The Applicant would like to see Section "H" to be utilized for visitor and handicap spots only. He does not feel any additional traffic will be generated by the proposed lot.

Planning Commission member J. Mascaro asked what typical volunteer times are. The Applicant responded that these times vary. Contracted employee times are currently Full Time. That construction project is planned to take the better part of 2+ years.

S. Schagrin asked since the goal is to eliminate parking along drive, how will the Applicant restrict parking. The Applicant responded that they will have a parking system in place with hang tags, and monitor employees where they park.

Charlie Durkin then took over the presentation. Since their last appearance the Applicant has placed 30 parking spots in reserve. No change to the basin or infrastructure has been made. They show a planted 4 ft wide berm that tapers along drive back to grade, and will block head lights.

In response to the June 2, 2014 Engineer's letter:

Zoning Ordinance Comments

1. Applicant has agreed to a 30 ft. wide drainage easement from Wissahickon Ave. to the stream (adjacent to Mount's access) W/R.
2. Non-conformity to conformity W/C

Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance Comments

3. W/R from required widening

Storm Water Management Comments

4. W/C
5. W/C
6. Amanda Helwig asked how costly is the under drain system alluded to by the Township Engineer to incorporate into the plans as recommended. C. Durkin said \$20,000 to \$25,000. James Mascaro asked the Applicant if there was any thought given to a retention basin with fountain or aerator? Applicant responded no. Sister Dorothy pointed out that she believes that the additional seeding will assist with infiltration. B. Gutowski commented that he and the Township Engineer had not had an opportunity to review that information. He also commented that regular maintenance would be required no matter the system implemented. W/R

General Comment

7. W/C
8. W/C
9. W/C
10. W/C

Public Comment

62 West Wissahickon Ave., Maryanne Riley: Commented the Applicant provided no pictures of evening images when there is no one at the property. The Applicant is looking for 180 spots to solve a problem that's happening between 9-2 PM. She noted that at the University of Penn, they instituted a shift stagger to eliminate parking issues. She did not see flexibility here. She also commented that an issue along Wissahickon Ave is that it's a huge breeding ground for mosquitoes. This is a real issue, and hopes that this system has the upmost vigor to remediate these issues.

Erdenheim Farm., Peter Ernst: Asked the PC to consider where the samples were taken, and the assumptions on the filtration rate. Where were they taken and how were they taken. The Applicant responded that the testing samples that were taken are in the report and fully documented.

Planning Commission Comments

- 1) S. Schagrin feels St. Joseph Villa addressed PC concerns and community concerns. As long as issue with basin is settled to the Township Engineers satisfaction he is ok to recommend the Waiver requests be granted.
- 2) A. Murray does not support the entire concept as a Planner, it goes against what she is trying to accomplish. Does not feel it is needed at this site. Feels marking site for designated uses will elevate concerns and that the Applicant should spend more time contemplating a solution.
- 3) M. Holland remains concerned about the proximity of the flood plain and the drainage. Feels the Applicant tried their best but the proposal is not enough.
- 4) G. Schaefer feels they made their case and the proposed plan is reasonable. It meets the minimum requirement. Would just want to make sure it is resolved to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer.

- 5) D. Sands feels the Applicant made their case for parking. He is still uncomfortable with the basin.
- 6) J. Mascaro admitted he was new to this presentation, but agreed with A. Murray. But, also pointed out to the PC, the Applicant is only going up to 2% on impervious surface. Now there are more trees and plantings vs. meadow. Whatever the Applicant and the Township Engineer can do to ensure no standing water he will be okay to recommend the applicants proposal.
- 7) J. Devine was swayed by code to support the increase in parking. Believes Section “F” will still be used. He felt hard pressed to object. He would like to see more parking in reserve if possible. As long as Township Engineer is ok, he is okay.
- 8) A. Helwig was okay with proposed spaces. Glad to see spaces placed in reserve. She also agreed with J. Mascaro with going from meadow to forested and planted areas and infiltration system may help with infiltration to the water table.
- 9) B. Rudd would like to see more parking in reserve. Would also agree to see that plan reached for management of the basin and that township engineer satisfied with proposal.
- 10) R. Dunlop commented that the Plan is developed at this point as much as it can be.

Public Comment

62 West Wissahickon Ave., Vince Riley – Reviewing numbers, does not agree with the math and “illegally” marked spaces. He does not see the need. Mike Rabnisky commented that yes, employees are ticketed for blocking emergency accesses. Sister Dorothy also commented that they are diligently working to not park employees on the road back to the Village. Some people park even at the Mount on a daily basis because they cannot get spaces at the Villa.

119 West Wissahickon Ave., Glen Warden – Likes that there is parking in reserve. H would like to see zone lighting. Applicant responded that timer and zoned lighting will be incorporated.

58 West Wissahickon Ave., Amy Tollner – Traffic burden on West Wissahickon is already heavy. Another left turn onto Wissahickon Avenue is not what the neighbors need. Asked if a traffic study will be conducted? B. Gutowski responded that while that is a good question, this may be outside of the scope of application since there is not a proposed increase in employees. So there is no evidence traffic will increase. B. Gutowski continued that there is no evidence there will be an increase in safety issues or more traffic to the community. If the pattern will be better or worse is debatable.

64 West Wissahickon Ave., Anita Masterini – Was the applicant required to do a flood survey? B. Gustowski responded that the Applicant did provide the older numbers. B. Rudd backed this up saying he looked into it and the new data is the same.

Peter Ernst of Erdenheim Farm- Did we confirm excavation will not go below the flood plain elevation? B. Gutowksi commented that DEP won't allow you to go below that level.

Motion

Motion made by J. Mascaro and seconded by S. Schagrín that in lieu of widening West Wissahickon Avenue, the Applicant will provide a 30ft. easement per the Zoning Ordinance Comments. 7 were in favor 2 were opposed. Motion Carries.

Motion

Motion made by J. Mascaro and second by B. Gutowski that in lieu of widening West Wissahickon Avenue, the Applicant will provide a 30ft. easement per the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance Comments. 7 were in favor, and 2 were opposed. Motion Carries.

Motion

Motion by G. Schaefer and seconded by J. Mascaro that Preliminary/Final Land Development be approved with the following conditions: 1.) Applicant review opportunities to put more parking spaces in reserve. 2.) That with respect to Item 6. (Storm basin) that the Applicant consider alternative approaches to storm water management satisfactory to Township Engineer to eliminate risk of mosquitos breeding grounds, and thus be conscientious of public health and safety. 7 were in favor and 2 were opposed. Motion Carries.

Old Business

Tecce Tract

Ross Weiss, Esq.

Ross Weiss presented a sketch plan of the Tecce tract with 35 Age Restricted homes on the rear (currently approved for 55) and the Atria Facility on the front acreage. They are not abandoning the approved plan. He re-capped that next week there is a hearing scheduled.

- 1) Rezone front 7.1 acres to be Institutional (PC did not recommend)
- 2) Make 4 or 5 amendments to Institutional Zoning (PC did not recommend)

He continued by stating that the Commissioners wanted to see development of remainder space. The amendment they are seeking would change 50% to 60% open space requirement. The sketch provided to the PC is for informational purposed only. Also, a reciprocal easement agreement was reached for both Masonic and Tecce tracts. As a result of a request by the Township and the County, they will provide for deceleration and acceleration lanes.

Motion:

Motion by B. Gutowski and second by A. Murray to approve the propsted increase in open space from 50% to 60%. To open up for discussion.

Discussion:

B. Rudd stated that this plan was approved in 2006. Now they want Atria in the front. The portion in back is the 35 they had.

A. Helwig asked Ross Weiss what the motivation of the request is. Mr. Weiss responded that when presented to BOC, they wanted to see more open Space if Atria is to be approved.

Public Comment

265 Northwestern Ave., Brennan Preine. Challenge before PC is how to reconcile all previous recommendations made when we are talking about the whole tract. There is a much greater context here. As a neighbors' group, when we look at the entire picture 55 versus 175 in beds in Atria/ employees and 35 townhomes, it's more intense and not a fair trade off. Question – going back to plans being abandoned or not, will the Applicant move forward with the approved plan if Atria is not approved? Mr. Weiss was not sure how they will proceed.

237 Northwestern Ave., Gary Bloomberg. Each unit is for two families. By developing the front, Tecce makes a great profit, and creates an eyesore for the neighbors. It's going to be Nursing Home Row. Employees day and night coming and going. The Township will make killing on taxes. They are still trying to maximize profit and develop rear. They won't meet with us and won't talk to us. This has been going on for 12 or 13 years. Always

to change zoning to the developer plans. They should be happy to make concessions on their rear. This is greed. They are changing the value of the neighborhood.

PC Comments

G. Schaefer: Overall message PC was trying to send to BOC was we can't make decision without looking at whole property. There was resistance from owner to provide that information. There is tremendous value this change in zoning on the front would mean, and tradeoff of density on rear should be a part of it. Now this comes along, seems to be trying to address the issue, but not to the degree the PC is expecting. Were we to approve this, what message are we sending to the BOC?

M. Holland: Agreed with George. The extensive development traded by more open space on remainder. Her opinion is that keeping the original approach and cutting off a few units is not a fair trade – nominal at best.

A. Helwig: The approved plan is 55 units. Now they want Atria on the front and 35 units on the rear. The developer is benefiting not the neighborhood.

S. Schagrin: Developer was asked to provide an overall plan, which they have done and now we are turning down. We need to give more credence to their progress.

B. Gutowski: Neighbor made proposal for 4 houses and original house. That was the tradeoff the PC agreed with.

B. Gutowski withdraws motion. Feels it sends a message to the BOC we do not want to send. On its face, it's difficult not to approve an increase in open space, but we need to take it in the context of our prior advice to the BOC.

Motion:

Motion by B. Gutowski and second by A. Helwig that the request not be accepted. That the PC re-affirms our previous recommendations, that this property must be dealt with as a whole. If subdivision and rezoning take place, as intensive a development as Atria is, it must be balanced and for greater than 60% open space proposed by this proposal. Further, the PC refers the BOC to the neighbors' proposal and recommends that the rear be maintained as open space. 8 in favor and 1 opposed. Motion Carries.

Approval of minutes of May 6th, 2014 deferred to next meeting. Welcome to Fritz Ohrenschall our new Community Planner.

Motion by A. Murray second M. Holland to adjourn the meeting. All in favor.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:17 PM

A. Helwig, Secretary