

**Minutes from the**  
**DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Regular Meeting**  
November 25, 2013

The Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular Meeting was held at 7:00 p.m., Monday, November 25, 2013 in the Doylestown Township Municipal Building, 425 Wells Road, Doylestown, PA. Members of the Planning Commission in attendance included Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, Vice Chairman; Kenneth L. Snyder with members Thomas Kelso, Edward Redfield and George Lowenstein. Other in attendance included Township Manager; Stephanie J. Mason, Board of Supervisor Liaison; Richard F. Colello and Township Planning Consultant; Ms. Judy Stern Goldstein.

**Review of Minutes:**

In the form of a motion by Mr. Lowenstein; seconded by Mr. Kelso the October 28, 2013 Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular meeting minutes were approved noting the following corrections...

Page 1 \ Public Comments – Add Ms. Hendrixson to the beginning of second paragraph.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

**Public\Commission Comments - None**

**Plans for Scheduled for Discussion:** Hallmark Building Group – Minor Final Subdivision \ 98 Shady Retreat Road

Attorney for Hallmark Homes Group; Giovanna M. Raffaelli addressed the commission to request recommendation of the proposed minor final subdivision to subdivide lot # 09-007-029001 into two single family lots. The site consists of 4.68 acres as an R-1 Residential District off Shady Retreat and Beulah Roads. The lot will be serviced by public sewer on on-lot wells. Review letters have been received by Pickering, Corts & Summerson dated October 30, 2013, Pennoni & Associates dated November 15, 2013, Bucks County Planning Commission dated November 20, 2013, Boucher & James dated November 20, 2013 and Michael Baker Engineers dated November 22, 2013. Their engineers have met with Township Engineer; Mario Canales to revise plans.

Five waivers are requested with one discussion item regarding recommendations of the proposed Bike and Hike trail. However, the applicants will comply with comments noted on all review letters and Ms. Raffaelli provided paperwork to show beginning process.

Ms. Hendrixson stated a review of comment letters are not necessary since the applicants will comply with all recommendations. Ms. Stern Goldstein agreed and added there was no extraordinary issue with rough calculations checked by their engineers and accepted on Friday, November 22, 2013.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned if issues with trees have been addressed. Ms. Stern Goldstein indicated a tree survey was completed showing a sample area has been provided.

Mr. Lowenstein questioned if the Bucks County Planning Commission issue has been address. Ms. Raffaelli answered; the area is very heavily wooded with existing vegetation that would satisfy the issue. Mr. Lowenstein indicated the BCPC would like to see further vegetation along the railroad tracks and larger street trees. Ms. Raffaelli responded; the consultant recommended in lieu of a fence, a heavier buffer will be provided. She added the area currently is very heavy and dense with woods. However, they will look further and will comply with a request to add more. Ms. Raffaelli concluded it's proposed to keep the area in its natural state with no construction.

Ms. Hendrixson commented the visibility of the driveways are difficult. Ms. Raffaelli responded; as per Pennoni & Associates Project Manager; Dave Tomko, the required site distance is provided and indicated on the plan. She added some of brush was removed in front, which helped.

Mr. Kelso questioned if construction debris was removed from a previous zoning change. John Maczonis of Hallmark Homes Group answered; a Phase 1 low priority study was completed, where one pile of tires and landscape materials will be included in a planned clean up. However, no hazardous items were found.

Mr. Lowenstein questioned if any invasive species has been found on-site. Ms. Raffaelli answered; all brush will be cleaned up to include any invasive species. Ms. Stern Goldstein added the site has been disturbed where alot of invasive species is located. To maintain a healthy condition, the invasive species should be removed. Ms. Stern Goldstein continued if the invasive species is proposed to be used as a buffer yard, the township has authority to require it be removed. Mr. Maczonis added; a cleanup of brush has been scheduled for the safety of residents and to clear an area for utility lots.

For informational purpose, Ms. Stern Goldstein indicated the applicants completed a site test earlier this year and submitted a plan, where a representative from Boucher & James identified which trees were being removed. Mr. Maczonis stated this test was needed to receive a well application for both lots, which was received.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned if the applicants met with Michael Baker Engineers Project Manager; Chris Stanford to discuss a proposed trail. Ms. Raffaelli indicated Mr. Stanford was on vacation this week and offered to review his comments with the commission.

Mr. Stanford recommended a 10 foot wide path within a 25 foot setback of the property be installed along the railroad tracks and a split rail fence either on both sides or any side without extensive or sufficient vegetation in order to act as a buffer. He also recommended a five foot wide sidewalk along the frontage of Shady Retreat Road. Ms. Raffaelli is maintaining her request for a waiver for curb and sidewalk along Shady Treat Road. With the path, she requested a discussion with the Bike and Hike Committee to review comments. They agree to grant an easement for the path and to discuss installation with costs being donated toward the path. She has concerns with the path located on private property and not within a right of way. A 10 foot paved path on lot 1 which causes imperious and tree clearing issues. Also, the cost to construct a 10 foot path at 850 feet for a two lot subdivision is significant.

A discussion ensued amongst the Commission regarding options for buffer trails, such as along Shady Retreat Road and Doylestown Hospital.

Upon hearing the commission suggestions, Ms. Raffaelli indicated if the location of the proposed path is desired, she will meet with the Bike and Hike committee to discuss options in detail.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned if the proposed site will have sidewalks. Ms. Raffaelli answered; no sidewalk are proposed on either side.

Mr. Kelso questioned there is a buffer issue along the railroad tracks located in New Britain. Ms. Stern Goldstein clarified there is not an ordinance requirement. Ms. Raffaelli added it's not sure if the ordinance is applicable.

Due to concerns, Mr. Kelso recommended the applicants review a possible drainage issue with regards to the 12 inch cross pipe along New Britain Road. Mr. Maczonis noted only one drainage issue located under an existing driveway, which will not be blocked. A pipe will be installed for drainage with grading to adjust the invert. Additionally based upon the ordinance requirements, an on lot stormwater is accepted with no additional water flow. He assured the commission grading will be supplied where needed. Mr. Kelso then questioned if there is enough room vertically to work with a 12 inch pipe with inverts. Mr. Maczonis indicated there are inverts on the pipes at .55 to .35 on either side. Mr. Kelso would like to see the ditch cleaned up. He added 12 inch cross pipes are obsolete and well below the minimum. He then suggested to have the township's road department review.

For the sidewalks, Mr. Kelso recommended a sidewalk or shoulder connection into the trail system. He understands there may be a burden with size and configuration for a site with only two lots, but would like to view plans closely to find options.

Ms. Mason stated until more issues are vented out with the tri-municipal plans, especially with New Britain, a trail may end up with two roadways without connection. However, even with a granted easements, problems may occur with a homeowner who will be unhappy having a trail along their property. Whatever decision is made, it should be clarified on the plans. Ms. Raffaelli confirmed some form of fencing will be included along lot 1, especially with a granted easement. She suggested placing a sign notifying of a future trail.

Mr. Lowenstein questioned if the fencing will be located within the setback. Ms. Raffaelli responded if the easement and a fee in lieu was granted then the fencing will be installed along the setback and continue towards the back of the property.

Mr. Kelso recommended a trail connecting to Beulah Road for the residents to use as a residential road, where Shady Retreat doesn't have that option. He is confident a resolution can be found without burden to please everyone once meeting with the Bike and Hike Committee. Ms. Raffaelli agreed.

Mr. Redfield requested clarification if the commission is recommending sidewalks or curbing be installed along the site for future trail access, in which he believes not to be necessary. Mr. Maczonis responded Hallmark is willing to install sidewalks because of the location of the driveway upstream of the cross pipe. He offered to review the issue with the township's public works department. If it's a matter of cleaning the area to get to the other side of the street, he will make a simple fix. The commission agreed by consensus a recommendation to install sidewalks and curbing is not necessary, but a path would be preferred.

Mr. Colello questioned for clarification, the commission is recommending trails instead of sidewalks or curbing and if all the trails are not built, easements will be granted. Ms. Raffaelli clarified the requested 20 foot trail easement will

be provided and placed on the plan before presenting to the Board of Supervisors. Also, a discussion with the Bike and Hike Committee will be scheduled regarding the additional recommendations included in Chris Stanford's November 22<sup>nd</sup> review letter. However, a continued request for waivers of curbs and sidewalks along Shady Retreat Road will be made. Mr. Colello then questioned the issue with imperious with removing the curbing. Ms. Raffaelli answered the trail is approximately 10 feet wide and 800 feet down for lot 1 and in an imperious standpoint will be over 20%. Also, clearing the path will also have an impact. This is one reason why the easement is a better choice to provide future easement relief.

Mr. Kelso questioned the result if the fee in lieu was granted instead of an easement. Ms. Stern Goldstein suggested a fee in lieu be granted after completion of the minor subdivision so not to disturb the lot calculations and not have the township create a non-conformity. Ms. Raffaelli agreed stating as long as the plan and imperious calculations remain the same. Ms. Mason would like to see the result of the demarcation to avoid surveying.

Ms. Raffaelli noted with a requested waiver regarding the driveway grade and slopes on lot 2 to decrease the amount of tree removal and site disturbance for better design. This will be addition to curb, sidewalk and roadway improvements. The commission agreed by consensus to the waiver request.

In the form of a motion by Mr. Kelso; seconded by Mr. Lowenstein the Doylestown Township Planning Commission recommends the Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors approve the Preliminary \ Minor Final Subdivision plan submitted by applicants; Hallmark Homes Group, Inc. for 98 Shady Retreat Road (Tax Parcel# 9-7-29-1) be approved with the understanding the Planning Commission is in agreement with request of five waivers. The applicant have agreed to comply will all comments indicated in review letters by Pickering, Corts & Summerson dated October 30, 2013, Pennoni & Associates dated November 15, 2013, Bucks County Planning Commission dated November 20, 2013, Boucher & James dated November 20, 2013 and Michael Baker Engineers dated November 22, 2013. Further, the applicants agreed to provide at a minimum, an easement or area in fee in lieu parallel to the railroad track for a future bike and hike trial. Applicant has also agreed to present their plans to the Bike and Hike Committee prior to the next Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors regular meeting for further discussion of improvements in the same area.

Mr. Kelso commented the commission will honor Mr. Maczonis' word the driveway area will be cleaned up and cross pipe will be checked.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

**Items Scheduled for Discussion:**

The next meeting of the Doylestown Township Planning Commission will be scheduled for Tuesday, December 10, 2013 due to the Christmas holiday.

**Adjournment:** 7:44 p.m.