

**Minutes from the
DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting**

December 16, 2015

The Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular Meeting was held at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 15, 2015 in the Doylestown Township Municipal Building, 425 Wells Road, Doylestown, PA. Members of the Planning Commission in attendance included Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, members; George Lowenstein, Edward Redfield and Ed Harvey. Others in attendance included Township Manager; Stephanie J. Mason and Board of Supervisor Liaison; Richard F. Colello.

Absent: Vice Chairman; Thomas Kelso and Township Planning Consultant; Judy Stern Goldstein. In Ms. Stern Goldstein absence, Ms. Stacey J. Yoder, AICP was present.

Review of Minutes:

In the form of a motion by Mr. Lowenstein; seconded by Mr. Harvey the November 23, 2015 Doylestown Township Planning Work Session meeting minutes were approved.

Motion carried 3 to 1 with Ms. Hendrixson abstaining due to her absence.

Public\Commission Comments – None

Cross Keys Land Use & Transportation Study - Presentation

Mr. Lowenstein reported on two studies currently being created by the Bucks County Planning Commission regarding roads boarding Doylestown Township. One of the studies pertains to the Cross Keys area located near Swamp Road. With no alternates roads available, there is a history of backup of traffic. The transportation portion of the United States Budget allows transportation issues be reviewed to become more efficient. Most problems are located off Old Easton and Swamp Roads. The study will view under-utilized properties for re-development to become more inviting and improve the economy. The purpose of both studies are to provide options. No conclusions or proposals have been recommended to date. Only possibilities were provided.

For Doylestown Township, suggestions on how to alleviate traffic along Old Easton and Swamp Roads were provided. Some of the suggestions were listed as introducing cross streets along the adjacent townships. A copy of the power point presentation given by Gilmore Associates Engineers and the Bucks County Planning Commission will be available on the township's website – www.doylestownpa.org. The presentations include suggestions on properties than can be redevelopment, traffic control and pedestrian crossings with sidewalks. Ms. Hendrixson added; the redevelopment project will be ongoing and the presentation references one portion where no confirmation on a beginning date was announced.

651 North Shady Retreat Road – Preliminary Land Development Plan

Gilmore & Associates' Landscape Designer; Robert Montrose addressed the commission and explained since meeting in the winter of 2014, changes were made to the plan with the road infrastructure remaining unchanged. A number of field tesst were completed for storm water infiltration to arrive to the preliminary plans. Additionally, upon reviewing previous township comments, a larger set back was added along Lot 1, another lot was eliminated for a

total of 4 lots. The lots were also rearranged to increase the side yard setbacks at Lot 4 to meet the 10-foot requirement. The positions of the lots were rotated around so to increase the set back to 22 feet. The Bucks County Sewer Authority was contacted to inquire what the easements requirements are to sewer the site to the north. As a result, the storm water plans was also revised based upon some of the field tests.

Upon reviewing Pennoni & Associates March 6, 2015 review letter, most items were detailed oriented where moving specific inlets were suggested and will not affect the infrastructure of the storm monitor when producing the right of way of the storm run off at 20%. The infiltration will be maximized within the road bed with a series of underground chambers. The bulk of the line will be managed as a result and any by-pass or overflow does not get infiltrated and will come down to a series of water quality bio swales.

Upon reviewing Boucher & James March 9, 2015 review letter, Mr. Montrose indicated a meeting is needed to be scheduled to confirm that actual tree count. With Gilmore & Associates calculating over 300 trees, there is a discrepancy with counts from both offices.

Upon reviewing Pickering, Summerson and Corts February 25, 2015 review letter, Mr. Montrose indicated a discussion is needed regarding the potential to expand the water main pigging backing on the sewer main through the township's open space. The applicants would like to receive thoughts and suggestions on the impact of resources from the Water Authority. From a tree disturbance standpoint, it can be accommodated without much trouble

Mr. Lowenstein questioned as per the Bucks County Planning Commission comments, why are the home proposed to be placed on the higher portion of the terrain. He noted less trees will be disturbed if the homes were placed on the lower terrain. Mr. Montrose answered; the design of the homes is based upon the storm water. Upon the preliminary field work completed to determine the best area to infiltrate the ground water, it was found the upland area was better suited from an environmental standpoint. Mr. Montrose added; as per geo-technical studies, you don't want to have an extended retention basin.

Mr. Lowenstein questioned how many cars can fit along the garage space. Mr. Montrose answered; two cars will be able to fit on the driveway in addition to the garage. Mr. Lowenstein then questioned if no parking is allowed on the street where will guest parking be provided. Mr. Montrose indicated the matter will be addressed under the Homeowners Association (HOA) documents. Mr. Lowenstein clarified the parking issues is a planning commission discussion, because it has to do with the layout and what happens with traffic on the property. Ms. Hendrixson added; additional parking is an ongoing issue when homeowners have parties or open houses and will become a problem if no parking is allowed on the street. Vehicles will begin parking on the grass or along the road, which may cause tension with neighbors. Mr. Montrose indicated they will look into the matter.

Mr. Montrose then address six waiver requests as ...

- 1) Section §153-24.C(2) – the applicants are requesting a partial waiver for providing existing features within 400 feet of any tractor line to be developed. A surrounding features plan is provided, such as aerial and corporate lighting noting all the critical utilities on the based plan. It also provides a survey for water and sewer. The surrounding features are noted as 400 feet and have a right of trespass on the survey on offsite properties.

- 2) Section §153-24.E(4) – Instead of the cul-de-sac showing a minimum radius requirement of 50 feet, the plans have the radiuses are 48 feet. The change is to reduce the impervious surface and provide a turning template, where the township firetruck or school truck can negotiate the radius. Mr. Lowenstein noted a review letter was not received from the Fire Marshall. Mr. Montrose indicated a preliminary turning template was forwarded last fall. However, he is unsure if the Fire Marshall reviewed the revised plans, but will follow up.
- 3) Section §153-24.K – Limekiln Road is a collector street at 800 feet south of the proposed drives. A partial waiver will be requested, because the entire site is less than 1000 feet. This represents an existing non-conforming and will be impossible for the applicants to comply.
- 4) Section §153-19.K – A partial waiver will be requested for the requirements of a bike path. Both sides of the streets are consistent with the site plan. Upon review discussions, it was determined it was a waste of impervious and the path should be kept on one side. However, a pedestrian crossing will be installed.
- 5) Section §153-34.B.(3)(a) – A partial waiver will be requested to allow flexibilities and not have such a linear street tree frontage. The waiver is to provide more creativity of the design and to comply with the street lights and other utilities requirements.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned; if the applicants will comply with the count of the trees. Mr. Montrose indicated yes and the waiver is to provide more space between the driveways for visibility.

- 6) Section §153-36.B.(3) – A waiver is requested for aesthetic and marketing reasons; the applicants prefer not to include a street light in one area. However, a street light will be placed if needed. Upon Ms. Hendrixson question, Mr. Montrose indicated lighting along the site will be pedestrian scale post lights. Upon a brief discussion, Ms. Hendrixson stated a street light is preferred at the turnoff for visibility and to show the address. Ms. Mason suggested a wooden post with a colonial luminaire.

Commission Comments:

Ms. Hendrixson referenced the template for the 50-foot radius and questioned if the waiver requested is regarding impervious. Mr. Montrose answered; the full radius is not necessary and the 48 feet proposed works better with the alignment. It also assists with the surface treatment of the water and spacing of the sidewalk. If the paving is made larger on the bulb, the gap will become narrow along the sidewalk and curb.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned what are the snow removal plans for the site. Mr. Montrose agreed a clarification for snow removal is needed. The mass majority will be placed in the middle of the bulb or pushed to the side. Snow removal will not be part of the HOA, but can be changed. A final decision is unknown at this time. Ms. Hendrixson suggested to have a confirmation shortly so to provide clarification for emergency vehicles and snow plows.

Mr. Lowenstein noted the plans show four lots for homes and three lots for open space where a lot on the right hand side does not provide access, which is not within township requirements. Mr. Montrose indicated the plans will have a utility easement double as an access easement to the open space. The access will be a required waiver and will be added to the current list. Mr. Lowenstein then noted the access goes through other people's properties. Mr. Montrose responded the access is an open space passage use and not recreation. Upon a brief discussion, Mr.

Lowenstein instructed issues will need to be addressed. Mr. Montrose agreed and stated the issues will be formalized on the sketch plan and the plan will be updated for the next submission.

Public Comments:

Resident; John T. Sandklev of 406 Mahogany Court questioned what are the post recently place along his property identified as. Mr. Montrose answered; the posts are to recognized where replacement tree plantings will be placed as a supplement to the existing woodlands. Additionally, trees which have fallen will be replaced with pine and or ever green trees for privacy. Mr. Sandklev commented the trees which are not scheduled to be removed need to be cared for on an ongoing basis.

Resident: Albert Janik III questioned the status of a pitch on the property. Mr. Montrose explained; the existing slopes from the back yards slopes to the rear. The pitch is away from the property and runs towards the woods. There is no retention basin, but a series of storm water controls as a rain garden in the center that will manage a run off towards the street. It will also serve as a pre-treatment which runs underground to an infiltration chamber under the paving with an emergency overflow. As a final step, the system will treat yard drainage.

Mr. Janik commented the home currently have no issues with basements flooding and questioned if the proposed property may cause any issues. Mr. Lowenstein questioned; if the circle is the primary place to collect water, how does it affect the ability to push water away from the upper portion of the property to the lower part. Mr. Montrose answered; with the proposed, there is normally no major impact from snow. The paving is designed as a sink hole where each curb is directed by the pitch of the road itself. Mr. Lowenstein questioned what happens when a large pile of snow is accumulated during snow plowing. Mr. Montrose indicated an emergency overflow control structure will direct the water flow away from the homes. Additionally, the existing properties are located along the foot print.

Ms. Hendrixson added; one of the requirements the applicants need to have in place is to show a zero containment of water along the property. One position solution of the Township's codes is all applicants need to prove no water will be sent to any existing homes as part of the review process. Mr. Montrose indicated the state issues a Best Practice Management manual which set guidelines when designing underground systems and all systems need to comply with the practices.

Resident; Janice Neuman of 402 Mahogany Court commented her home is currently susceptible to the basement flooding and is concerned with her propane tank freezing from the proposed development. Mr. Montrose responded; it will be very unusual for any home to be impacted uphill and the applicants will comply with the township's ordinances. Inspectors have visited and completed various testing of the site. Ms. Neuman then questioned if fencing is considered. Mr. Montrose answered; the existing fence that goes through the property will be removed and replaced with landscaping as much as possible.

Upon a discussion between Mr. Montrose and the residents regarding the style of trees proposed to be planted and replaced, Mr. Montrose offered to provide the residents with a copy of the proposed landscape design.

A resident questioned what will be done with regards to dirt and dust between the homes from the proposed site during development. Mr. Montrose answered; the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Soil Conservation District conducts approval processes during the temporary constructions. A series of erosion control liners will be placed on top soil as a barrier to minimize the line of dust that accumulates in the area. This process

cannot deviate without township or conservation district approval. Additionally, each lot will be stabilized on a temporary basis and lawns will be seeded and maintained until purchase is made.

Mr. Colello commented how it's always a good idea to have the developer have open communications to solve problems and to make the job easier when addressing the Commission to inform everyone is pleased, including the residents. He then suggested to keep an ongoing dialogue prior to the preliminary plans submission.

Upon a discussion amongst the commission and residents regarding concerns on privacy, Ms. Hendrixson suggested to have as much open space retained as possible. Mr. Montrose responded; the design is low impact because of the cluster, house built close to one another without long lining driveways pushed to the building lots and not spending unnecessary impervious to make the cul-de-sac longer. The applicants are trying to preserve a much open space as possible.

A resident questioned if the layout of the site can be changed due being far away from Shady Retreat Road. Mr. Montrose answered; the applicants need to comply with township zoning ordinances, which requires a larger set back because of the corner lot and the driveway being 10 feet from the corner. Mr. Lowenstein noted a stream located nearby where development cannot infringe upon wetlands.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned what are the next steps. Mr. Montrose indicated a discussion with Boucher & James regarding details of the plan, but mainly direction and feedback is needed from the water companies regarding the sewers. A variance will be needed for the new flood plain ordinance to accommodate the pine crossing of the flood plains.

Ms. Neumann questioned if water connection to the new homes will have an impact on water pressure. Mr. Montrose answered; the area is in a high pressure water district. Upon a meeting with the water company, water pressure reducers will be installed where the pressure will not be affected.

Sign Ordinance – DVRPC Meeting Recap

Ms. Yoder reported the recent sign presentation where the Montgomery Planning Commission presented their model sign code. The event also had additional sign discussions and a sign manufacture showcasing new technology in signs and lighting. There was also a presentation regarding the new electronic messaging centers and new sign laws, pertaining to an Arizona case.

Ms. Hendrixson questioned if there were any new signs not anticipated by the township. Ms. Yoder indicated she did not see any new signs not anticipated or shocking. The main focus was on the electronic messaging centers and what it means for many local ordinances.

Mr. Colello suggested to the have a recent PSATS article regarding sign walls forwarded to the commission. Ms. Mason agreed.

90 Day Clock

Upon Ms. Hendrixson question, Ms. Mason informed; 651 Shady Retreat Road Preliminary Land Development may return in January or February depending upon the discussion results regarding the water and sewer issues. Additionally, the applicants will need to meet with the Zoning Hearing Board.

Ms. Hendrixson requested to have the next workshop session regarding the sign ordinance to be scheduled in January. She then suggested to invite Code Director; Sinclair Salisbury. The Planning Commission agreed to schedule the next Work Session on Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 4:00pm, upon confirmation from Mr. Sinclair.

In the form of a MOTION by Ms. Hendrixson; seconded by Mr. Harvey the Doylestown Township Planning Commission nominate Mr. Thomas Kelso as Chairman.

MOTION TABLED.

Adjournment:

Hearing no further business, the December 16, 2015 Doylestown Township Planning Commission Regular meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.