

MINUTES OF THE
EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING HELD ON JULY 15, 2015
(Approved August 19, 2015)

The Planning Commission held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 15, 2015. Present for the meeting were Walter Woessner, Kathryn Alexis, Lance Parson, Lawrence Tietjen and Jason McConnell. Also present for the meeting was Marjorie Brown, Planning Commission Solicitor and Brady Flaharty, Township Engineer.

Also present was Mariea Geho, Vice Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Woessner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the pledge was recited.

MINUTES

Mrs. Alexis moved to approve the third draft of minutes of the June 17, 2015 monthly meeting minutes. Mr. Woessner seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 4-0-1 vote. Mr. Parson abstained.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

Consideration of review of revised Whispering Woods Preliminary Plan

Mr. Ben Goldthorp and Mr. Jason Engelhardt were present to review the revised Preliminary Plan for the Whispering Woods Development. Mr. Goldthorp stated they reviewed the comments from all the review letters. Mr. Goldthorp believes they can comply with all the comments in the review letters. Mr. Goldthorp stated he is aware they need to provide an Open Space Management Plan. Mr. Goldthorp stated the trees along Ellis Woods Road have been surveyed and the outcome of that survey will be reflected on the next plan submission. Mr. Woessner asked what the red marks on the trees along Ellis Woods Road represent. Mr. Engelhardt stated he will have to check with the surveyor to see if the red marked trees are to remain or be removed.

Mr. Woessner stated he would like to start the discussion tonight with the Traffic Engineer's letter from McMahan Associates. Mr. Woessner stated he does not agree with everything in the Traffic Engineer letter. A discussion ensued on how many copies of the Traffic Impact Study are distributed and to whom they are distributed. Mrs. Imes stated the Township receives two (2) copies of the Traffic Impact Study each time a plan is submitted or resubmitted. Mrs. Geho gave the copy she reviewed to Mr. Woessner for him to review.

Mr. Woessner discussed the review letter from Richard M. Tralies, Natural Lands Trust. Mr. Goldthorps letter stated an Open Space Management Plan has been included, but that meant that there is a plan for a plan. Mr. Goldthorp asked if the Township has a design template that has been approved in the past that they could use. Mr. Flaharty stated this is a new requirement under the SALDO and there has not been a plan submitted yet. Ms. Brown stated there is an Open Space and Trail Maintenance Agreement required. It may make sense to keep this in mind and consolidate the requirements for both agreements as a guideline to create the Open Space Management Plan. Mr. Woessner stated he would like to see something on the Open Space Plan on how they will handle older trees. A tree fell from the Open Space area onto his property on top of his grandsons sand box. Mr. Woessner stated Mr. Goldthorp may want to have someone periodically do an inspection of the trees on the property to decide whether a tree should be removed.

Mr. Woessner discussed the review letter from Brady Flaharty, ARRO Consulting. Mr. Woessner asked Mr. Goldthorp how he planned on transitioning from an existing four feet (4') sidewalk along Spiece Road to the required five feet (5') sidewalk for Whispering Woods. Mr. Goldthorp suggested using a handicap ramp to make the transition. Mr. Goldthorp and Mr. Engelhardt will check the situation. Mr. Woessner discussed item #30 in the Township Engineer letter pertaining to meeting with the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee. Mr. Goldthorp stated he met with the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee, who approved the plan with the addition of a three (3) to four (4) car parking lot at the corner of the property along Ellis Woods Road. Mr. Goldthorp indicated the Committee stated they would place their comments in the meeting minutes in lieu of providing a letter to the Planning Commission. Mr. Woessner stated they are having another meeting on Tuesday, July 28, 2015. The Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee may suggest other recommendations for the Open Space. Mr. Woessner suggested Mr. Goldthorp attend the meeting. Ms. Brown requested the Township direct the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee to submit a written response with their comments to the Planning Commission. Ms. Brown requested the Township direct the Fire Marshall to submit a written response with his comments also.

Mr. Woessner discussed the review letter from Marjorie Brown, Wisler Pearlstine, LLP. Ms. Brown asked Mr. Goldthorp if he had any questions on the comments. Mr. Goldthorp stated he had no comments. Mr. Goldthorp will be meeting with Mr. Weiner to prepare the Homeowners Association documents. Ms. Brown discussed her prior suggestion about a Conservation Easement area. The current plans show the Conservation Easement area extends beyond the walking path. If the Planning Commission favors a conservation easement area, this area would need to be scaled back. Ms. Brown suggested Mr. Goldthorp request a waiver for the linear feet boundary requirement for counting trees. There are two (2) parcels for this Subdivision. Mr. Woessner asked Mr. Goldthorp if he contacted PECO. Mr. Goldthorp stated he has started discussion, but have not gone into specifics. Mr. Goldthorp asked if the part of the trail could be put in the existing Sanitary Easement. Mr. Flaharty stated that would be okay as long as they do not put the trail over top the Sanitary Sewer Line.

Mr. Woessner discussed the items from the Planning Commission.

Sheet 1 – Add “Verizon” for cable service.

Sheet 1 – Under Waivers – Add Old Schuylkill Road Sidewalk slope to waiver list. Also requirement specifies minimum three (3') feet between the locations of sidewalk and right-of-way. Plans show sidewalk closer than three (3') feet. Add this to waiver request.

Sheet 3 – Remove extra “R” off drawing in the word “Woessner”

Sheet 7 – Note #9 – Need to tweak the language since the note has nothing to do with

Parking.

Sheet 11 – New parking lot and driveway location. A discussion ensued pertaining to the parking lot and its location. Mr. Flaharty suggested aligning the driveway to the parking lot directly across from Ellis Woods Road if there is a “three (3) way stop.

Sheet 12 – The access past the retaining wall to get down into the basin looks like it impedes equipment access. There is a gate right next to the retaining wall. Mr. Goldthorp stated twenty (20') feet should be enough room. A discussion ensued.

Sheet 12 – There is some mention in the notes about something special pertaining to Lot 7 and Lot 8. Mr. Goldthorp stated this could be a note from a previous plan. They will look into this and remove if needed. Mr. Woessner asked where the applicant came up with the 66.9% for the Open Space. Mr. Engelhardt stated he will provide the calculation information.

Sheet 14 – Mr. Woessner does not see the Emergency Spill over as an easement. Sheet 23 shows the Emergency Spill over on Lot 7 and Lot 8. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will take a look at this. A discussion ensued on the Emergency Spill area.

Sheet 18 – Mr. Woessner pointed out the fence around the basins is showing a distance of twenty-four (24”) inches between the bottom rails to the ground when measuring from the top using the dimensions stated in the table. This needs to be revised to the current standard.

Sheet 18 – Mr. Woessner pointed out the fourteen (14”) inch notations in the Belgian Block Detail does not seem to go anywhere. Mr. Goldthorp will check into this. Ms. Geho asked if the Belgian Block will only be going inside the development, not outside the sidewalk. Mr. Goldthorp stated yes, the Belgian Block will only be inside the development.

Sheet 22 – Mr. Woessner pointed out there is one section of the trail that is 178’ at 16.3%. Mr. Woessner stated he is concerned about people pushing a stroller on this section of the path. Mrs. Alexis stated this can be done. Mr. Woessner stated he does not like this slope. Mrs. Alexis stated she likes that the trail is following the natural contours of the property. Ms. Brown stated you will need a waiver and will need to look at the ADA requirements. Mr. Woessner asked Mr. Goldthorp to specify the deviation in the waiver request.

Sheet 28 – Mr. Woessner discussed the porous paving cleaning. Mr. Goldthorp stated this is up to the Homeowners Association to perform. Mr. Woessner asked how they will get the people to remove their cars. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will have to contact the residents ahead of time to let them know when the cleaning will be performed.

Sheet 31 – Mr. Woessner stated the plans show a lot of fill dirt. Mr. Woessner asked Mr. Goldthorp if he is planning on acquiring the fill from someplace else. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will dig an onsite pit.

Mr. Woessner asked about the swale locations. A discussion ensued as to whether easements were required for swales. Mr. Flaharty confirmed a swale is a stormwater management facility (BMP) and Ms. Brown noted the swale areas must be netted out of gross lot area in arriving at the calculation of net lot area.

Ms. Brown discussed the off street parking spaces and whether there will be curbing. Mr. Goldthorp stated he is anticipating curbing. It was noted that street parking will need to be restricted on Wilbe Drive.

Mr. Tietjen asked about the Culture Resource Notice and the PHMC Comments. Mrs. Gail Brown from the Historical Society asked Mr. Tietjen to ask when these items would be available for review. Mr. Goldthorp stated the documents are available and believed they had been forwarded to the Township. Mr. Goldthorp stated he would forward these documents to Mrs. Imes for her to distribute to the appropriate Commissions.

Mr. Parson asked Mr. Goldthorp when he was looking to start construction. Mr. Goldthorp stated he hopes they would be back in front of Planning Commission in September for Preliminary approval, waiver approval and recommendation of Preliminary approval to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Goldthorp would submit the Preliminary plan to the Board of Supervisors in October. Mr. Goldthorp would submit for Final plan approval from the Planning Commission in December. Mr. Goldthorp is looking to submit the Final plan approval to the Board of Supervisors in January. While they are working on Final plan approval from the Board of Supervisors, they will work on all the agreements. They would like to get a shovel in the ground around March of 2016. Mr. Goldthorp would hope to have the road paved before winter of 2016.

Mr. Parson asked when Mr. Goldthorp how long he thought the whole build out would take. Mr. Goldthorp stated he envisions the infrastructure completed in 4 to 6 months to get to the first paving section. He stated he would hope to sell 30 homes in a year. He believes this would take approximately 2 ½ years. Mr. Goldthorp stated the development was being presented as a single phase project, but that the buildings would be built in phases. Phase 1 would have the road completed so far with a turn around. A further discussion ensued. Mr. Woessner questioned the

temporary turn around. Mr. Goldthorp stated they would do what makes sense from a construction perspective. Mr. Woessner stated the Fire Company may want to weigh in on this topic and should review the sequence of construction. Mr. Parson stated he hoped that while they are working on the first half, they will be working on the trail and have the trail completed by a certain time frame early in the project. Mr. Flaharty stated this should be included in the construction sequence. Mr. Goldthorp stated they could base the completion on how many Certificate of Occupancies are completed. Mr. Flaharty stated they may not want to base it on Certificate of Occupancies but show this in the construction sequence.

Mr. Goldthorp stated they will be back in front of the Planning Commission at their September meeting.

After the applicants left the meeting, a discussion continued on the turn around. Mr. Parson asked why Mr. Goldthorp is not going to put the road through the whole complex. Mr. Woessner stated it has to do with money. Mr. McConnell stated it will cost more to have the road done in 2 stages. It would be more cost effective to do the road completely 1 time. A discussion ensued and members stated the road should be built all the way through because of a need for access to all buildings for emergency services.

Parking Standards for Recreation Fields

Ms. Brown discussed the review letter from Ann Hutchinson, AICP, Senior Director Community Planning, Natural Lands Trust, on Parking Standards for Recreation Fields. Ms. Hutchinson does not recommend Parking Standards for active recreation lands in residential developments that are not Township owned or part of a school. Ms. Hutchinson stated they do not normally see playing fields in a residential development. Mrs. Alexis asked how the Commission envisions this field being used when the Homeowners Association is paying for the fields. A discussion ensued. Mr. Parson asked what if someone gets hurt on the field. Does the Homeowners Association cover it? Ms. Geho stated the Homeowners Association would have insurance and would cover any injuries. Ms. Brown stated normally, the Homeowners Association decides for itself whether they want to have the fields open to the public and whether to charge usage fees. Mr. Parson thinks this is a bad option to have an active recreation field open to the public in this location. Mrs. Alexis agrees. Mr. Woessner suggested the Commission waits to see what the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee comes up with.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Continued Discussion of Ordinance No 2015- "Miscellaneous Streets and Sidewalks, Subdivision and Land Development and Zoning Ordinance Amendments"

Ms. Brown stated she has incorporated all the comments received so far, but is holding off on providing the updated document. She plans to wait until the review is completed and then present the updated version to the Commission. Ms. Brown continued the discussion of the proposed changes.

- Section 30 – Chapter 27, Part 13, Section 1306, Subsection A, Paragraph 2 – Proposed change is correcting an omission.
- Section 31 – Chapter 27, Part 13, Section 1314, Subsection 14, Paragraph B, Subparagraph (c) – Proposed change is to correct a typo.
- Section 32 – Chapter 27, Part 13, Section 1315, Subsection A – Proposed change is to provide clarifying language.
- Section 33 – Chapter 27, Part 13, Section 1319, Subsection B, Paragraph (1) – After some discussion, the Commission expressed a preference to retain use of the existing terminology for “chicken” and “fowl”.

- Section 34 – Chapter 27, Part 13, Section 1325 – Proposed change defines the number of Domestic Animals per parcel in Paragraph 1 and Paragraph 2. After some discussion, the Commission recommended that the ordinance distinguish between large and small animals. It was recommended to require a minimum of two (2) acres for two (2) large animals (horses, cattle, mules) and to allow one additional large animal for each additional acre. For smaller animals (goats, sheep), it was recommended to require a minimum of two (2) acres for two such animals and to allow two (2) additional animals for each additional acre. It was also recommended to limit the number of chickens to ten (10). Most members recommended the removal of Paragraph 3. Ms. Brown agreed to look at the noise ordinance to see if it could be expanded to address birds. Paragraph four (4) will also be removed completely.

The Commission decided to continue the review of this ordinance at the next monthly meeting.

Ms. Brown gave a brief review of the handout she provided to the Commission on the Wireless Communications Facilities Ordinance. Ms. Brown stated the firm drafted a complete revision for another municipality and the Board of Supervisors recommended that ordinance be the starting point for East Coventry to review. It is recommended that the Commission look through this Ordinance as a fresh, clean document. Mr. Hosterman will be prepared to discuss this Ordinance at the August Planning Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Parson moved to adjourn the monthly meeting at 9:45 p.m. Mrs. Alexis seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 5-0-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A Imes
Secretary