

MINUTES OF THE
EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING HELD ON APRIL 13, 2015
(Approved June 17, 2015)

The Planning Commission held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2015. Present for the meeting were Walter Woessner, Lance Parson and Lawrence Tietjen. Absent were Kathryn Alexis and Jason McConnell. Also present for the meeting was Marjorie Brown, Planning Commission Solicitor, Brady Flaharty, Township Engineer and Rick Tralies, Township Planner.

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

Mr. Woessner called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m. and the pledge was recited.

MINUTES

Mr. Tietjen requested a correction to the meeting minutes under the Historical Commission Update. The first sentence reads "Mr. Tietjen stated Dale Friends was" should read "Mr. Tietjen stated Dale Frens was". With the proposed correction, Mr. Parson moved to approve the third draft of minutes of the March 18, 2015 monthly meeting minutes. Mr. Tietjen seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 3-0-0 vote.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

Consideration of review of revised Whispering Woods Preliminary Plan

Mr. Ben Goldthorp was present to discuss the revised plans for the Whispering Woods Preliminary Plan. Mr. Goldthorp stated he has reviewed all the comments from the review letters and made the appropriate changes. He was able to present the Preliminary Plan at the Park, Recreation & Conservation meeting in February 2015. Mr. Goldthorp is looking to return to the Park, Recreation & Conservation meeting in April 2015.

Mr. Goldthorp reviewed the following changes to the Preliminary Plan:

- Added connection to the other trail down by the stream. This will be a stone trail in this area by the stream, but a paved trail through the development.
- Proposed multi-purpose field in open space – field meets requirements for some sports. The remainder of the open space will be planted as meadows with bird houses. Mr. Parson asked if the field will be open to the Public. Mr. Goldthorp stated the Homeowners Association will own and maintain the open space. Mr. Goldthorps thought is the open space can be used by any resident. Mr. Parson asked where the public will park. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will have to park along the roadway. Mr. Flaharty asked if the Homeowners Association would rent the field out to other organizations. Mr. Goldthorp stated they would not. Mr. Woessner stated the SALDO ordinance states parking is to be provided for active open space. Mr. Goldthorp stated they can provide a parking lot, but the Park, Recreation and Conservation Committee did not want a parking lot. Mr. Parson stated he can see the residents from Coventry Glen using the space. Mr. Tietjen stated he can see residents from the area using the field, but feel it should be labeled an active open area. Mr. Flaharty stated there would need to be "No Parking" signs on Ellis Woods Road. The Township may not need the "No Parking" signs on other roads, but it is definitely needed on Ellis Woods Road. Mr. Woessner stated he can see the residents from Coventry Glen using the open space, but cannot see them walking there. Mr. Flaharty stated we need to make sure it is set up to NOT promote the field as an "active open space area".

- Mr. Woessner stated he knows Mr. Goldthorp will be requesting a waiver for the slope, but Mr. Goldthorp is not saying how much the slope is on how many acres. Mr. Engelhardt stated he can provide that information. Mr. Woessner stated he has some comments on the slope of the trail.
- Mr. Tietjen asked about the Cultural Resource Notice. Mr. Flaharty stated Ms. Gail Brown brought the Cultural Resource Notice up at the Board of Supervisors meeting. Mr. Flaharty explained that this should come with the NPDES application. Mr. Goldthorp stated he thought they had a Cultural Resource Notice. Ms. Brown stated Mr. Goldthorp might want to take a look at SALDO Section 304.2.B paragraph 5, which described what the Historical Commission reviews.
- Mr. Woessner stated Mr. Goldthorp will need a waiver request for the width of Ellis Woods Road. Old Schuylkill Road will be wider than Ellis Woods Road. The developer will want to look at the reference being used. Mr. Goldthorp stated he can do that.
- Mr. Woessner discussed the foot candle in Item 34 in the ARRO review letter. The applicant requested a waiver to provide an “average” illumination of 0.4 foot candle instead of a “minimum” illumination level of 0.4 foot-candles. Mr. Woessner noted Ms. Brown is in the process of reviewing the SALDO. Maybe we should change the SALDO requirement from “minimum” to “average”.
- Mr. Woessner discussed Item 39 in the ARRO Engineering letter. The ordinance and construction standards are at odds. We should change the SALDO requirement to reflect the Township’s “construction standards”. Mr. Flaharty stated the way things are written, the more stringent standard is the controlling standard. The Township construction standard is more stringent.
- Mr. Woessner asked if Item 56 in the ARRO Engineering letter should be another waiver. Mr. Flaharty stated it would either be a waiver or compliance. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will add this item to the waiver list. Mr. Flaharty stated safety needs to be taken into consideration on this item. Mr. Goldthorp stated they are looking to place the sidewalk ten (10) feet back from the roadway.
- Mr. Woessner asked if they will move the telephone pole out of the sidewalk. Mr. Goldthorp asked where the Township would like the telephone pole placed.
- Mr. Tralies discussed Item 40 of the ARRO Engineering letter. The applicant needs to make sure the trails on the plans are designated as “Community Trails”. The applicant needs to demonstrate that the trail meets the SALDO slopes requirements. Mr. Tralies does not have a problem if a section of the trail falls in the 10% slope, like Ellis Woods. If the slope falls in the 25% slope, like Spiece Road, Mr. Tralies is okay with a 25% slope as long as it is not a long stretch and not in a gravel area. If the 25% slope is a long stretch, there could be a major erosion problem.
- Mr. Woessner discussed the low spots in the sewer right-of-way where water lays. This area is a potential mosquito area.
- Mr. Woessner discussed the following items on the proposed plans:
 - Sheet 3 – The applicant has identified the trees being removed, but has not identified the trees remaining on the property. Mr. Woessner stated he did not know what the applicant plans to do with the trees that are already laying down on the property. Mr. Parson stated he believes the Board of Supervisors may have a problem with not cleaning up the trees.
 - Sheet 7 – All the drainage easements are shown as fifteen (15) feet wide. The drainage easements should be twenty (20) feet wide. Mr. Woessner stated he is not sure how they are going to put a parking lot on top of an easement. Mr. Flaharty stated a paved area can be put on an easement. The parking lot on the easement is at lot 38/39. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will comply with the twenty (20) feet drainage easements requirement.

- Sheet 7 – There are a bunch of numbers referenced on the plan, 61’1” and 61’4”. Mr. Woessner asked what those numbers mean. They appear to be the distance from the outside property line to the inside line, showing the real side yard location and distance.
- Sheet 7 - The stormwater easements are between Lot 38/39 and Lot 50/51.
- Sheet 7 – The Township has a requirement to keep driveways away from intersections. Mr. Woessner believes the end parking space is considered a driveway. He believes that this end parking space should meet the criteria of being sixty four (64) feet from the intersection. However, he does not know how the applicant will meet the criteria. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will take a look at this.
- Sheet 8 – says Sheet 10.
- Sheet 9 – says Sheet 14.
- Sheet 10 – The stormwater basin needs to be removed from the Open Space Calculations. The basin can be in open space, but not included in the calculation. Mr. Goldthorp stated there should be a separate plan showing the Open Space Calculations without the basin included.
- Sheet 8, marked at Sheet 10 – There is a requirement in the Zoning Ordinance that each multi-unit single-family attached dwelling must be at least one hundred twenty five (125) feet away from single-family detached dwelling. However, there is only one hundred twenty (120) feet from the end unit to the residence across the street on Old Schuylkill Road. Mr. Goldthorp stated they will take a look at that. Mr. Woessner stated he does not know how they will fix this issue.
- Sheet 12 – Mr. Woessner stated he does not think a school bus will come into the development. Where will the kids gather to be picked up for the bus? Mr. Goldthorp said he is not familiar with the school district schedule. He would guess that they would make two (2) stops, one at each entrance.
- Sheet 15 – The applicant is showing a fence on top of the retaining wall. There is nothing written on the plan which shows or states the type of fence. Mr. Goldthorp stated he will add a label to show the type of fence proposed. Plan states there will be a retaining wall engineered at another time. Why is it not shown on the plan now? Mr. Goldthorp stated they typically do the retaining walls during a shop drawing phase, once the plan is approved due to the changes during the plan review. Mr. Flaharty stated the retaining will need to be done towards the end of the process so it can be properly escrowed.
- Sheet 18 – Trail slopes are shown at 16 % in an area where it should be 5%. Mr. Woessner stated he believes the trail should be shown as a “Community Trail. Mr. Goldthorp stated he can request a waiver. Mr. Woessner stated he would rather see the slope meet spec. Mr. Goldthorp asked if the Planning Commission is asking the applicant to regrade the area. Or would the Planning Commission rather we request a waiver to keep the area in its natural state. The Park, Recreation & Conservation Committee suggested the area stay in its natural state. Mr. Woessner stated he would like the area to meet spec. Mr. Woessner stated he liked the curve in the trail. Mr. Goldthorp stated he could do a switch back on the back side of the trail. Mr. Goldthorp asked who decides on the percentage of the slope and other committee comments. Ms. Brown stated the review committee review the plans and send their comments and recommendations in writing to the Planning Commission. Ultimately the Planning Commission takes into consideration the information provided from these review committees and makes its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.
- Sheet 37 – The Street trees along Old Schuylkill Road seems to be missing in the area not being disturbed. Mr. Goldthorp asked where the Planning Commission would like to see them planted. Mr. Woessner stated you could plant them along Ellis

Woods Road. Mr. Goldthorp stated Mr. Woessner is showing he calculated 2,236 trees. Mr. Woessner stated Mr. Goldthorp is only showing 1,250 trees. Mr. Woessner stated his calculations came from pages 2 and 3. Mr. Goldthorp will take a look to see how they calculated the number of trees. Mr. Woessner stated all the trees along Ellis Woods Road need to be replaced. Each eight (8) inch caliper tree to be removed must be replaced with two trees.

- Mr. Woessner asked Mr. Goldthorp when he thought he would have everything corrected. Mr. Goldthorp stated he would like to meet with Mr. Flaharty in the next week or so, and then make modifications to the plans.
- Mr. Flaharty stated when responding to Mr. Woessner's comments, please address them to the Planning Commission.
- Ms. Brown asked if Mr. Goldthorp had any questions on the legal review letter. Mr. Goldthorp stated he would like to catch up with Mr. Flaharty, meet with the Park, Recreation and Conservation Committee, and then meet off line to discuss any questions on the legal review letter. Ms. Brown briefly discussed some of the items listed in her review letter.
 - Paragraph 1 – Each dwelling unit must be on a separately subdivided lot.
 - Paragraph 3 - The applicant needs to relocate the utility poles.
 - Paragraph 6 – The applicant should identify which items are not in “substantial compliance” with the conditional use plans and what is different from the conditional use submittal.
 - Paragraph 8 – The Parks, Recreation and Conservation Committee should submit some kind of formal documentation containing its comments.
 - Paragraph 13 – Sewer easements should be shown on the plans.
 - Paragraph 16 – The Planning Commission should consider making a recommendation as to whether Wilbe Drive should be offered for dedication or, if to remain private, should satisfy standard Township Road specifications in case the roads are dedicated to the Township in the future.
 - Paragraph 17 – The Fire Marshall should formally review the proposed plan. Written recommendations should be sent to the Planning Commission. Mr. Goldthorp stated he has sent a plan to the Fire Official. He will have the Fire Marshal send the comments to the Township.
 - Paragraph 18 – The Planning Commission should make a recommendation on the lighting proposal of the applicant and this should be incorporated into the proposed plan resolution. Procedurally, this does not require requesting a waiver.
 - Paragraph 24 – The Planning Commission should consider recommending the Home Owners Association keep Open Space Area B and Open Space Area C in its Natural State and be subject to a conservation easement. Mr. Goldthorp stated he will prepare the Home Owners Association documents and have Ms. Brown review them.
- Mr. Woessner distributed additional written comments to the Planning Commission and the applicant, identified as Doc. # 150414, consisting of five (5) pages.
- Mr. Parson asked Mr. Goldthorp if he had any idea when they would like to start construction. Mr. Goldthorp stated they would like to start in the fall, if possible.
- Mr. Woessner asked if Mr. Goldthorp would be resubmitting a revised plan next month, in May. Mr. Goldthorp stated it would be more like June.

Consideration of Sketch Plan review of Minor Subdivision of the Bryncroft Farm located at 601 Ridge Road

Mrs. Elizabeth Gaboriault explained the sketch plan for the proposed subdivision plan. The property is 13.371 acres. Mrs. Gaboriault stated they are looking to subdivide 2 acres off the front in order to construct a home on the back portion. The original house is on the front lot. The existing driveway was known as a “Wagon Trail” and built in the mid-1800s. Mr. Woessner stated the current

driveway services multiple homes, which would make it a non-conforming use. This may require a waiver.

Mr. Flaharty asked if there is any agreement in place for the shared driveway. Mr. & Mrs. Gaboriault stated there is nothing as of now. Mr. Brady stated they would need a waiver to add another lot to the shared driveway. Ms. Brown stated they would need a driveway easement with maintenance provisions in addition to the request for a waiver. A discussion ensued.

Mr. Flaharty state the next step is a plan submission (minor subdivision) with the inclusion of a waiver request for the driveway.

Mr. Gaboriault asked who approves the waivers. Ms. Brown stated waivers are approved or denied by the Board of Supervisors upon recommendations made by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Flaharty stated the Driveway Ordinance only permits common access driveways for two-family detached homes and prohibits driveways that provide access to more than one lot.

Mr. Gaboriault asked the Planning Commission what they thought their chances are to get the waiver approved. Mr. Woessner stated he thought it looked pretty good. Ms. Brown noted that the Planning Commission's recommendations are only advisory in nature.

Ms. Brown stated an easement would be needed that stipulates that those homes using the shared driveway are responsible for the maintenance, plowing and any other identified requirements and should include any attaching conditions and restrictions such as parking restrictions for the use of the easement. Ms. Brown stated the easement agreement should contain the same types of provisions as would be found in a Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions used for a "Homeowners Association".

Mr. Brady stated if they treated the driveway as a private street, it would have to be constructed according to the Township road specifications and requirements. Ms. Brown stated they could attempt to submit their application premised on the driveway being treated as a private street and request a waiver for the road specifications and a waiver from other SALDO requirements..

Northern Federation Update

Mrs. Geho provided an update from the Northern Federation Meeting. Mrs. Geho stated the speaker this month discussed the Iron & Steel Tours and updating the brochures.

Historical Commission Update

Mr. Tietjen stated there was nothing to report.

Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee

Mr. Woessner stated there were no more comments on the plan. We will find out next week on the when the revised plan will be distributed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Parson moved to adjourn the monthly meeting at 9:02 p.m. Mr. Tietjen seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 3-0-2 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A Imes
Secretary