

EAST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 28, 2015

Members Present: Greg Davis, Deb Abel, John Laumer, Sue Drummond, Jeff Broadbelt, and Brian Taylor

Absent: Todd Asousa

Also Present: Terry Woodman, Township Manager, and Maureen Perri, Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm. There were approximately 12 people in the audience.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Deb Abel made a motion to recommend Greg Davis as Chairman. John Laumer seconded and the vote was unanimous. Greg Davis made a motion to nominate Deb Abel as Vice Chairman. The motion was seconded by Sue Drummond and the vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Greg Davis to approve the minutes of December 17, 2014. The motion was seconded by Deb Abel and unanimously approved.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT: BRANDYWINE REALTY FURTHER AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO PERMIT MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CGO-CORPORATE GATEWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT

Represented by Lou Colagreco, Esquire and Paul Comitto, Brandywine Realty

This ordinance text amendment is to allow additional mixed uses in the Corporate Gateway Overlay District. The application has been submitted by the owner of a property at 50-52 Swedesford Road which is in the CGO – Corporate Gateway Zoning Overlay District.

Mr. Colagreco stated that based on prior discussions with the Planning Commission the following changes were presented to the Board of Supervisors: 1) they have reduced the residential ratio from .65 to .50 and 2) that any future developments would have to go through the Conditional Use approval process. Mr. Colagreco said the Board of Supervisors expressed two concerns: 1) that the residential ratio works and that the project be viable with this change, and 2) the Board agreed with requiring the Conditional Use approval process for this type of mixed use in this Zoning District. The hearing was continued to the Board of Supervisors' March 11th meeting.

ACTION:

Greg Davis made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment submitted by Brandywine Realty Trust amending the Zoning Ordinance to permit Mixed Use Development and creating standards for mixed use development in the CGO – Corporate Gateway Zoning Overlay District. Members of the Commission had no issues with the amendment as presented this evening. Jeff Broadbelt seconded and the vote was unanimous.

LAND DEVELOPMENT – PRELIMINARY PLAN: 20 MOORES ROAD – BUILDINGS 4 & 5

Represented by Lou Colagreco, Esquire and Eli Kahn

Mr. Colagreco stated the applicant proposes to construct two three-story office buildings covering 198,000 sq. ft. with 137 parking spaces held in reserve on a property consisting of 62 acres. Both buildings had been approved previously in the early 2000's but one of the proposed buildings has been relocated on the site. The property is located in a PO-Professional Office Zoning District on the southwest corner of Moores Road and Sidley Road.

Building 5 was approved for 117,000 sq. ft. to be built on the ball field and Building 4 is three stories consisting of 80,500 sq. ft. and was originally sited next to the pond. The current proposal is to turn Building 4 90 degrees and move it closer to Route 202. Mr. Colagreco stated that the lighting standards to be implement is a more subtle lighting scheme than what would be required by Township Ordinance. This change is in deference to the neighbors. The proposed lighting level is similar to what was approved by the Board of Supervisors for the area adjacent to the buildings currently under renovation. Mr. Kahn said he will adhere to the Township's current regulations for stormwater which are more stringent than what existed when these two buildings were originally approved. Mr. Kahn mentioned that there are improvements being made to the internal pedestrian trail as well as adding a new chip pathway along Sidley Road for community use.

McMahon Associates review of the plan was detailed in a letter dated January 27, 2015. Mr. Keaveney, Pennoni Associates, stated that McMahon's review letter recommended a right hand turn lane be built from Rt. 401 onto Moores Road. Discussion ensued over the availability of right of way and the constraints of the stream and flood plain. Mr. Kahn said, in his opinion, the real intersection in need of improvement is at Phoenixville Pike and Sidley Road. Discussion ensued.

Residents' concerns were: 1) traffic volume and speed; 2) possibly adding traffic calming methods to Moores Road; 3) improving the intersection at Moores Road and Rt. 401; 4) improving the intersection of Phoenixville Pike and Sidley Road; 5) minimized lighting; and 6) screening of the property.

ACTION:

Greg Davis made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the Preliminary Plan – 20 Moores Road for Buildings 4 & 5 totaling 198,000 sq. ft. and holding 137 parking spaces in reserve. The property is bounded by Moores Road, Sidley Road, Rt. 401 and Rt. 202 in a PO-Professional Office Zoning District subject to complying with Arro's letter, dated December 16, 2014. Deb Abel seconded and the vote was unanimous.

AMENDMENT TO A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN: COVENANT UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – ROUTE 30 AND CHURCH ROAD

Represented by: Owen Carr

Mr. Carr stated that in 2011, they were approved to construct a Deacon's pantry and an addition to the church. The property is zoned INS – Institutional Zoning District and is located at the intersection of Route 30 and Church Road. At that time, they had proposed an addition to the church, a new sanctuary building as well as a Deacon's pantry building. Since that time they have purchased an adjacent property and no longer need to construct the pantry building. At this time, the Church is requesting modifications to the approved Phasing plan which was a sheet in the previously approved Land Development set.

In the area that was to be occupied by the pantry building they are now adding 3 parking spaces to the southeastern parking lot and a connecting driveway. They are also adding two parking spaces, extend the existing driveway around the cemetery, add a pedestrian walkway, and add 800 sq. ft. addition to the church building annex.

ACTION:

Greg Davis made a motion to recommend the amendment to a previously approved Land Development Plan for Covenant United Presbyterian Church showing modifications to the Phasing Plan for a new sanctuary and support buildings on the south side of Rt. 30 opposite Church Road. Brian Taylor seconded and the vote was unanimous.

COMMENT TO THE ZONING HEARING BOARD: RLD ATWATER & PROVCO PINEGOOD – SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ALLOW A GASOLINE STATION

Represented by Lou Colagreco, Esquire and Sue Bratton

Mr. Colagreco stated that the property is located on the Atwater property closest to Route 29 in O/BPS – Office/Business Park Service Overlay Zoning District. He reminded the members that the Atwater Village Commercial plan was approved by them at their January meeting. He advised that convenience stores are a permitted use in a commercial district but it is the gasoline pump which requires a Special Exception. They will appear before the Zoning Hearing Board on February 12, 2015 for the Special Exception. Therefore, they are requesting comments from the Planning Commission.

ACTION:

John Laumer made a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board for the RLD, Atwater JC & Provco Pinegood application for a Special Exception to allow a gasoline station as part of a commercial mixed use proposed for the Atwater Village Commercial District on the parcel closest to Rt. 29 and south of the quarry lake in an O/BPS – Office/Business Park Service Zoning District. Deb Abel seconded and the vote was – 5 – approved and 1 – opposed – Greg Davis.

CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION: RLD ATWATER JC TO CONSTRUCT A 130 ± ROOM HOTEL

Represented by: Lou Colagreco, Esquire

Mr. Colagreco stated that approval for the hotel was recommended at the January 28, 2015 meeting for the Atwater Commercial property which is closest to Route 29 in O/BPS – Office/Business Park Service Overlay Zoning District. At that time, the discussion was for possibly a 120 room hotel. Since that time, he stated that they are requesting a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for the Conditional Use Approval for a hotel not to exceed 130 room. The proposed footprint of the hotel is 15,379 sq. ft.

ACTION:

Sue Drummond made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Conditional Use Application filed by RLD Atwater pursuant to Section 200-37.B of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the construction of a hotel not to exceed 130 rooms in the Atwater Village Commercial District. Deb Abel seconded and the vote was unanimous.

SANDY RIDGE SUBDIVISION SKETCH PLAN: ENVISION LAND USE – 80 SINGLE FAMILY LOTS

Represented by: John Jarris, Esquire, John Mostoller, Stephen Sauselien, PE

Mr. Jarris stated that the property is also referred to as the Balderson Tract. It is located on the northeast corner of Hillbrook Circle west of James Thomas Road in an R-1 Residential Zoning District. He said that 80.4 developable acres of the property are in East Whiteland and the remainder in Charlestown is comprised of 42 acres where they are proposing 11 building lots. The plan shows a residential cluster development overlay, with 80 single lots averaging 18,000 sq. ft. in size. Because of the steep slopes on the property, the subdivision plan will require Conditional Use Approval.

The property has approximately 300 lineal feet of frontage on Phoenixville Pike across from the Great Valley Middle School driveway. The access to the development will be from this frontage. The developer is proposing a series of minor collector roads with 50 foot rights of way and a 26 foot parkway entrance. An emergency access/egress road is shown out onto Conestoga Road (Rt. 401). The property has significant wetlands which are headwaters to the Valley Creek. The embankment from an old railroad bed acts as a damn holding back waters from the wetlands during storm events. Discussion ensued concerning water issues and the impact it has on flooding and Hillbrook Circle.

Residents' concerns: Since the construction of Charlestown Oaks, stormwater runoff occurs onto the roadway of James Thomas and residents are experiencing basements flooding. Ms. Fish expressed her concerns with the neighboring superfund TCE property and what impact the earth disturbance would have on this toxic site. Other issues were the single roadway access for ingress/egress as well as pipelines through the property. Discussion ensued.

The applicant was asked to consider preparing a by right sketch plan using the regular standard 40,000 sq. ft. lot. The applicant felt that the cluster development overlay would provide for more open space.

ACTION:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Greg Davis, Chairman

Maureen G. Perri, Secretary