

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township
December 17, 2014 – 7:30PM

Present

Commissioners – Rodia, Whitig, Adler, Pomerantz, Hatton, Lees and Criddle. Also present were Township Planning Director Chris Patriarca, Township Engineer Kevin Matson and those mentioned below.

Call to Order

Mr. Pomerantz called the meeting to order at 7:30 and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted and approved unanimously (BW/JL).

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Commission (PC) meeting of December 3, 2014, were unanimously approved as amended, with Pomerantz and Rodia abstaining (BW/DC).

Reports

Mr. Lees presented the December 15 Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting. At their workshop the BOS discussed the Renewable Energy Ordinance and the Fair Share land development timeline. At their regular meeting the BOS had several reports presented to them, a presentation on Jacqueline Drive traffic calming, authorized advertising for the renewable energy ordinance, took under consideration the WEGO police merger, accepted the Springer subdivision and adopted the 2015 Township budget.

Announcements

Mr. Patriarca asked the PC what time they would prefer to hold workshops when deemed necessary. He stated this would be advertised with the annual newspaper notice for the yearly meeting schedule so workshops would not need to be advertised separately. Mr. Pomerantz followed by asking the PC if considerations should be made to change the start time of meetings from 7:30 to an earlier time. After discussion, the PC decided to continue to hold their regular meetings at 7:30 with workshops held when necessary at 6:30. Mr. Pomerantz followed with providing information to the PC on the RFP developed by East Goshen Township for the update of their comprehensive plan.

Non-agenda Public Comment

There was no non-agenda public comment.

New Business

Fair Share Property/Malvern School Conditional Use

Andy Rau, the attorney for the applicant, first introduced their team and gave a brief overview of the history of the development of the Fair Share property. He stated in August 2007, conditional use approval was granted for a bank and office building on the property, and land development plans subsequently accepted by the Township in December 2008. Mr. Rau stated the change

being requested would allow for the construction of a Malvern School instead of a bank. He also spoke of the Permit Extension Act as well as noted the extensions granted by TAG Builders have kept this plan in place since 2007. Mr. Pomerantz followed with a comment on how the PC expects a complete presentation and a full addressing of all engineering comments/concerns prior to issuance of a recommendation on the application.

Mr. Rau first stated many of the traffic concerns in the McCormick Taylor (McT) comments will be addressed at the January 7 meeting after TAG's consultants meet with the Township in the interim. He then followed by going through the December 12 McT letter relevant to the overall site design and layout. He stated with several comments that the TAG will comply with the comment and have it addressed to the satisfaction of Kevin Matson, the Township Engineer. Roman Dychdala, the project engineer for TAG then addressed site landscaping adjacent to the ArborView residential area. He stated there is adequate room along the connector road to provide for significant screening between the residential and commercial properties.

With regards to the access points to the property, Mr. Dychdala stated the access is over 500 feet from the Stetson Middle School driveway. Next discussed was the off-site loading berth to which the applicant argued that this space is unnecessary due to the nature of the business. Diane Morgan, the Director of Operations for the Malvern School, indicated the only deliveries made to their facilities are generally made by trucks such as FedEx, and infrequent deliveries from larger trucks are made with much less frequency.

Mr. Dychdala indicated the area at the front of the proposed building could serve as a potential loading area, and Mr. Matson generally agreed with this idea. Relevant to topography on the concept plan, Mr. Rau indicated they will comply with this requirement by the time of land development. Mr. Matson stated the topography had changed with the development of the ArborView subdivision to which Mr. Dychdala stated a plan with more detailed topography will be provided. Ms. Morgan then provided for the overall context of the proposed play area of the school. Next was a brief discussion on stormwater management and how it will be handled on-site.

In reference to the LEED comment, Brian Breslin of the Malvern School provided for a background on some of the environmentally sensitive design incorporated into their facilities, but that he has inquired with their architect as to what the cost would be to become LEED certified. Mr. Rodia asked Mr. Matson what are the additional costs involved with LEED certification. He stated there is a direct relationship between the certification and overall costs of construction, but he did not have an exact figure of these costs.

Mr. Dychdala elaborated a bit on the completion of the ArborView trail and stated it would be connected by way of a sidewalk on the northern side of the connector road, but convert it to more of a trail if desired by the Township. Mr. Hatton next asked for a clarification of the ordinance as to whether or not both a day care center and an office are allowed on the same property. Mr. Rau stated that a restriction cannot be "read into" the ordinance if not explicitly prohibited.

Mr. Rau first discussed the emergency access into the ArborView subdivision and stated it was previously approved as part of the ArborView land development and will ultimately be offered to the Township for dedication. He further stated it will only be used as an emergency access for now. Greg Richardson from TPD went through the McT comments related to transportation. Mr.

Richardson first discussed the trip generation letter provided for as part of their application. He stated they will gather updated traffic counts and analysis of additional intersections. He further stated he was scheduled to meet with the Township traffic engineer Al Federico and Township manager Rob Pingar on December 22 to discuss in detail several items mentioned in the McT review.

With regards to the internal access to the school, it will come directly off the connector road. It will provide for a one-way driveway into the drop-off area and will have additional signage to indicate this. Additional study will be done to confirm energy vehicles will be able to adequately access the site. Issues related to handicap accessibility and connections to the connector road will be clarified. Additionally, the proposed school will not have any direct access onto 202.

Mr. Pomerantz asked about the timing of their resubmission and if it would be ready by the January 7 PC meeting, and reiterated the PC's policy of not considering a positive recommendation on the application until all of the engineering comments have been addressed. Mr. Rau stated they had all intentions of getting the materials submitted back by the time of the next meeting. Mr. Richardson stated it will be difficult for the traffic counts to be complete by the January 7 meeting.

Mr. Rau stated the PC should consider the broader aspects of the application as the SALDO application will get into more of the details. He further stated if the PC has open issues at the end of their next meeting, they can make conditions to require them to be addressed in detail during SALDO. Mr. Matson stated all of the items in the McT review letters must be addressed as they are required by code.

Mr. Hatton asked if the traffic studies take into account after school activities. Mr. Richardson stated the traffic counts are done during the peak hours that would encompass the time when after school activities are conducted. Further, it was stated the proposed road will connect all of the way to West Pleasant Grove Road, but that the final design of its connection into Stetson School is to be determined. This connection will either involve a parallel road west of the jughandle or a direct connection into the jughandle from the south.

Mr. Pomerantz concluded by asking if what needs to be addressed will be addressed prior to the January 7, 2015, PC meeting for the PC to make their recommendation. Mr. Rau indicated the applicant intends to have all of the supplemental information by the time of the January 7 meeting.

Fair Share Property and the Westtown Historic Commission

Dave Walter representing the Westtown Historical Commission (HC) made a presentation on the historic resources present on the Fair Share site. Mr. Walter first provided for an overview of the previous approvals for development made on the site. He stated the HC believes no consideration was given to preserve existing resources on-site, and that if historic consideration were considered, the need for variances would have been diminished. Mr. Walter stated that the Township should deny any further extensions related to the Fair Share property where practicable in order to fully reevaluate the historic resources present on-site, or that Fair Share properties voluntary make a condition of approval the preservation of historic resources.

Mr. Walter stated development of the Fair Share property can be dated as far back as 1723 and that the home was likely constructed in the 1820s. He then presented a series of historic images illustrating the home in its historic context. Next was a discussion of the architecture of the

building detailing various aspects of the façade and overall appearance. He then stated the home is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, but that it could be restored to its original appearance. He also thanked the applicant for preserving the spring house. Mr. Walter then further spoke of potential springs and wetlands present on-site as well as the impact of the proposed connector road on them. He further discussed the PC conversation of the road and related issues from their 2007 meeting on this project. Mr. Walter then concluded with a discussion of how historic structures can be incorporated into new development.

After the presentation several questions were asked. First Mr. Whitig asked about the overall list of historic structures the HC has identified to date. Mr. Walter indicated there are about 135 historic structures/sites that predate 1900 within in the Township. Mr. Rodia asked if there are mechanisms for the Township to encourage further preservation on redeveloped sites. Mr. Matson noted that when waivers are needed, there is a degree of negotiation to be had to try to preserve historic structures, but that there is nothing formally codified in the current Township ordinances requiring it. Mr. Pomerantz followed by asking what makes this structure “historic.” Mr. Walter noted its significance rests in its early development and the nature of the home on-site.

Public comment

Mr. Hatton requested the PC forward any comments on the sign ordinance to Mr. Patriarca.

Adjournment

9:17 pm (DC/SR)

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Patriarca
Planning Commission Secretary