

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township

December 5, 2012 - 7:30PM

Call to Order

Chairman Lees led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and called the meeting to order.

Present

Commissioners – Hatton, Whitig, Adler, Lees, and Pomerantz. Also present were Township Manager Robert Layman, Township Engineer Rob Pingar, five guests and those mentioned below.

Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted as presented (RP/BW).

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of November 14, 2012, were approved as submitted. (RP/RH)

Reports

Dave Walter who attended the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 19th was not present but sent a written report. At the Workshop the Board discussed police personnel matters in executive session, and also discussed the Westtown School Science Building Plan and the 2013 Budget.

At the regular meeting the Board heard a Police Report indicating theft from unlocked vehicles was a continuing problem. Topics raised during Public Comment included upgrading the website and the status of the Act 537 Plan. Westtown School granted another two week extension of the review period for the Science Building Addition Plan. The Board accepted Bulldog Construction's bid for repair of the force main on South Concord Road. During discussion of the 2013 Budget it was announced that there will probably be a tax increase in 2013. The SPCA Contract for 2013 was approved. Mr. Walters reported on the status of the Camp Elder Historic Marker. A possible Historical Commission was discussed.

Elaine Adler reported on the December 3rd meeting. The Work Shop agenda included a possible Historical Commission, the search for a new Police Chief, scheduling of interviews for the Planning Commission vacancy, the Westtown School plan, and progress in collecting delinquent utility bills. Chairman Barber reported that approximately \$53,000 had been remitted to the Township and that stronger legal action has been initiated against those who have not yet responded to the collection firm's request for payment.

At the regular meeting the Building Inspector reported an average month and the Road Master stated that the sewer main repairs on South Concord Road would be complete this week. Park and Recreation reported that the Winter Fest was an outstanding success with greatly increased participation. Under Public Comment, there was a discussion of unpaid use of Oakbourne. The Westtown School Science Building plan was approved as was the 2013 Police Budget. The Board approved release of an old escrow for the Jefferson senior apartment project which was replaced with an escrow posted by the current developer.

Announcements

Elaine Adler reminded PC members to RSVP to the Holiday Reception invitation.

Non-agenda Public Comment

Dick Pomerantz commented on the recent decision of Owen J. Roberts School District to open up use of athletic facilities to the public, and suggested encouraging West Chester Area School District to do the same. PC will recommend to the Supervisors that they take whatever steps possible to encourage the School District to achieve this and suggest that the Open Space Task Force also consider this.

Russ Hatton reported on the Open Space Task Force meeting which he attended. He indicated that the Task Force had not yet worked out the administrative and organizational details, but that they were proposing an ambitious agenda with a survey early in the Spring.

The Task Force talked about using the Maillist. There are currently some 200+ on this list, but there will be articles in the next newsletter and on the website urging more residents to participate.

Zoning Amendment – Special Use Overlay(SUO)

PC received McCormick Taylor review letter dated 12/3/2012. Present for the developer were Attorney John Jaros, Engineer Keith Lieberman, and Bozzuto Representative Don Tracy. The draft amendment submitted by the Bozzuto group, potential developer of a portion of the Crebilly Tract, was discussed by the PC at the last meeting. The developer proposes an apartment complex which is not currently permitted in the SUO. The 260 apartments would be built on 18 acres fronting on Route 202. The developer would construct the access road from Route 202 (approximately across from Piedmont Road) and a segment of the Township's proposed connector road extending from the new access road south to Route 926 estimated to cost between 1.4 and 1.6 million dollars. The developer would also construct the 202/926 improvements previously discussed with the Presby Homes project which are estimated to exceed one million dollars. Public sewer would be provided for this project via a main under Route 202 connecting to the gravity sewer system in the Pleasant Grove development. Bozzuto proposes an estimated 1.5 million dollars in upgrades to part of gravity lines leading to the Pleasant Grove Pump Station and to the pump station itself.

Mr. Jaros and Mr. Lieberman reviewed the history of proposed development of this segment of the Crebilly tract. Mr. Lieberman presented a concept plan showing the area of the Crebilly tract to be developed as the apartment complex, the areas to be added to the Westminster Presbyterian tract, the tract reserved for a future business development, and explained that the Robinson family wishes to add the remainder of the SUO overlay to the tract previously proposed for a large lot subdivision. The apartment project is comprised of 5 3-story buildings and a 4-story central building. Berming, similar to the Bozzuto project in Thornbury is proposed along Route 202.

There followed a discussion of the McCormick Taylor letter. The Commission noted that it appears no public open space is anticipated in either the apartment development or in Robinson's large lot subdivision. During prior discussions Westtown has indicated the need for public open space. Mr. Hatton noted that the Open Space Task Force has also identified a need for public open space in this area.

The building setbacks in the draft amendment are less than the current Ordinance requirements for a CCRC. Mr. Lieberman stated that the setback from Route 202 is approximately 150 feet, but setbacks of 50 feet from the new connector road are proposed. To achieve larger setbacks would require moving the connector further west into the area to be included in the large lot section of Crebilly.

The proposed impervious limit is 55%, the same as currently applies to BCD. Mr. Lieberman indicated the draft would be revised to use the same building separation language that is currently in the Township Ordinance. Three of the buildings will have interior garages with a reserved parking space in front of the garage door. Garages count as .5 parking space per the Westtown Ordinance. According to Mr. Lieberman, the draft ordinance proposes 1.5 parking spaces per unit. Since no engineered drawing has been prepared, he does not have a precise count of the parking spaces shown on the concept plan, but it is greater than 1.5 per unit. The Westtown Ordinance requires 2.5. Mr. Lieberman said that a recent survey at the Springhouse complex in Thornbury indicated that maximum usage appeared to be 1.18 spaces per unit. He also stated that the Urban Land Institute recommended 1.65 spaces per unit for apartments and the developer was agreeable to using this number. The draft amendment does not include parking setbacks from internal streets.

Architectural and landscape plans were not addressed in the draft, however, Mr. Lieberman indicated that this project has progressed to the point where the developer is willing to provide schematic level building and landscape drawings. Language relating to a Master Plan will also be added to the draft amendment.

In response to Planning Commission questions:

1. Mr. Lieberman said that a traffic study has not been performed, but there did not seem to be much difference in the traffic generation of this project and the previously proposed CCRC although the peak periods may be somewhat different.
2. Mr. Tracy expects an apartment mix of 50% one bedroom, 35% two bedroom, and 15% three bedrooms units.
3. Mr. Tracy explained the developer's research into market conditions which makes them confident of the success of this project. Financing is available at this time. The timing of the project is vital. Bozzuto would hope to begin construction in 2013.
4. Mr. Tracy indicated that in general 100 apartments produce 15 school students. It is his experience that the number is lower in the Philadelphia area.
5. Mr. Tracy explained there are numerous recreational facilities provided in the central building. The outdoor recreation area on this concept plan is an area providing seating, outdoor eating space. No playground area is proposed.
6. Mr. Jaros stated that Westminster Presbyterian Church is aware that a portion of the area to be added to the church property is intended for the right-of-way for the connector road extending north to West Pleasant Grove Road.
7. Mr. Lieberman itemized the improvements to be made at the 202/926 intersection which should make a significant difference in the flow of traffic at this location even though traffic volume may have increased since the original plans were made.
8. Mr. Lieberman described the improvements which will permit sewage from this project to go to the West Goshen Sewer Plant via the Pleasant Grove Pump Station. The Bozzuto project will bore under Route 202 and connect to the existing gravity system in Pleasant Grove. This will require extensive improvements to the existing mains as well as a major upgrade to the Pleasant Grove Pump Station. This will require an Act 527 revision since the Crebilly tract is currently proposed for on-site treatment.

Mr. Jaros reviewed the steps needed to amend the Zoning Ordinance and approve a Conditional Use Application. He asked if the Commission would make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on the draft amendment tonight or if they would prefer to see a revised draft first. Chairman Lees said it would be preferable to see the revised draft before making a recommendation. Mr. Jaros acknowledged that the Commission intended to cancel its December 19th meeting, but asked if it would be possible to hold that meeting to discuss and recommend the revised draft. The Commission agreed.

Public Comment

Walter Pavelchek, S. New Street, commented that many residences have many more than two cars which means cars are parked on the street. It appears that the Township requirements for parking spaces are not adequate.

The Commission discussed parking at other multi-family projects. Most were constructed with a requirement for two spaces per unit and have experienced parking problems. In any case, any reduction from the present requirement of 2.5 spaces per unit will require amendment of the Parking section of the Zoning Ordinance as well as the SUO. Mr. Pingar will advise the Bozzuto group of this.

Bob Layman, Township Manager, reported that the Board of Supervisors will be interviewing applicants for the Planning Commission vacancy on December 17th.

Adjournment (EA/BW) 9:32pm.

Elaine L. Adler
Planning Commission Secretary