

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township
June 9, 2010 - 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, Walter, Pomerantz, and Rohrbach. Also present were Township Manager Bob Layman, Township Engineer Rob Pingar, one guest, and those mentioned below.

Adoption of Agenda

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

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of March 17, 2010, were approved as submitted. (RH/DW) Unanimously approved. (The PC meetings scheduled for April 7th, April 21st, May 5th and May 19th were canceled.)

Reports.

Russ Hatton reported on the Board of Supervisors meeting of April 4th. The Board considered the PC recommendation for rezoning of the sewer tract and the several pump station tracts, but decided more information on the specific parcels was needed. Residents of Liberty Square were present to request the Township's assistance. There are items which the builder has not completed.

Dave Walter was unable to attend the May 3rd meeting and referred the Commission to the Board minutes noting that there were no items of particular interest to the PC and that the Liberty Square residents were again present to discuss the remaining builder issues.

Brent Whitig reported on the May 24th meeting. Liberty Square residents again attended. The new West Chester Borough Mayor was present to introduce herself.

Dick Pomerantz reported on the June 7th meeting. He noted that the Board has discussed the possibility of modifying the use of a bond issue during the Work Session. Bob Layman explained that the Board had expected to use the bond for sewer projects, but these have been delayed. At this time the Board is considering other uses for the funds. Bond counsel has advised that this is possible but will require certain actions by the Board. Mr. Pomerantz also noted that the Building Inspector reported an increase in the number of permits issued.

Announcements

Environmental Management Center program on Thursday, June 10th.

Non-agenda Public Comment.

Dick Pomerantz, speaking as a Township resident, commented on the Crebilly/Presby Home and public sewer projects. He asked that the PC consider considering this as an agenda item. He spoke of the time devoted to these projects and the expense to Westtown, and asked was the Township reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. It appears that \$140,000 was paid to URS for the sewer project and the related meetings and that significant costs for consultants was incurred for the Presby/Crebilly project. Mr. Layman responded that Presby/Crebilly paid the costs, but that the URS situation was different. He also explained the complication of changes in DEP procedures and reimbursement programs and said that much of the work done by URS would be useful as it would be required for future sewer projects. Mr. Lees said this topic would be on the June 23rd Agenda.

Tract 2010-1, WCASD, Penn Wood Elementary School Renovations

Present for the WCASD were Solicitor Ross Unruh, Kevin Campbell, Operations Manager, and Mark Groves. Also present was Angelo Capuzzi of Chester Valley Engineers and Architect Scott Malin from Spiegle Group. PC received sketch plan dated 5/7/2010 and Chester Valley Engineers letter of 5/12/2010.

Mr. Capuzzi reviewed the present conditions at the school and said that the renovations would include extensive renovations to the existing building, a 9,600 s.f. addition, and removal of the existing modular classrooms. The additions are proposed for the front of the site as steep slopes on rear section of the tract preclude expansion in that direction. New water service will be required. The renovated building will be sprinkled and air conditioning is being considered. A storm water basin will be constructed at the rear of the building.

Mr. Pomerantz asked about use of the existing drive from the front of the building to the Bobolink Lane cul-de-sac commenting that there was a safety issue. He also asked about the possible impact of the construction on the neighborhood, and suggested advising the neighbors of the project.

Mr. Capuzzi responded to Township Engineer Pingar's questions as follows:

1. Mechanical components will be located on a pad outside of the auditorium section of the building (PC suggested buffering).
2. No storm water management was required when the school was constructed. The roof drains of the original building discharge into 36" pipes filled with stone which serve as basins.
3. Access to the rear of the building for construction purposes will go from the existing drive around the rear of the west wing of the existing building.

The work is scheduled for 2012 and is anticipated to cost 10.6 million.

Ross Unruh asked that the Commission recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Land Development Plan for this project, when submitted, be considered as a Preliminary/Final submission. The PC agreed.

Motion (RP/BW), the Planning Commission recommends that the Board approve consideration of the Land Development Plan for Tract 2010-1, Penn Wood School Renovations, as a Preliminary/Final Plan, in order to process the application in a timely manner. Unanimously approved.

Tract 2010-2, WCASD Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School Renovations.

PC received a sketch plan dated 5/17/2010 and a letter from KCBA Architects dated 5/14/2010. Present were the WCASD representatives, Engineer Peter Haas of Barry Isett & Associates and Architect Scott Kalner.

Mr. Kalner said the school was built in 1954 and has been added to at several different times and includes seven modular classrooms which will be removed. The renovations include an addition with a new gymnasium, re-arrangement of interior spaces to provide greater efficiency, a sprinkler system, relocation of an existing soccer field, and grading and pathways for the new addition. The existing on-site septic system will be modified to accommodate the building addition. A temporary construction driveway and staging area will be constructed at the southeast corner of the property.

Peter Haas noted that the site is served by public water: a new service line will be added for the fire protection system. At present there are only a few small storm water pipes. Underground on-site storm water detention will be added in the area of the soccer field. There is an increase in impervious surface of approximately 11,000 s.f. which will be contained and managed. Air conditioning the school is being considered. The mechanical equipment would be located on the roof and completely screened.

Mr. Lees asked about the on-site system. Mr. Haas indicated that two of the existing six fields will be removed as they are in the area of the new addition. They will be replaced. No increase in school population is anticipated. Mr. Unruh commented that there had been discussion of public sewer, but no agreement has been concluded with West Goshen in whose service area the school is located.

Mr. Pomerantz asked about screening of contractors employees for possible history of sex crimes. Mr. Campbell assured the Commission that the WCASD has a procedure for this purpose.

Mr. Haas responded to Engineer Pingar's questions as follows:

1. Two of the existing four sheds on the property will be removed. Additional storage for seasonal items will be provided in the new addition.
2. Some testing of the existing septic fields, two of which are located in the flood plain, has been done, and more will be done.
3. The applicant will consult DEP about permits which may be required for location of the construction staging area and drive, and the restored soccer field which are partially in the flood plain.

Mr. Pingar indicated that, although state permits may be required for this project, he did not object to the request for the Preliminary/Final plan process.

The project is scheduled to begin in 2011, take about 18 months, and to cost approximately 10.8 million.

Motion (RP/BW), the Planning Commission recommends that the Board approve consideration of the Land Development Plan for Tract 2010-2, Westtown-Thornbury School Renovations, as a Preliminary/Final Plan, in order to process the application in a timely manner. Unanimously approved.

Thornbury Township- Crooks Subdivision

The Commission received the plan for this three lot subdivision on the south side of Route 926 immediately behind the CVS Pharmacy. PC will make no comment.

Public Comment

Tom Lownes, 1428 Bobolink Lane. Mr. Lownes said he was a happy neighbor of Penn Wood School, but had some questions regarding the plan for renovations. He noted that there was a gate in the side drive which enters the Bobolink cul-de-sac that is currently closed when the school is not in session and asked if the gate would remain. He also asked about cost overrides. PC referred these questions to Kevin Campbell of the WCASD. Mr. Lownes expressed concern about use of the side drive by construction vehicles, and possible safety issues. It was noted that while a construction access to the rear of the building is proposed, there is currently no access to the rear for emergency vehicles. Mr. Lownes also expressed the hope that as much of the existing trees as possible would remain to screen the adjacent residences.

Adjournment (DW/EA) - 9:20pm.

Elaine L. Adler
Planning Commission Secretary