

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township
April 7, 2004 - 7:30PM

Present: Chairman Verdiani noted the following members present; Commissioners House, Kurth, Adler, Verdiani, Purcell, and Huberty. Also present were Township Manager Robert Layman, Township Traffic Consultant Al Federico, and four guests.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Verdiani led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and called the meeting to order.

Adoption of Agenda.

The Agenda was adopted with the addition of the Old Wilmington Pike Rezoning under New Business.

Approval of Minutes.

The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of March 17, 2003, were unanimously approved as submitted (PH/MP).

Announcements. The Board of Supervisors meeting scheduled for April 19th has been moved to April 26th.

Reports.

Board of Supervisors April 5, 2004. Don Verdiani reported. The Board is considering increasing the fine for false alarms on home fire alarm and security systems. Mr. Verdiani reported that Westtown Mews is considering a comprehensive plan for improvements to the complex. He noted that there were also complaints about power failures. Mr. Layman has been asked to gather information on this topic. The Oak-bourne Phase I project has been put on hold until the increased cost factors have been resolved. Mr. Verdiani also reported that the Board has agreed to the O'Brien proposal to supply a drainage easement and install part of the piping in lieu of an open space dedication.

Tract 2003-1, O'Brien. The Board has accepted Mr. O'Brien's offer of a 60-day extension of the review period. The revised plan was received 4/7/2004.

Tract 2000-14, Riley. The Board has accepted an offer of an extension of the review period to 7/31/2004.

Tract 2003-10, TAG Builders. PC received CCPC review letter dated 3/26/2004. The Board has accepted Mr. Galbally's offer of an extension of the review period to 5/20/2004. Township Traffic Consultant Al Federico was present to review the effects of the current PennDOT 202 realignment plans on this project. He explained that the signalization of the Pleasant Grove Road intersection impacts the proposed parallel road through the TAG tract. Following a meeting with the builder, it has been tentatively agreed that the northern terminus of the road will be shifted west to connect to the school driveway outside of the jughandle but in the Township's current right-of-way. There are two options for the southern terminus of the parallel road. Option 1 is to use the proposed development road. Option 2 is to stay along the right-of-way shown on the preliminary plan. The feasibility of this connection depends on PennDOT's eventual decision as to the actual alignment of 202. Mr. Federico also noted that PennDOT might eventually decide to revise the Stetson jughandle which would impact this parallel road connection. The developer will proceed with the Preliminary Plan showing the northern terminus as discussed and including the Option 2 right-of-way. Actual engineering will be addressed at the Final Plan stage as required by the Conditional Use Approval.

Route 202 Re-alignment. PC members expressed support for certain sections of the CCPC review of PennDOT's Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) for 202, such as prioritizing improvements like the 202/926 intersection, the necessity for pedestrian crossings, and the impact of closing 202 access points on township roads. _

Mr. Federico indicated that one of the three alignments shown would probably be PennDOT's choice, but there were still environmental issues to be addressed. Environmental issues include such factors as local access, circulation, and noise impacts. PennDOT will accept comments until 4/26/2004. Westtown's concerns relating to circulation between the east and west sections of the township, pedestrian pathways, closing of local roads, nature and placement of sound barriers are therefore pertinent. According to Mr. Federico PennDOT may respond by saying, "These issues will be addressed during final design", but at least the issues are on record. He also indicated that PennDOT will study the necessity for off-site road improvements to increase the capacity of these roads during construction on 202, and that the Township could have some input into this process.

PC discussed the following concerns:

Closing of local roads on the east side of 202 from Township building north to Holiday Inn. PC considers closing these roads is desirable as it would increase safety and improve traffic flow on 202. Since it appears unlikely that PennDOT would install a sound barrier if these roads are left open, the noise impact on this neighborhood would be very significant. This negative impact would be decreased if these roads are closed and buffering, sound mitigation, and alternate access provided. The Township's Growth Management Plan (GMP) calls for an access from this neighborhood to Skiles Blvd.

Access to 202 on the west side north of Stetson/Skiles intersection. It appears that PennDOT is proposing to close off Robins Nest Lane, both ends of Old Wilmington Pike, and Jacqueline Drive. A new road is shown connecting Jacqueline Drive to Cheyney Drive and access to 202 (right-in, right-out) would be maintained from Cheyney (Westview) to 202. PC is concerned about the safety of this access point.

Provision for circulation between the eastern and western sections of Westtown Township. The DEIS calls for a signalized intersection at 202 and Pleasant Grove which would provide for this circulation. PennDOT's decision to signalize this intersection may be based on conditions that no longer apply – i.e. the location of the Police Station at that intersection. If PennDOT should decide to close this intersection as was the original plan, some other circulation must be established. Continuing Pleasant Grove over or under 202 with or without access to 202 would be recommended under these circumstances and would provide desirable pedestrian and bicycle circulation. The parallel road along the western side of 202 as envisioned in the Township's GMP with access to the Stetson traffic signal would be essential if Pleasant Grove does not access 202. The need for the parallel road is directly related to the functionality of the 202/Pleasant Grove intersection.

The DEIS calls for pedestrian bridges, but does not locate these bridges or indicate that they will allow for bicycle use.

Walter Pavelchek presented his arguments for deleting the parallel road from Pleasant Grove to the Stetson jughandle. He urged the PC to reconsider this concept. According to Mr. Pavelchek, is it not needed and a continuation of Pleasant Grove over/under 202 would allow the western section of the Township access to the Stetson traffic light via Skiles Boulevard.

Township Manager Robert Layman will incorporate PC concerns in the Township letter. Draft will be send to PC members for comment. Chairman Verdiani summarized PC concerns saying that Westtown's concerns are the safety and convenience of the Township's residents. PC also suggested the letter should

reference storm water management, sewer and other infrastructure which might be affected by the construction. Attention to landscaping and underground utilities would improve the appearance of 202.

West Chester Regional Planning Commission – Alternate Delegate. Carol DeWolf is the regular delegate. She has requested PC appoint an alternate. Mark Purcell was the alternate last year and has agreed to continue subject to confirmation of the WCRPC meeting time. The PC re-appointed Mark Purcell as the alternate.

Old Wilmington Pike – Request for Rezoning. As discussed at the prior PC meeting, the residents would like this area rezoned commercial so that they can sell the combined properties for a no-residential use rather than waiting for an eventual PennDOT buyout. The owners have indicated that Wawa was interested in the tract. Chairman Verdiani said the PC must determine a process for evaluating this request. The GMP considered that office use might be possible if an access other than Route 202 were provided. The PC will ask the Township Solicitor for comment.

Public Comment.

Adjournment. 10:25PM (EA/MP).

Elaine L. Adler
Planning Commission Secretary_