

AT A REGULAR SESSION OF THE WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION HELD IN THE STOKES ASSEMBLY HALL, 1039 WILMINGTON PIKE, WESTTOWN, PA, ON OCTOBER 23, 2002 AT 7:30PM.

Present: Chairman Donald L. Verdiani noted the following members present; Commissioners Elaine Adler, Mary Paumen, Carol DeWolf and Kevin Flynn; **Absent:** Commissioner Domenico Bibbo. Also in attendance were Director of Planning, Zoning, and Code Enforcement Patrick B. Howard; Township Engineer Angelo M. Capuzzi. and six 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 as presented.

Approval of Minutes (October 9, 2002).

On the motion of Ms. Paumen, seconded by Mrs. Adler, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the minutes of October 9, 2002 as presented.

Announcements.

Mr. Verdiani announced that there were three students from West Chester University's Urban Planning course in attendance. Mr. Howard advised those present that the Board of Supervisors will interview the top two candidates for the vacancy on the Commission prior to the November 4, 2002 Board meeting.

Mrs. Adler announced that the Board of Supervisors at their October 21st regular meeting had appointed Patrick Howard Township Zoning Officer effective November 1, 2002.

Business Items:

Tract 2002- Preliminary Plan – Joyce Realty Proposed Office Building.

Present at the meeting were Mr. Spencer Qualls and Mr. Jim Hatfield project engineer.

Mr. Jim Hatfield, of Vandermark and Lynch, advised the Commission that the applicant will address and resolve any issues in CVE's letter of October 21, 2002 before final plan approval. He stated that the applicant is asking for preliminary plan approval this evening.

Mr. Hatfield stated the applicant is requesting the following landscape waivers under §149-922 & §149-925 of the Township Code.

- 922B.3 – Buffer plantings do not meet the required spacing between plantings due to utility conflict.
- 922B.3b – Request to reduce the number of shrubs and trees to be planted. Mr. Hatfield stated that the applicant will provide a reasonable number of viable growth plantings.
- 925G.1 – To allow the existing deciduous trees to remain as the buffer on the eastern property line instead of replacing with flowering trees as required by ordinance.
- Township ordinance requires two trees per island in the parking area applicant is requested only one tree in certain islands.

Ms. Adler asked if the applicant would be willing to upgrade the species of plants on the plan in exchange for granting the waivers. She stated that there appears to be a large quantity of less desirable species instead of a variety of plantings. Mr. Hatfield responded that this is not his forte but he feels that the applicant would consider upgrading the plantings. Ms. Paumen suggested that Mrs. Adler and Mr. Howard meet with the applicant's land-

scape architect to discuss the best plantings for the site as this would be a good opportunity with a reduction in the plantings to have the best species. Mr. Qualls stated that he would like to replace some of the shrubs in the buffer areas with evergreens. Mr. Verdiani suggested that the applicant discuss this with the Board of Supervisors during the Conditional Use Hearing. He stated that the Commission is aware that the shape of the property makes the landscaping difficult. Mr. Hatfield stated that the north side of the pond will be kept in a natural state because of the steepness of the grade in that area. Mrs. Paumen asked if the south and east sides of the pond will be grass areas. Mr. Hatfield responded as these areas are relatively flat they will be grass.

Mr. Hatfield asked if it would be necessary to ask for a stormwater waiver for the small runoff from the pond. Mr. Verdiani said as the applicant would be using best management practices this is not an issue.

Mr. Hatfield stated that the applicant has received a letter from the Township Solicitor concerning the architecture of the building. Mr. Qualls reviewed the elevation drawings of the building with the Commission. Ms. Paumen asked if the building was all brick. Mr. Qualls responded that it is a one story brick building and the same design as the office building recently constructed.

Mr. Verdiani said the only remaining issue is the 10% requirement for open space. Mr. Howard said he has discussed this with the Township Solicitor who feels, given the conditions of the tract, that the pond could be considered open space. Mr. Hatfield stated that the applicant's first choice would be not to have a designated open space area. He stated that when the environmental study of the pond is received the recommendations for the management of the pond area could be considered the same as a management document or covenant for open space. Mr. Verdiani stated that the Township Ordinance does not appear to exempt commercial development from open space requirements. He said if the Board of Supervisors requires the 10% open space the Planning Commission would consider an environmental treatment of the pond as satisfying this requirement.

A motion was made by Ms. Paumen, seconded by Mrs. DeWolf, to recommend final plan approval for Joyce Realty's Land Development conditioned on the following: The Landscaping waivers and choice of plantings will be reviewed by Elaine Adler and Patrick Howard with the applicant's landscape architect; If 10% open space is required the Commission would accept the pond as open space if sufficient and in compliance with any recommendations of an environmental study of the site; Recommend approval of the waiver for building length with use of the façade presented on plan; recommend approval of waiver on storm water management issue; and compliance with CVE's letter of October 21, 2002.

Special Exception Bayard Rustin High School.

Present at the meeting were Mark Groves, Capital Project Manager and Ernie Graham, ELA Group.

Mr. Groves advised the Commission that the revised plan being presented this evening has been reviewed by the Township Staff and the Zoning Hearing Board. He stated that the District is working on an intergovernmental agreement with the Township as to the development of the site. He said the District approved the substance of the agreement on Monday and is waiting for a response from the Township. Mr. Groves said the agreement will cover buffer principles, best management practices for stormwater, heights of buildings, roadway improvements, a sewer facility, infrastructure, construction of the Township trail system, etc.

Mr. Graham reviewed the revised plan with the Commission. He stated that the major difference is the increase in the acreage of the campus to 108 acres as the compactness of the original sketch plan did not allow for best management practices. Mr. Graham reviewed the following changes to the plan: The face of the building has been rotated to allow for a better view; Landscaping/buffering of the athletic fields; relocating of Shiloh Road; improvements on Route 926 that will not impact the properties on the south side of the road; turn lanes and a deceleration lane added on Shiloh Road; and the reconstruction, milling and resurfacing for the entire front of the property.

Mr. Graham stated that the District has agreed in principle to a dedicated public trail to the Township. He said the exact location of the trail has not been determined at this time. He also stated that there is a security issue connected to the trail system which needs to be addressed. Mr. Groves advised the Commission that given the nature of today's world and the recent events in Maryland, security is an issue. Mrs. DeWolf said she did not think events in Maryland should affect the installation of the trail system. She said that Westtown School allows the public to use its trail system which will be connected to the Township's system. Mrs. Adler said it does not appear that the trail is crossed at the railroad tracks needed to connect to Thornbury's trail system. Mr. Groves stated

there are wetlands in the area that will need to be addressed. Mr. Groves advised the Commission that the District will need approval from SEPTA for the trail and will continue to address this issue.

The Commission discussed the number of parking spaces that will be installed for the stadium and the school. Ms. Paumen expressed her concerns with the number of students who would be driving to school. Mr. Groves said the District allows juniors and seniors to drive but they must have parking permits. Ms. Paumen said this could become a major issue for the Township if the students began parking on the neighborhood streets. Mr. Groves said he would have the District Director of Education attend the next meeting to address these concerns with the Commission.

Mr. Groves mentioned that the four homes on the site have been reviewed by both the Pennsylvania Historical Commission and John Milner's architectural firm and have been found not to be of any historical significance. He said the District's intent is to demolish the structures.

Mr. Flynn asked if the District is on schedule with their planning. Mr. Groves said the project appears to be on schedule and it is hoped that the project will be bid in June. He said construction would start in 2003 with a completion time of approximately twenty-two months.

Mr. Groves said they are not prepared to discuss the lighting issues this evening but will be discussing lighting at the October 29th Zoning Hearing. He also stated that the architect and elevations of the building will also be unveiled at the Zoning Hearing. Mr. Verdiani asked if the building is expanded would a second floor be added or an addition made to the first level. Mr. Graham stated an addition would be made to the lower level.

Mr. William Steele, 1053 E. Niels Lane, asked how many classrooms had windows and would they remain if the building was expanded. Mr. Groves said rooms that are actually classrooms will have windows. Some classrooms would lose side windows if the building is expanded but the end wall window would remain.

Public Comment Non-Agenda Items.

Mr. Steele commented when reviewing landscaping of a tract that a diversity of plants be considered. He suggested not always using plants that are considered native to an area.

Adjournment.

The motion to adjourn made by Ms. Paumen, seconded by Mr. Flynn, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick A. Howard
Secretary to the Planning Commission