

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, June 6, 2001 - 7:30PM
Oakbourne Park, Dunning
1014 South Concord Road, Westtown, PA

Present: Chairman Don. L. Verdiani, Secretary Elaine L. Adler, Domenico N. Bibbo, Kevin Flynn, two guests, and those mentioned below.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman 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 (DB/KF).

Approval of Minutes-May 23, 2001: May 9, 2001, were approved as submitted (DB/KF)

Reports Staff. Elaine Adler reported that the Oakbourne Road bridge was re-opened this morning. The Act 537 Plan and the Comprehensive Plan are scheduled for adoption by the Board in July.

Planning Commission Membership. Chairman Verdiani introduced Carol DeWolf who was appointed by the Board of Supervisors at its meeting on June 4, 2001, to fill the vacancy on the Planning Commission.

Board of Supervisors, June 4, 2001. Don Verdiani represented the Commission. He reported to the Board on the Growth Management Plan discussion at the May 23rd meeting with the Orvis family in attendance. Mr. Verdiani informed the Board that the Commission had asked URDC to prepare revisions to the R-1 Zoning District which would permit a cluster development in keeping with recent discussions. He also told the Board of the Commission's recommendation that the proposed light industrial uses on the Crebilly tract be controlled by performance standards rather than a listing of permitted and non-permitted uses. The Board indicated its support for the Commission's position and for the on-going effort to prepare ordinance language which would permit the proposed senior apartments in the POC overlay district. The major issue of this meeting was the Public Hearing on the Vacation of Oak Lane. Mr. Verdiani said Westtown School presented its reasons for the requested closing and a traffic study identifying the expected traffic impacts on neighboring roads. Westtown School has offered to help fund the proposed traffic signal at 926 and Shady Grove Way and to donate land at this intersection to facilitate traffic improvements proposed by Westtown Township. The Board approved the Resolution vacating Oak Lane.

Board of Supervisors Meeting Monday, June 18, 2001. Mary Paumen will represent the Commission.

Tract 2000-8 Jefferson Center/McCawley Senior Apartments: PC received revised plan dated 6/1/01. Present were Joseph McCawley, Attorney Steven Marshall, and Pennoni Engineer William Wendling. Mr. Marshall reported on his meeting with Solicitor Robert Adams, Michael Cotter, Angelo Capuzzi, and Joseph McCawley. The revised plan reflects the discussions at that meeting and at the last Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Marshall pointed out the changes on this plan: 1. The setback from the jughandle has gone from 21 feet to 51 feet; 2. Changing 8 units in each building from two-bedroom to onebedroom had reduced the bulk of the building. This reduces the length of each building by 15 feet, and the square footage from 63,000 to 54,000. At Mr. Adams request, Mr. Wendling prepared a three dimensional representation of the proposed buildings from several locations. Mr. Wendling explained that the drawings included enhanced landscaping incorporating additional deciduous trees. Trees are shown at 20-foot height. He demonstrated how much the landscaping and berming would obscure the buildings from the sight of someone driving on Route 202 or the jughandle. .

Mr. Verdiani reviewed the status of this plan. The present POC regulations do not permit the proposed apartment use. The Board and the PC have agreed that the senior apartment use is acceptable. The Township consultant is in the process of creating ordinance language. Mr. Verdiani expressed appreciation of the McCawley teams efforts to revise the plan in accordance with the Township's thinking. Commission members reiterated their continuing reservations relating to the bulk and height of the buildings. The PC will discuss possible amendment language at the June 20th meeting.

Mr. Verdiani also indicated the Commission and the Board had concerns relating to the increase in the total square footage of the Jefferson Center above the 175,000 permitted by the Stipulation. While it appears that the Township favors the proposed senior apartment use sufficiently to consider an increase in the square footage, there has been no decision as yet as to the actual density to be permitted. Mr. Verdiani indicated that the plan revisions that reduced the number and scope of the requested waivers increased the Commission's comfort level.

Mr. Marshall asked when specific density number would be available. Mr. Verdiani said the PC expected to come to a conclusion at the June 20, 2001, meeting.

Zoning Amendment - Expanded Agricultural Use: Eva Foster provided a copy of the township map which identified the two to ten acre tracts being considered. Mr. Verdiani explained that the Growth Management Plan to be adopted by the Board in July contains language relating to preservation of open space. Zoning Ordinance provisions relating to agricultural uses on these smaller tracts would be in conformity with that open space preservation language. Mrs. Foster spoke in favor of including the 2-3 acre tracts in whatever provision is made for expanded agricultural use citing a list of possible uses in a US Department of Agriculture publication, Living on a Few Acres. She also requested that Westtown invite representatives from the county as well as the relevant state agencies to the planned workshop meeting with residents in the fall.

PC observed that the color-coded map does identify clusters of tracts in the three to five acre group which form a significant area of existing open space. The PC will draft a letter and questionnaire to be sent to the owners of properties under consideration. PC members expressed concerns about possible structures related to these agriculture uses, the appropriateness of allowing such uses on the two-three acres lots, and the impact of these activities on the neighboring lots. Mrs. Foster argued that the "Right to Farm" .Act would protect property owners in designated agriculture security district from neighbors complaints relating to customary agricultural practices.

Chairman Verdiani observed that this project was growing beyond the initial estimations but indicated it was a worthy project for the Commission to undertake. A subcommittee will be created to develop the questionnaire. Mrs. Foster has volunteered to assist. PC also briefly discussed creating a conservancy in Westtown Township, expanded conservation easements, and funding for the purchase of development rights. .

2000 Census Figures: Mr. Bibbo asked if Westtown agreed with the population figures released by the Census Bureau which he feels are somewhat low. Mrs. Adler said the Township was investigating.

Public Comment:

Jeannette Donahue, Farm Lane. Asked for clarification of street address numbering. Mrs. Adler explained that the Township was responsible for assigning street numbers. Mrs. Donahue also asked for the schedule for installation of traffic lights on Route 926 at the Shady Grove Way, Westtown Road, and Shiloh Road intersections. Mr. Capuzzi supplied the information.

Adjourned: 9:35PM (EA/KF)

Elaine L. Adler, Secretary