

**MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING APRIL 9, 2019**

Attendees: Dave Shula, Patrick Doran, Vince Manuele, Peter Cornog, Bob Dambman, Scott Quitel, Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning, Krista Heinrich, Township Engineer, T&M Associates, Amy Grossman, BOS Liaison

1. Call to order: 7:00 PM by Chair Manuele

2. Announcements & Correspondence

**Announcements:** None

**Correspondence:**

- Call for Entries - 2019 Montgomery Awards; the deadline for nominations is May 10, 2019. Two projects to take into consideration are the Audi Dealership on Pennsylvania Avenue and the Renovations and West Gym Addition to PW High School.
- E-mails pertaining to SLD#08-18 Judd Associates, LP, Militia Hill Road and Stenton Avenue, Plymouth Meeting, PA

3. Approval of Minutes:

- Mr. Cornog moved to approve the minutes as written from the March 12, 2019 meeting; seconded by Mr. Doran. Vote 5-0 (Mr. Shula abstained, was not present at that meeting)

4. Zoning Hearing Board Appeals: None

5. Subdivision & Land Development Applications:

- SLD#08-18 Judd Associates, LP, Militia Hill Road & Stenton Avenue, Plymouth Meeting, PA; Text Amendment to CLI-District for attached dwellings on lots of at least 20 acres; 61 Unit Residential Townhouse Development. Jim Garrity, Esq., was present representing Judd Associates which is an affiliated company of DePaul as well as Mike Schurr, Director of Judd Associates. Judd is the equitable owner of approximately 23.4 acres located on the corner of Militia Hill Road and Stenton Avenue with most of its frontage on Militia Hill Road. The property is zoned CLI Campus Limited Industrial District surrounded by AA and AAA Residential Districts. Judd Associates, LP is proposing a Zoning Text Amendment to the CLI Campus Limited Industrial District, to allow attached dwellings (i.e.—townhouses) on tracts so zoned that have a minimum area of 20 acres. In addition to the proposed text amendment, a concept plan was submitted for 61 townhouses on this site (2.6 dwellings/acre density). Mr. Garrity showed an alternate site plan with two apartment buildings and parking; also discussed that a 100,000 SF office could be built based on maximum parking that could fit of 500 spaces. The applicant is in receipt of reviews from the Fire Marshal and one from the Montgomery County Planning Commission, as well as a memo from Mr. Guttenplan. Mr. Garrity discussed points raised in County letter, including recommendation that the site be used for business as zoned which applicant believes is not feasible. Planning Commission concerns consisted of: environmental concerns due to prior quarry followed by landfill use; we're now nearing completion of the comprehensive plan so any change should wait; why were offices and apartments so quickly dismissed (and apartments aren't even permitted); green space and views should be preserved; and what is the compelling reason to make this change, which is also asked by County in their review (County review recommendation and conclusion read by Mr. Manuele). Public Comment: Frank Scarpello, 6326 Arlingham Road; Jay Muckle, Militia Hill Road; Rosie Ward, 5090 Militia Hill Road; Jim Spence, 6007 W. Valley Green Road; Linda Doll, Fairway Road; Ana Maria Zaugg, 5280 Militia Hill Road; Eli Glick, 7 Whitefield Drive; Joe Corcoran, 341 Militia Hill Road; and Sydelle Zove, Harts Ridge Road. Their comments and concerns included: additional traffic generated by the townhouses; why is Whitemarsh concerned with the County's view more than the residents'; would like to see it stay as open space; stormwater runoff and impervious ground cover issues; recommends waiting for the price to drop and the Township buy it; more kids added to the school system that is already overburdened; spot zoning is contrary to the zoning code and comprehensive plan; if Judd is a residential builder, why did they buy non-residential use land; a text

amendment is discretionary and political in nature; developers can't do what they want so they try to change the law; environmental concerns are disconcerting; and accessing environmental reports and taking immediate action to safeguard the health and welfare of the community. In addition to the public comment, 3 additional e-mails were received opposing the request. Mr. Glick stated there is an open space fund we all pay for in taxes and if anyone is interested in preserving open space, to come to the Open Space Board meeting. At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Shula made a motion to recommend not approving the text amendment; seconded by Mr. Doran. Vote 6-0. A second motion was made by Mr. Shula recommending that the Board of Supervisors not hold a public hearing; seconded by Mr. Cornog. Vote 6-0.

6. Conditional Use Applications:

- CU#04-18 Cheryl L. Lubber/Salon LaBlonde, LLC, 535 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA; Personal Service Shop (Hair Salon) plus Accessory Retail Business; Amended Application. Cheryl Lubber, owner of the salon along with Lauren Antonelli, salon manager, were present and provided comment regarding the application. Ms. Lubber was in front of the Planning Commission on November 27, 2018 at which time the Commission recommended approval of her application for a personal service shop (hair salon) with minor accessory sales. The Board of Supervisors approved that application on December 13, 2018. Ms. Lubber has added an accessory clothing retail business to her salon, 'Fashion Statement.' Since 'retail' is a separately enumerated conditional use in the VC-1 District, Ms. Lubber was asked to amend her application and obtain approval to also include this business. If the approval is granted the applicant will be required to obtain permits for the additional window signage as well as the sidewalk sign. Public Comment: David Delacato, Associate of Gigi's Consignment Shop and Patricia Haber, owner of Gigi's Consignment Boutique both spoke. Their comments included citing Title 49 of the PA Code of Professional Vocational Standards (Board of Cosmetology), uses of salon for other purposes prohibited; feels there is not a minimal amount of clothing being sold and according to the lease, approval for the sale of clothing should have been given by the property owner. Mr. Doran moved to recommend approval of the conditional use with the caveat that the Solicitor look into the issues concerning the state Board of Cosmetology restriction and subject to securing permits for the (additional) signs; seconded by Mr. Cornog. Vote 6-0

7. Old Business: None

8. New Business: None

9. Public Comment:

- Joe Corcoran stated the comprehensive plan being discussed worries him. More than anything, rethink how it's being run by staff. Real people in real neighborhoods all over the Township have real interest and they are not being represented in that vision. There is a way to turn a comprehensive plan into a vision plan for the Township and if we are going to change it, it should be done with great caution.
- Sydelle Zove thanked the Planning Commission for the two votes this evening. Would like to suggest considering to the Board of Supervisors a moratorium if it's legal on text amendments and spot zoning. Why not wait until the dust settles to consider any future text amendments that lead to zoning changes on critical parcels until the comprehensive plan is complete.
- Frank Scarpello thanked the Planning Commission for their vote. Doesn't feel a moratorium is needed if enough votes come back no. As far as information available on the website, the general citizen who wants information will not be able to find it the way it is right now. More transparency would be nice.
- Lisa Ramos wanted to remind the board Mr. Harth was put on the steering committee to advise the Township about the comprehensive plan and it didn't work for him. There is a big election coming up and there are many people unhappy with the direction the Township is going. We need new leadership who cares about where we live.

10. Adjournment:

- There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning

The Planning Commission is appointed as an advisory group to the Board of Supervisors and the Zoning Hearing Board with respect to comprehensive land use planning, existing land use, and various land use and zoning applications in Whitemarsh Township. No formal decisions are rendered by the Planning Commission. Formal decisions are rendered by the Board of Supervisors or Zoning Hearing Board, as prescribed by law, based on the type of application.

All written or graphic material that is presented to the Planning Commission at a public meeting shall be kept in Township files and is subject to examination under the PA Right-to-know Law.