

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING JUNE 26, 2018

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

1. Call to order: 7:00 PM by Chair Manuele
2. Announcements & Correspondence

Announcements

Correspondence

- E-mail from someone who could not be in attendance but wanted to share their thoughts on tonight's agenda item
- Binder the applicant distributed

3. Approval of Minutes:

- Mr. Cornog moved to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2018 meeting; seconded by Ms. Patchen. Vote 5-0-1. Mr. Shula abstained (not present at that meeting)

4. Zoning Hearing Board Appeals:

- None

5. Subdivision & Land Development Applications:

- SLD#01-15 VFW at Fort Washington, LTD, 451 Bethlehem Pike, Fort Washington, PA; Zoning Text and Zoning Map amendments for new Fort Washington Transit-oriented Development District; Revised. Gregory Harth, the applicant, was present. Mr. Harth briefly stated that feedback from the previous draft amendment required them to clarify a few technical issues and architectural design standards which necessitated an additional review by the Planning Commission (the Commission had recommended against the proposal in November 2017), and he also explained some of the constraints of developing under the existing VC-1 zoning. Wetland studies have been done to confirm there are no wetlands within the boundaries of the property; the flood plain has been delineated confirming that the development can be designed to meet all the floodplain standards with no net change to the flood elevations; traffic concerns have been investigated and with input from the Township and PennDOT, a plan has been proposed to address the pre-existing problematic wait times in the vicinity of the development; a tree study was commissioned and will be updated when the applicant meets with the Shade Tree Commission as part of the Land Development process; and a parking study was also commissioned at other recent mixed use developments in the surrounding vicinity to support the proposed parking standards. Tom Barton, Architect and Planner, gave his review of the property's VC zoning and various development potentials and came to the conclusion that multifamily residential was the best use. Matt Foley, Bernardin Architects, spoke about the quality of design and some of the changes made from last time and presented a few plans and several renderings to portray the design intent highlighting the changes from the previous plan. Rob Lewis, Esquire with Kaplin Stewart, explained the ordinance requirements for building setbacks based on habitable stories. Casey Moore, P.E. with McMahan Associates, discussed the traffic study and proposed off-site improvements to make traffic flow better. Jody Holton, Executive Director with the Montgomery County Planning Commission, was present and reiterated specific points from their 2016 review letter, explained why the County supports TOD's in the correct locations, and stated they are fully supportive of the text as presented. Planning Commission Members comments and concerns: density is still an issue; clarification over setbacks and how it has been modified from last version and how these setbacks compare with those of The Courts at Spring Mill Station (Mr. Cornog provided photographs and dimensions of that development); traffic could get worse; scale of the building and location still a concern; feels they are changing the zoning to fit the

development. They support the Transit Oriented District generally and appreciate the changes and effort made by the applicant. Public Comment: Peter Blood, Fort Washington Rescape; Marianne Matt, 704 Bethlehem Pike; Mike Schaffer, Fort Washington; Richard Abraham, 670 Bethlehem Pike; Myles Pettengill, 414 Flourtown Road; Audrey Dudley, 1245 Boden Place; Phillip Rogers, Co-Owner of the building across the street (former Ft. Washington Masonic Lodge); Sydelle Zove, 644 Harts Ridge Road; Linda Rocca, 2 Patriot Way; Jim Magaziner, Former President of the Historic Society; Lisa Ramos, 7033 Sheaff Lane; and Kathy Wilhelm, 651 Church Road all spoke. Their concerns and comments included that there has been no change in density and needs to be brought down; the buildings are far too large and located too close to the road; flooding is still a concern; improvements to the traffic patterns won't be adequate; limited parking will force parking on the streets; the process in which the ordinance and the development are being considered at the same time is not proper; and they would have liked for the residents to have been more involved. Mitchell Gold, Lafayette Hill, Real Estate Broker spoke, is a supporter of the development; feels the use makes sense and would be a great benefit. After discussion amongst the Commission members, a motion was made: Mr. Doran moved to recommend a change in zoning from Village Commercial to the Transit Oriented District for this particular area and that the Commission take under advisement the text amendment as drafted with the intention of providing further direction on the text for issues such as density (at a future meeting); seconded by Mr. Cornog. Vote 5-1

6. Conditional Use Applications:

- None

7. Old Business: None

8. New Business: None

9. Public Comment: None

10. Adjournment:

- There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 9:43 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 Whitmarsh 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.