

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

Attendees: Vince Manuele, Peter Cornog, Sherri Glantz-Patchen, Dave Shula, Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning, Jim Sullivan, Township Engineer, Amy Grossman (BOS Liaison)

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

2. Announcements & Correspondence:

Announcements:

- An amended agenda was handed out. The Conditional Use application for the Solar Panels has been removed because the applicant has decided to postpone the project,
- The Comprehensive Plan update first public meeting is being held on October 3, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the Barren Hill Fire Company.

Correspondence: None

3. Approval of Minutes:

- Mr. Shula moved to approve the meeting minutes from August 22, 2017, seconded by Mr. Manuele. Vote 4-0.

4. Zoning Hearing Board Appeals: None

5. Subdivision & Land Development Applications:

- SLD#02-16 Phipps Station Group, LLC, Maple Hill, 3047 Spring Mill Road, Plymouth Meeting; Final Plan Review. Sal Paone, Jr., the applicant, was present. Mr. Paone gave a brief presentation of the project. The Commission last saw this plan in April of this year as a Preliminary Plan. After the Commission's recommendation for approval, the Board of Supervisors granted conditional preliminary plan approval, including a number of waivers, on May 25, 2017. The Township Engineer issued a letter on August 22, 2017 and the applicant has no concerns and the comments will be taken care of. Mr. Paone wanted to revisit the two biggest issues with this plan that seemed to have general concern of the residents which was the impact of stormwater and traffic. At the last meeting, Tim Woodrow, the applicant's engineer was present and stated there would be no negative impact to the surrounding neighbors with their stormwater design and Mr. Sullivan supported that conclusion. The traffic concerns in the area go beyond this application and Mr. Paone is handling the improvements required for safe access to and egress from the site. The Final Plan is consistent with the Preliminary Plan and has 21 lots (3 existing homes and 18 lots for new homes). Following a few clarifications by Commission members, there was the following Public Comment: Mike Kapuscinski, 1 Cardinal Drive; Joe Uriani, 7 Cardinal Drive; and Carole Dangelo, 3120 Spring Mill Road all spoke. Their concerns all included the opposition of the curb cut on Cardinal Drive for emergency vehicle access; a request for sidewalks on Butler Pike; putting a restriction on building height; increase in stormwater runoff; installing bollards with a chain at the emergency access; additional "no outlet" signs installed on the corner of Butler Pike and Cardinal Drive; and traffic control. Mr. Manuele moved to recommend approval of SLD#02-16 subject to the final plans including the reference to the bollards and chain at the access drive to Cardinal Drive; seconded by Mr. Cornog. Vote 4-0.
- SLD#01-14 Whitemarsh Station, 5130 & 5136 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting; Zoning and Text Amendment; Recommendation for Authorization for Scheduling a Public Hearing. Mr. Guttenplan briefly explained this would apply to the zero-lot-line single-family development being built by Paone Builders under the AD – Attached Dwelling District standards that were added for this development type in 2014. The amendment is to allow decks as close as 8 feet to the property line. Several decks were designed or built in violation of the current standard for deck encroachment in the rear yard; the current Zoning Ordinance allows a deck to encroach half the depth of the required rear yard. The Zoning Hearing Board recently granted variances for 4 decks that are 12' deep for homes with 20'

deep rear yards. Rather than continue to handle this issue with multiple variances, the staff and Zoning Hearing Board felt it would be more appropriate to amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a reasonable depth deck on the homes in this or future developments that might be built under these AD standards. This is on the agenda for the Planning Commission to make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, that they schedule a public hearing for this amendment. Mr. Cornog voiced concern that this would 'open up a can of worms' and that people would just ask for deeper decks. There was also discussion about what is built if there is no deck; Mr. Paone explained that in that case, the sliding doors are not functional; with recent Building Code changes, a simple set of steps down to grade is no longer legal. Mr. Shula made a motion to go forward with the advertisement for the public hearing; seconded by Mr. Manuele. Vote 3-1 (Mr. Cornog opposed).

- SLD#05-17 Miller Purdy Architects, Ltd - Lee Park Commons, 1032 E. Hector Street, Conshohocken, PA; 3-Story Building; Preliminary Plan Review. Kent Purdy, Miller Purdy Architects and Paul Schmoll, Civil Engineer with Barry Isett and Associates were present. Mr. Guttenplan briefly stated this is the site of the former '7th Heaven' club. The proposal is to tear the existing building down and replace it with a three-story building. The first floor is proposed for offices and the second and third floors for apartments, for a total of 12 units (8- 2 bedroom units & 4- 1 bedroom units). The building footprint is about 5,600 sqft. and the lot is about 26,000 sqft. with parking in the "back", recognizing that this is a unique site with three front yards. Requested waivers were reviewed. The applicant is requesting a parking reduction under an allowance in the RDD provisions; however, it was suggested by the Police Chief that the applicant maintain the existing perpendicular parking on Lee/End Street to help relieve parking shortages in the area. The Planning Commission had concerns with building setbacks and placement of the new building; pedestrian walkways; and the continued sidewalk behind the parked vehicles on Lee Street. They recommended that the applicant come back with revised plans after going to the Zoning Hearing Board for relief needed for front yard parking (front yard associated with Spring Mill Avenue) and at that time, they would consider a recommendation for combined preliminary/final plan approval. Therefore, no formal action was taken.

6. Conditional Use Applications: None

7. Old Business:

- Ms. Patchen would like Harth Builders (SLD#01-15 VFW at Fort Washington) to provide documentation from the studies used to base their parking ratios on. Commission members also reiterated concerns about building appearance, height and scale. Mr. Guttenplan agreed to pass these concerns on to Mr. Harth to address before they return to the Commission.

8. New Business: None

9. Public Comment: None

10. Adjournment:

- There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 8:57 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.