

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2015, 7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Colleen Preston, Chairperson
Frank Scarpato, Vice Chair
Rick Schroder
Marie Hittinger
Charles Shock
Geoffrey Stroud
Aimee Bowers

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steven C. Brown, Township Manager
8 Audience Members

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Preston called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Brown introduced Mrs. Maciejczyk, the new Administrative Assistant for the Township, to the Planning Commission Members as well as the audience.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes of November 19, 2014 and January 28, 2015 were reviewed.

Mr.Shock made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 19, 2014. Mr. Schroder seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0. Mrs. Hittinger made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 28, 2015. Mr. Scarpato seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.

IV. PLAN EXTENSIONS

1. Powers/Dutton preliminary subdivision plan- no comment.
2. Ridgewood/Needham Farms Ltd preliminary land development plan .
Mrs. Maciejczyk has already requested an extension to be provided by March 27, 2015.

V. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Mark Family Trust subdivision plan

Mr. Ken Crossan, engineer, presented the plan for the applicant. The purpose of

the plan is to create two lots for existing houses, no new construction is planned. REA's comments have been received. There is no letter from the County Planning Commission as of yet. The property is 28.56 acre parcel between the Route 1 Bypass and N. Guernsey Road. It is in the RR Zoning District. They would like to establish individual lots since the property is in a trust with other family members that has since been dissolved. They would like to divide the property among the family members.

Mr. Crossan reviewed the reviewed Zoning comment #5, which states that structures larger than 200 square feet must adhere to the principal building setback requirements. As a result of the creation of the property line between Lot #2 and Lot #3, the garage on Lot 2 would not meet the required setback.

Mr. Crossan stated that there are two garages and the property line would be 12' from one and 25' from the other. The required setback is 30'. Their plan is to demolish one of the garages to adjust to the new property line so the remaining garage meets the setback. The applicant will propose a timeframe for demolition of the one garage. Mr. Scarpato asked the question, "What's the land being used for now?" and Mr. Howard Mark, owner and audience member, responded that Evergreen Farms is leasing and farming the property. Mr. Crossan said they would be back next month for action on the plan.

2. Geren subdivision plan

Mr. Ken Crossan, engineer, presented the plan on behalf of the applicant. The property is 7.6 acres on Garden Station Road between Avondale Road and Sullivan Road. The property has a residence with a barn and horses. They want to make an individual lot to the rear of the property giving 3.9 acres to the new house and leaving 3 1/2 acres with the existing house.

Mr. Crossan reviewed the review letter from Ragan Engineering Associates. He stated most of Mr. Ragan's comments were of a technical nature and would be addressed. The only waiver is to request relief from submitting the plan to the Conservation District for review as the disturbance is under 1 acre in size. The comments from the County Planning Commission are pending. There is also a Sewage Facilities Planning Module; it, the plan and waivers can all be done at one time during the next Planning Commission meeting.

3. Route 1 Economic Development Presentation

Mike Pia, Jr. and Bob Grabus from the Chester County Economic Development Council were present. The Route 1 Economic Development initiative is intended to bring business development to southern Chester County and London Grove Township that we want. Mr. Grabus asked the question, "Is economic development something you're interested in?" and the Planning Commission responded with yes. One of their projects is to develop a website for Southern Chester County to market areas that the communities would like to see developed with industrial and office uses. He hopes the website would list properties for each community with identified uses the municipality is interested in.

The Planning Commission is to consider the project and pass comments onto Mr. Brown to be sent on to Mr. Grabus and Mr. Pia.

4. Transportation Improvements Inventory

Mr. Brown explained what the TII is and the process. It is the beginning of a process that includes the DVRPC and ultimately PennDOT for projects that get funded and constructed. However, most projects on the TII do not get built by PennDOT. The TII can still be a useful planning process for coordination with developers, other communities, PennDOT and the County.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Existing Projects Update Form-TII 2015. The first two items on the form were removed since they are not in our Township. The rest were rated on a scale ranking high, medium, low.

TII Project Name:

Pa 41: Delaware to PA 926 (Safety Improvements) - HIGH
US 1: Maryland Line to School House Road (Reconstruction/Interchanges)-LOW
Octoraro Passenger Rail (New Passenger Rail Service) - LOW
Octoraro Rail Line Rehabilitation (Track and tie replacement/bridges) - LOW
State Road Bikeway: PA 41 to PA 841 (Bikeway) - REMOVED
PA 41: US 1 to Glen Willow Road (Streetscapes & Access Improvements) - HIGH
PA 41: Old Baltimore Pike to Avondale (Sidewalks)-HIGH
Old Baltimore Pike: West Grove to PA 41(Sidewalks) - LOW
State Road/ Avon Grove High School (Sidewalks) Charter School to 841- HIGH
W London Grove Road: Chatham (sidewalks) - LOW
S Guernsey Road (sidewalks) - LOW
Glen Willow Road (sidewalks) LOW
Valley Road over Mid Br White Clay (replace or rehab) - HIGH
Avondale area park and ride lot (park and ride lot) - LOW
N Guernsey Road: PA 41 to US 1(widen from 17' to 24') - MEDIUM
PA 41 @ Baltimore Pike (Safety Improvements) - HIGH

PA 841 @ State Road (roundabout) - LOW
PA 41 @ PA 841 (Chatham) (Safety/Calming) - HIGH
Evergreen Street @ Guernsey Ave (Signalize or Roundabout) - LOW
PA 41 @ Woodview Road (Safety-add turn lanes/realignment) - HIGH
PA 41 @ N Guernsey Road (Add turn lanes) - HIGH
State Road @ Schoolhouse Road (roundabout) - HIGH
N Guernsey Road @ W Woodview Road (Safety Improvements) - HIGH
PA 926 @ Howell Moore Road (Safety Improvements) - HIGH
State Road @ Guernsey Road (Safety/Roundabout) - HIGH
Schoolhouse Road @ Remington Way (Add Turning Lane) - REMOVE

Mr. Brown wanted to add the following projects:

Old Baltimore Pike at Route 41 add bus shelter/stop near Avonwheel per the County Planning Commission's Old Baltimore Pike Complete Streets project- HIGH
Old Baltimore from West Grove to Avondale add improve existing bike lanes- HIGH
Mr. Schroder wanted to add widen Old Baltimore Pike between Route 41 and Route 841- HIGH

5. Riparian Buffer Assessment -

Mr. Schroder started by stating, in his opinion, small parcels cannot handle the cost for installing and maintaining a buffer; however, there are benefits to the buffers so which properties can be made to put the buffer in? Mr. Brown said he believes that there are two main issues; one, what "triggers" the ordinance requirement and two, the width of the buffer. He believes the buffer needs to be 100 feet based on scientific data presented by Natural Lands Trust. As for the trigger, he believes buffers do not work well for single family home owners but it does work for larger parcels and subdivisions. Mr. Brown suggested exempting the small properties and increase the buffer width from 75' to 100' He also believes the regulations should be paired with an outreach program to farmers and larger property owners. The program would promote the use of conservation plans and possibly the purchase of open space easements where the buffers would be. The Open Space Committee could possibly help with such a program.

Mr. Wayne DiFrancesco, resident and farmer, commented that as a farmer/land owner we already have constraints by the DEP and limitations on how close we cannot disturb the soil to a stream. He believes 100 feet on each side of the stream is a "land grab" and is unfair and the Township should simply require what the Conservation District requires.

The Commission indicated that they liked the idea put forth by John Goodall from the Brandywine Conservancy where a 35' buffer would be required of farmers if they had a conservation plan in place. Mr. Schroder responded that the State is requiring municipalities to clean up their streams;. if we do not increase the buffer width we may not meet the requirements and we may have to put in a treatment plant to clean the streams. Mr. Scarpato suggested tabling the issue and wait for the State so we can see how strict this is going to be and go from there. Mr. Schroder stated that we needed data from the State, what reduction number do we have to hit? We just do not have the information. He also suggested that we could start without an ordinance and move ahead with the conservation plans and possible easement purchases.

Mrs. Hittinger made a motion to table the Ordinance and move ahead with working with conservation plans and easement purchases. Mr. Scarpato seconded the motion and all members were in favor with a 7-0 vote.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Maciejczyk,
Administrative Assistant