

**LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

*Meeting Minutes for October 29, 2009  
Rescheduled from October 19, 2009*

The Lower Pottsgrove Township Planning Commission held their re-scheduled regular meeting on Thursday, October 29, 2009. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair, Frank Cebular, at 6:30 p.m. and the following were in attendance:

Frank Cebular, Vice Chair  
Ron Dinnocenti  
Michael McGroarty

Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager  
Chad Camburn, Bursich Associates, Inc.  
Joseph Nixon, MCPC  
Lewis Babel, Fire Marshal

A motion was made by Mr. McGroarty, seconded by Mr. Dinnocenti, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote to approve the minutes of September 30, 2009.

**ACCEPTANCE OF NEW APPLICATIONS**

A motion was made by Mr. McGroarty, seconded by Mr. Dinnocenti, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote to accept the sketch plan application (#2009-03S) for Ringing Rocks Elementary School.

A motion was made by Mr. Dinnocenti, seconded by Mr. McGroarty, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote to accept the sketch plan application (#2009-04S) for Bella Italia Pizzeria.

**OLD BUSINESS**

(#2006-10M) **Manfredi Minor Subdivision**, *Minor Subdivision Plan*, proposal to subdivide a 7.171 acre parcel (Parcel ID# 42-00-00053-004) into one 3.918-acre parcel and one 3.253-acre parcel at 1507 North Adams Street in the R-1 Residential District. The applicant received a variance from §407 of the LPT Zoning Ordinance, which requires each lot to have 50 feet of road frontage, which will need renewal. [Plans prepared by Aston Surveyors/Engineers, Inc., 44 South Chestnut Street, Boyertown, PA 19512, dated 07-24-2006, last revised 06-10-2009 and consisting of six (6) sheets].

Pet Manfredi, the applicant; John Aston, the applicant's engineer; and Jeff Karver, the applicant's attorney, represented the application.

Mr. Aston updated the Planning Commission on the work that has been done on the project since the Commission last saw the application. Mr. Aston has recently taken over the engineering duties on the project and has been working to address the Township's concerns.

Mr. Aston addressed Mr. Babel's concerns with regard to emergency access, asking whether a paved back up turnaround, instead of a circle would be acceptable. Mr. Aston noted that the grade of the lot would make it difficult to create a circle large and safe enough for the emergency vehicles.

Mr. Babel responded that that the lot would not be accessible by a ladder truck (approximately 40 feet long) because of the turnaround and the fact that the lot is so wooded. He said that even if the driveway is 12 feet wide at the completion of construction, invariably, the trees will close in on the driveway making it difficult for larger emergency vehicles to access the site. He said most likely, a 35 foot pumper/engine with a 1200

foot hose would be used to fight any fires on the lot. He said that having the required sprinklers in the house will be a necessity for this home.

Mr. Babel whether the storm pipes intended to be used under the driveway would be strong enough to carry the weight of the fire trucks. Mr. Aston responded that the pipes would be set in concrete and covered with six inches of stone and three inches of pavement. The driveway would be entirely paved.

Mr. Dinnocenti asked about the steep slopes around the house. Mr. Aston explained that it would be handled by a two-tiered retaining wall, much like the one that is used on the existing home. The area where the home is intended to go will be level.

Mr. Cebular asked Mr. Aston how they will approach the engineering comments.

Mr. Aston stated that his client is amenable to paying the \$1,000 Parks & Recreation fee-in-lieu, as mentioned by the most recent engineering letter. He said that he will be asking for a waiver from §504.2.c. which requires that the maximum grade for a driveway be eight percent. He said there are some areas where the grade will be approximately 12 percent. He is currently working with Mr. Camburn to address the stormwater comments.

Mr. Camburn stated that the applicant will need to meet peak reduction requirements since he will be unable to meet the infiltration requirements, given soil conditions in this area of the Township. Mr. Camburn expressed concern about the safety of drop-off areas around the driveway culverts and recommended the applicant install safety measures such as reflectors in these areas. He said he is confident that the applicant will be able to meet most of the concerns he outlined in his latest review letter, although they will need to request some waivers once they finalize their design.

Mr. Nixon said the County's concerns had been outlined and addressed from previous reviews.

Mr. Karver explained that the applicant is preparing a zoning application for the December hearing to request renewal of the variances that have since expired. He will be asking for recommendations from the Planning Commission at the November meeting with regard to these variances.

**Action:** No action was taken at this meeting with regard to this application.

## NEW BUSINESS

**(#2009-03S) PSD: Ringing Rocks Elementary School, *Land Development Sketch Plan*,** proposal to construct a 19,000+/- square foot addition on the 57,000 square foot Ringing Rocks Elementary School and associated improvements on the 64.4+/- acre Pottsgrove School District Campus located at 1401 Kauffman Road (Parcel ID# 42-00-02125-002) in the R-2 Residential District. [Plans prepared by Landmark Engineering, 950 West Valley Road, Suite 3104, Wayne, PA 19087, dated 09-03-2008, and consisting of four (4) sheets].

The application was represented by Dave Nestor, the PSD Business Manager; Kevin McAghon, the applicant's engineer, and Rod Frye and Scott Adams, the applicant's architects.

Mr. McAghon introduced the project and discussed the impact of the development on the property's steep slopes. He explained that the most impact would be in the parking area on the eastern side of the project and at the dumpster location. He explained that a conditional use would be required to disturb the slopes as intended.

In addition the applicant may require zoning relief for a number of aspects of the project. First, the applicant will need a special exception to expand the institutional use. They are working to meet the parking requirements, the setback requirements, and steep slopes. The applicant intends to comply with the Township's lighting requirements and other zoning requirements.

Mr. McAghon was concerned about the need for an impact statement. Ms. Elliott said she would review the application and the Township regulations to make a recommendation for how to proceed.

Mr. McAghon explained that they will deal with stormwater once they move to preliminary plans.

Mr. Dinnocenti asked if a retaining wall and fence would be necessary to accommodate the grade for the parking lot proposed along Kauffman Road. Mr. McAghon responded in the affirmative.

Mr. McAghon explained that they will be revising their plans to better address the zoning questions and plan to request a recommendation from the Planning Commission for a zoning hearing in December.

Mr. Nixon stated that the County would like to see more landscaping when they present the preliminary drawings. In addition, he suggested the applicant consider installing crosswalks across the drives for pedestrians. He also recommended pervious paving to help with the infiltration of stormwater. Mr. McAghon stated that they would be looking into underground detention and infiltration, depending on soil conditions.

Mr. Babel asked about the drive that looped around the rear of the building. He was concerned that it would be too narrow and the radii too difficult for emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles, and waste removal vehicles. He recommended using 20 feet for the drives.

**Action:** No action was taken at this meeting with regard to this application.

(#2009-04S) **Bella Italia Pizzeria**, *Land Development Sketch Plan*, proposal to construct a 4,500 square foot building with a 3,500 square foot restaurant, a 1,000 square foot office, and a 480 square foot patio on the 36,281 square foot lot (Parcel ID# 42-00-01882-902) located at 2209 East High Street in the LCO-Limited Commercial Office District with the SV-Sanatoga Village District Overlay. [Plans prepared by Ludgate Engineering Corporation, Lincoln Corporate Center, 10 Vanguard Drive, Suite 90, Reading, PA 19606, dated 08-25-2009, last revised 10-06-2009, and consisting of two (2) sheets].

Mr. Tom Ludgate, the applicant's engineer represented the application. Mr. Ludgate explained that the applicant was now considering reducing the size of the restaurant from 3,500 square feet to 2,500 square feet and adding one more 1,000 square foot office. The overall square footage proposed would remain the same.

He explained that the site is proposing one entrance/exit on High Street and an exit at the rear of the site to Sunnyside Avenue via an alley to help handle traffic concerns at the site. A sidewalk and wall will be installed at the front of the lot to buffer parking. There will also be a matching wall on the patio.

A landscape has not yet been formalized, but the applicant intends to provide a hearty buffer at the rear of the property to meet the Township's buffer requirements.

The applicant has been meeting with neighbors to the rear of the property who have expressed concerns with regard to stormwater. They are proposing some underground filtration, and to pipe the site water, via an easement, across one of the neighbor's properties to an inlet on Sunnyside Avenue. They are in negotiations with the neighbors to make this work.

Mr. Ludgate explained some of the zoning relief that may be required. He said they will be looking for relief from §2809.1, which prohibits parking in the front yard to accommodate a few parking spaces that will encroach on the front yard setback. Relief may be required to allow the patio to encroach in to the front yard and to allow the drive and some parking to encroach into the 25 foot rear yard landscape buffer.

Mr. Nixon asked whether the offices will be to support the restaurant or if they will be standalone businesses. Mr. Ludgate responded that the offices will serve standalone businesses, probably professional offices. He stated that it is possible that the restaurant may expand to 3,500 square feet in the future. Mr. Nixon asked if the applicant would consider connecting the parking lot to the neighboring Rite Aid parking lot. Mr. Ludgate stated that the applicant will work with the Rite Aid to see if it can work. Several Planning Commissioners stated that it had been considered when a bank wanted to develop the site, but the former applicant and Eckerd could not come to an agreement.

Mr. Dinnocenti stated that he is ok with the distance between the applicant's proposed driveway location and the Rite Aid driveway. Mr. Camburn stated that he thinks PennDOT might have a concern, particularly with regard to its proximity to the shopping center's entrance across High Street. Everyone agreed that the back alley would be an asset to the development of this site.

Mr. Babel stated that he found the plans acceptable from an emergency management perspective.

Mr. Ludgate responded that he would be revising the plans so the Planning Commission could make a recommendation at its November meeting for the December zoning hearing.

**Action:** No action was taken at this meeting with regard to this application.

## GRADING PERMITS

None.

## PLANNING MODULES

### *Lower Pottsgrove Township Authority Act 537 Plan Update*

Mr. Camburn explained that the Act 537 Plan Update is being proposed to accommodate the anticipated growth at the Sanatoga Interchange. This update will allow them to provide support for the H2O grant (which has been delayed until next year). Mr. Dinnocenti asked if zoning needs to be in place in order for the Act 537 Plan Update to be considered. Ms. Elliot stated that it is not necessary and that, the Township is working on putting infrastructure needs in place before adopting the zoning. If the infrastructure cannot be put in place in the area, then it does not make sense to increase the zoning for the area.

**Action:** A motion was made by Mr. Dinnocenti, seconded by Mr. McGroarty, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote to support the Act 537 Plan Update by signing Component 4-A.

## PLANNING & ZONING

### *Amendment to New Hanover Township Recreation Plan*

Ms. Elliott summarized the New Hanover Township Recreation Plan. The Planning Commission declined to comment.

### *Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee*

Ms. Elliott said that it has been a number of months since she has provided a report on the Pottstown Regional Planning Committee. She stated that the Committee has spent a significant amount of time considering a market impact assessment for the region. She said it could be an interesting exercise/tool to

determine how development will impact municipal budgets over time. She thought it would be especially vital to this region, which is trying to keep or remove some of its budgets from being “in the red,” so to speak. No action has been taken yet. The committee is working to determine whether there are enough funding sources that would make such a study financially feasible for the Committee to pursue.

*MS4 Stormwater, Green Building*

Ms. Elliott said she and other members of staff have spent a lot of time over the past two months attending conferences and meetings with regard to MS4 and Green Building initiatives. She said both will be having more of an impact on the way the Township operates, particularly with regard to planning efforts, in the near future.

*Township Zoning & SALDO*

Ms. Elliott explained that they were working on making a presentation of the first set of zoning chapters by the end of 2009. She further explained that she was excited to hear that the County has been working on a model SALDO, which would help with the Township’s intention to revise the SALDO. Mr. Nixon said the model SALDO has been worked on at the County level for a number of years and that, under the guidance of Mike Stokes, it looks like it will be ready for an unveiling soon.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. by a motion of Mr. Dinnocenti that was seconded by Mr. McGroarty and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for November 16, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager