



**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION OF
LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

October 21, 2013

The Lower Pottsgrove Township Planning Commission held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, October 21, 2013. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Frank Cebular, at 6:30 p.m. and the following were in attendance:

Frank Cebular, Chair
Ronald Dinnocenti, Vice Chair
William Wolfgang
Anthony Cherico
Brian Brentzel

Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager
Chad Camburn, Bursich Associates
Joseph Nixon, MCPC

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Wolfgang, seconded by Mr. Dinnocenti, and unanimously approved by a 5—0 vote, to approve the minutes of September 16, 2013, which was the latest meeting of the Planning Commission, subject to a typographical correction per Mr. Wolfgang.

ACCEPTANCE OF NEW APPLICATIONS – *None.*

SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

#2013-01M: **T.J. Maxey Enterprises, LLC**, *Minor Land Development / Lot Line Adjustment Plan*, proposal to adjust the lot line between 2766 East High Street and 2772 East High Street [Parcel #42-00-01864-20-9, Block 018, Unit 067] in favor of 2772 East High Street to remove its driveway from the 2766 East High Street lot and to make driveway and parking improvements at 2766 East High Street [Parcel #42-00-01865-00-1, Block 018, Unit 081] in the LC Limited Commercial District [Plans prepared by Cedarville Engineering Group, LLC, 1033 South Hanover Street, Suite 300, North Coventry, PA 19465, dated 06-28-2013, last revised 07-12-2013, and consisting of seven (7) sheets].

The applicant, Todd Maxey, and the applicant's engineer, April Barkasi of CEDARVILLE Engineering represented the application. Ms. Barkasi provided a brief history as to how Mr. Maxey acquired the property from the bank and stated that the property was before the Planning Commission to adjust the lot line to convey the eastern portion of the property which contains the driveway for the neighboring 2772 East High Street. At the time the car wash at 2772 East High Street was developed there was a plan to close the driveway on Mr. Maxey's property and share the driveway that was created for the car wash. Due to construction changes, the driveway was installed at a level too high to access Mr. Maxey's property. Ms. Barkasi reported that the Cutillo's who own the car wash have signed off on the proposal to convey the land and also to provide an easement to Mr. Maxey for the sewer lateral that crosses the front of the car wash property.

Ms. Barkasi discussed the proposed changes to the site, which would include a defined driveway that would be moved slightly west to align with a driveway on the opposite side of High Street. The parking lot will be paved,

striped, landscaped, and lighted. She explained that stormwater improvements are not proposed because 1) the amount of impervious coverage on the site would be reduced and 2) the concern that creating a point source discharge would degrade the steep, but currently stable, slopes along the western edge of the property. It is her recommendation that allowing stormwater to sheet flow across the property as it currently does, is the best option.

Mr. Nixon asked why the plan did not shift the parking closer to the building, in order to provide more of a landscaping barrier between the property and High Street. Ms. Barkasi responded that the landscaping area between the building and the parking lot was necessary in order to achieve a grade that would take water away from the building. Currently, water is directed toward the front door of the building.

ACTION: A motion was made by Mr. Brentzel, seconded by Mr. Cherico, and unanimously approved by a 5—0 vote, to recommend approval of the following waivers, per the July 15, 2013, waiver request letter from CEDARVILLE Engineering Group, LLC, and as depicted on the Plans:

- §215-17.B.(3) of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which requires a driveway width of 24 feet. Applicant proposes a width of 12 feet for approximately 40 along the side of the building to permit access to the rear of the building for the two residential apartments, due to site constraints.
- §215-17.D.(10) of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which requires no less than a five-foot radius of curvature for all curblines in all parking areas. The Applicant proposes two four-foot curb radii on two islands adjacent to the main access driveway.
- §215-18.B. of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which requires the Applicant to install curbing and sidewalks along its High Street road frontage. Applicant is requesting a deferral from the requirement to install sidewalks and PennDOT has requested the applicant not install curbing along High Street.
- §215-24. of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which requires the Applicant to install stormwater management facilities. Analysis by the Applicant's engineer shows that the proposed improvements would not generate additional stormwater runoff from the site.
- §215-51.B.(5) of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which requires the Applicant to provide planting strips a minimum of eight feet wide. Install a buffer strip of not less than 25 feet along all property lines. §215-59.B. permits property line buffers to be waived for land developments under one acre in the SV Sanatoga Village District.
- §215-54.C.(4)(a) of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which requires the Applicant to install a buffer strip of not less than 25 feet along all property lines. §215-59.B. permits property line buffers to be waived for land developments under one acre in the SV Sanatoga Village District.

ACTION: A motion was made by Mr. Dinnocenti, seconded by Mr. Wolfgang, and unanimously approved by a 5—0 vote, to recommend approval of the minor land development and lot line adjustment plan for T.J. Maxey Enterprises, LLC subject to the conditions that the applicant meets the requirements of the agreement for issuance of a temporary use and occupancy permit and any outstanding engineer and staff comments.

GRADING PERMITS – *None.*

AUTHORITY BUSINESS – *None.*

PLANNING & ZONING

Sanatoga Green – Presentation on Project and Zoning Ordinance Proposal

This project was represented by Robert Brant, the applicant’s attorney, Maarten Pesch and Alex Morris of WRT, the applicant’s designers, and Ken Dryer and Ted Drauschak, the applicants.

Mr. Brant explained that the applicants would be presenting their proposal for the property located on Evergreen Road, for which they have an option to purchase from Mr. Dinnocenti. He stated that the applicants would need a zoning map change in order to permit the project to go through and it is their intention to work with the Township to develop an ordinance that would permit their project by right.

Ms. Elliott stated that the Township has been working on several drafts of the Gateway Mixed Use (GMU) zoning district, which is proposed for the area surround the subject property and took some time to refresh the Commission members on the uses permitted under the proposed ordinance.

Mr. Morris and Mr. Pesch presented the concept plan for the site, which included three sections: 1) a commercial section which proposes a hotel, day care and office building, 2) a rental housing section, which includes mid-rise apartments and live-work units, and 3) a for-sale section of single family attached or detached units. Morris and Pesch explained that they designed the project to work with the site’s natural features, rather than stripping it down to fit a specific development. They showed Commissioners pictures of how the project’s open space and residential units might look, including some local examples such as the Lofts in King of Prussia.

Mr. Morris provided an analysis of how the current proposed GMU zoning district might need to be tweaked to permit the project to happen by right:

- Zone the entire property GMU.
- To permit live-work units, they would recommend permitting low-impact home-based businesses by right, rather than by special exception.
- Permit first floor parking garages, which would help reduce the amount of parking lot or driveway spaces required for vehicles, thereby reducing impervious coverage on the site.
- Permit day care as a primary use, rather than an accessory use. Most day cares want to be stand alone for security reasons.
- Reduce setbacks from 75 feet to 50 feet.
- Reduce space between buildings to 20 feet.
- Permit buildings up to 4 stories or 50 feet, rather than 3 stories or 50 feet.
- Permit single family attached/detached, multifamily residential units with residential uses on the ground floor.
- Permit mid-rise apartments, age-restricted residential uses, assisted living.

- Permit a residential density of at least 10.3 dwelling units per acre, rather than the 8 currently listed, provided the applicant increases the sustainable measure points.

Ms. Elliott reported that she has met with Mr. Morris and Mr. Pesch to discuss their thoughts on the proposed GMU Ordinance. She stated that it is the intent to change the zoning of the entire property to GMU, rather than split it between GMU and another district as had been proposed in the past. She also stated that she thinks that many of the requests could be accomplished through a “gateway residential” overlay district. She said she has calls into various members of the Township’s advisors to discuss the best way to delineate the overlay district. She also mentioned that the density issue will need to be discussed at the regional planning level, as the regional comprehensive plan sets the residential density for this area at 8 du/acre. She said the regional planning committee is currently working on updating its comprehensive plan and density/intensity is the current topic of discussion. She will bring this up to the regional planning committee for discussion their next meeting. She said she did not think the current ordinance and developer’s proposal are far off, but there are some issues that will need to be discussed.

Mr. Wolfgang asked about public bus access. Mr. Draushak stated that they do want to work with the bus company to bring public transit to the site. They will also have electric car charging stations and PV parking areas. He stated that they are looking to use as many sustainable design measures in the project as possible.

Mr. Zlomek, *Sanatoga Post*, asked if there was any consideration given to traffic. Mr. Brant said that it is too early to know what the impact of traffic will be on the site; however, the developer will hire a traffic engineer to work with the Township and PennDOT to assess traffic impact and mitigate it.

Transportation Impact Fee Study – Status Update

Ms. Elliott reported that the Board of Commissioners passed the resolution to start the transportation impact fee study process and has asked TPD to put together a scope of work and schedule. Once a schedule is in place, they will get started on the project.

Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee – Discussion on Future Land Use Categories

Ms. Elliott said that the Regional Planning Committee is updating its comprehensive plan. She asked the Planning Commission for its thoughts on residential densities in the Regional Commerce area of the Township. This area encompasses the area of the Township south of Route 422, most of which is currently zoned industrial. Commissioners discussed the fact that this area is inhibited by geography, with steep slopes, train tracks and the river cutting off much usable land in the Regional Commerce area. The area also has significant advantages, such as its proximity to the river, train tracks and Route 422 interchanges. But to make this area work as a regional commerce area, commissioners felt that permitting a higher density of residential under certain circumstances would help provide density to promote the businesses the Township and region hopes to attract in this area.

Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan Update – Information

Mr. Nixon reported that the County is also working on updating its county-wide comprehensive plan. It will be soliciting input from those who live or work in the County at public meetings and through surveys. He passed out a survey to the Commissioners and asked them to either complete it and return it by mail or, they can fill it out online. Mr. Nixon said that Scott Exley of Bursich Associates serves as a member of the County Planning Commission and also serves on the comprehensive plan steering committee, which will provide the Pottstown region with representation.

BCW Zoning Change Proposal – Update

Ms. Elliott said she and staff have discussed BCW’s proposal for a retail use on a portion of its property next to the future westbound off ramp at Armand Hammer Boulevard. They will be meeting with the property

owner this week to discuss how to handle the zoning and will report back at the next Planning Commission meeting.

Zoning Ordinance Rewrite – Update and Discussion

Ms. Elliott said that she and Mr. Nixon met prior to the meeting to discuss zoning concepts and the parking ordinance. She said that she will make revisions to the draft parking ordinance and present it to the Commission at its next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Brentzel announced that he has regretfully submitted his resignation from the Planning Commission as he will be moving out of the Township. The Planning Commission thanked Mr. Brentzel for his service and wished him well.

GOOD OF THE ORDER – *None.*

NEXT MEETING: ***Monday, November 18, 2013, at 6:30 p.m.***

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager