



MEETING MINUTES OF THE
**PLANNING COMMISSION OF
LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
September 21, 2015**

The Lower Pottsgrove Township Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, September 21, 2015. 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
Scott Fulmer

Edward C. Wagner, Manager
Chad Camburn, Engineer

Mr. Cebular announced the meeting was being recorded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wolfgang made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2015 regularly scheduled meeting of the Lower Pottsgrove Township Planning Commission. Mr. Dinnocenti seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

ACCEPTANCE OF NEW APPLICATIONS – None.

SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

#2015-02 Spring Valley Farms II seeking Preliminary approval for the proposal to construct 178 homes on 143.67 acres along Bleim Road [42-00-0266200-5] in the R-1 Residential District with PSD (Preservation Subdivision District Overlay) [Plans prepared by Graf Engineering, LLC 5 Cannon Avenue, Suite 103 Lansdale, PA 19446, revision date 8-21-2015 and consisting of 41 sheets].

Mr. Rolph Graf of Graf Engineering and Mr. Brennan Marion of 1934 Bleim Road Associates were present at the meeting.

Mr. Graf advised Chad Camburn of Bursich issued an updated plan review letter and an updated sewer review letter, both dated September 17, 2015. As a result of Mr. Camburn's review comments, the applicant added more items to their waiver request letter. The Fire Marshall also issued an updated review letter dated September 10, 2015.

Mr. Graf explained Waivers #1 through #4 in his waiver request letter are the same as requested on July 20, 2015. Although no official action was taken regarding these particular waivers, Mr. Graf felt they were acceptable to the Planning Commission. He then explained the additional waivers they are now requesting:

5. Waiver from 200 foot clear sight distance in both directions at all intersections for new residential streets.

Mr. Graf advised there are problems with meeting the 200 foot clear sight distance at two locations. He did not anticipate this waiver would be an issue because the smaller, privately owned streets will have a reduced speed limit of 15 mph.

Mr. Wolfgang asked if there would be height restrictions and footage requirements for the homeowners if they want to plant shrubbery. Mr. Graf said typically they add a note saying that area of the sight distance needs to remain free and clear. If this note was not included on the plan, Mr. Graf will add it. Mr. Camburn said this should be included in the deeds that are affected.

Mr. Dinnocenti suggested installing speed bumps. Mr. Marion said the landscaping concerns could be addressed in the homeowners' association documents.

6. Waiver from minimum 30-foot wide cartway for proposed residential streets.

Mr. Graf explained per the Preservation Subdivision Ordinance, the applicant was permitted to go down to a 24-foot cartway width. To allow parking on one side, the applicant is proposing a cartway width of 28 feet. According to Lower Pottsgrove's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, the minimum street width is 30 feet; therefore, the applicant is seeking a waiver for the proposed 28-foot cartway width.

7. Waiver from requirement to plant street trees at a ratio of one tree per 50 lineal feet of street frontage.

Mr. Graf advised 53 street trees could not fit along the proposed streets, but are being proposed internal to the development. They are requesting a partial waiver to allow street trees to be planted somewhere other than the street.

Mr. Wolfgang recalled a discussion at the last meeting regarding the types of trees. Mr. Camburn said if the Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission act favorably upon the applicant's request to install the trees between the sidewalk and the curb, Bursich and the applicant's engineer would work together to make sure the proper tree types will be planted.

Mr. Graf said everything else outlined in the Bursich review letter is a "will comply." He said they were looking for preliminary plan approval so they can move forward with submissions to a number of outside agencies.

Mr. Wolfgang asked a question regarding 3 existing cedar trees on Pleasant View Road, between Bleim and Sanatoga Roads. He did not think those trees would provide a sufficient buffer for the individuals living there and he would like to see some plantings to buffer the development and lights. Mr. Graf said if there is an area that is insufficient, their intent is to supplement those areas. Mr. Camburn said if PennDOT, the Board of Commissioners or Planning Commission would require some sort of improvements along Pleasant View Road, or if the trees would need to be cleared for some reason at a future date and that buffer goes away, Bursich is suggesting a stipulation in the developers agreement requiring additional planning to put that buffer back in place.

Mr. Wolfgang commented that Pruss Hill Road is not always illustrated on the plans. His concern is when the state reviews the plan, are they going to realize this is a main road that will be used heavily by this development and others. Mr. Graf said a very detailed traffic impact study was done by McMahon and Associates and all existing intersections around the perimeter of the property are evaluated as part of that study. Mr. Wolfgang asked Mr. Graf for his contingency plan if PennDOT requires realignment of the Bleim Road and Sanatoga Road intersection. Mr. Graf said if PennDOT asks them to take Bleim Road and line it up with Sanatoga Road – then we don't have a project. Mr. Wolfgang asked about Pruss Hill Road and Bleim Road and Mr. Graf said they don't own that land.

Questions were raised about the impact study. Mr. Fulmer did not understand how they arrived at the figure of 73 children, based on 502 residents. Mr. Graf said the data is based on Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research. He said a multiplier is used based on the size of the homes and lots and the number of bedrooms. Mr. Graf said they did not get the benefit of any "soft" benefits, such as not dedicating roads to the Township and donating 85 acres of open space, in the traffic impact statement. Mr. Graf said they are using the numbers they are using the appropriate numbers but he agreed there would be more than 73 school-age children in the development.

Mr. Dinnocenti asked if there is an acceleration/deceleration lanes for school buses and if there is going to be a bus stop in the development. Mr. Graf advised the buses will not come into the development because they are private streets. Mr. Dinnocenti asked if there any provision for a gathering area for children on Bleim Road. Mr. Graf envisioned the entrance as a gathering area where the children would get off the bus and walk to a collection area. They are proposing benches and lights but no shelter. Mr. Graf felt that most parents would drive their children to this area if the weather is bad.

Mr. Dinnocenti asked for the distance from Bleim Road to the gathering area and Mr. Graf estimated between 200 and 250 feet. Mr. Dinnocenti said the bus would have to park and wait for the children to come out and this would block traffic. He would like to see the plan accommodate the school children with an area closer to the road and Mr. Wolfgang felt that would an asset. There was further discussion on school buses parking on Bleim Road and cars parking along Spring Valley Lane.

Mr. Wagner pointed out 2 changes to the Traffic Impact Study:

- Change the number of police officers from 17 to 19;
- In the conclusion, the second paragraph change to read "this development will more **than** cover"

Mr. Wolfgang asked if Chief Foltz has reviewed the plan. Mr. Wagner advised the Chief has not yet reviewed it.

Mr. Babel advised the applicant agreed to his recommendations and he appreciated the cooperation. He asked if a waterline can be tied into Deer Ridge to help with water pressure. Mr. Marion said we've already built a \$700,000 water tower to help with water pressure so he felt they contributed.

Mr. Camburn touched on a few items that will be decided by the Board of Commissioners; however, the Board may want the Planning Commission's opinion on them:

- Page 2, Zoning Ordinance, #2 says the Board of Commissioners may require the plan to be submitted showing illumination levels and foot candles. Mr. Camburn said this is more typical

of a shopping center but it is in the ordinance. Mr. Wolfgang's concern is this is a rural, dark area and if the lighting will affect people facing the development. Mr. Graf said the lighting is intended only to light up the area; there will not be any light that spills over into the perimeter.

- General comments, Page 5, A. The applicant wants preliminary approval of the overall site, then final approval per phase. Mr. Graf concurred that they will be coming in per phase with the final plan. Mr. Camburn advised an overall phasing plan is needed and Mr. Graf said they are at a point now that they can establish detailed phasing limits. Mr. Wagner pointed out it can be up to 5 phases, as discussed by the Sewer Authority.
- General Comments, #5. The applicant is proposing a general park/play area. Mr. Camburn asked if the Planning Commission wants to have input on this or leave it up the developer because it is a private community. Mr. Graf explained the play area as shown on the plan. Mr. Wolfgang asked if the homeowners association could work out what they would like there. Mr. Marion would like to put in a small tot lot to start and then proceed from there.

Mr. Cebular asked about the number of trips generated during the morning peak and weekend hours. Mr. Camburn said that is being evaluated as part of the Act 209 study.

Mr. Cherico did not see Appendix A of the traffic study. Mr. Graf advised he provided only the executive summary. Mr. Camburn said Page 4 of Bursich review letter addresses that and PennDOT will review it as well.

Mr. Troutman asked if there was any way for children to get to Richards Park. Mr. Marion said this is a suburban development/subdivision and people will drive their kids, they are not going to ride their bikes. Mr. Wagner said the only way to accomplish this would be to develop the Saylor Tract, which would connect to Deer Ridge.

Mr. Troutman asked Mr. Fulmer if the School Board has looked at the plan. Mr. Fulmer said they are aware of it.

Joe Zlomek of the Sanatoga Post asked if the Board's approval of the preliminary plan says it accepts the traffic study as presented or if there is a chance to revisit it. He also asked if the Board of Commissioners has any say on whether it gets altered or not. Mr. Wagner said PennDOT has the say because Pleasant View Road and Bleim Road are both PennDOT roads.

Mr. Zlomek asked if PennDOT says we need to make changes or maybe have no project, or if PennDOT says nothing, is the Township out of the loop and nothing else happens with the traffic study. Mr. Camburn said we still have outstanding comments in our review letter that have to be resolved. The Planning Commission's recommendation for approval is conditioned upon the applicant meeting the requirements of that letter. Mr. Camburn further explained once the plan gets through the Township's process and the Township accepts the plans, PennDOT has the right to overrule any action taken by the Township regarding state roads.

Regarding the estimated number of school children, Mr. Zlomek asked if the Township has the opportunity to revisit and say we think there are better numbers or we think there are more problems

than you initially predicted. Mr. Wagner envisioned going to a meeting at PennDOT District 6 with Mr. Marion, Mr. Graf and Mr. Camburn to discuss those items.

After discussion, Mr. Wolfgang made a motion to approve the September 21, 2015 request for 7 waivers for the Spring Valley Farms project. Mr. Cherico seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

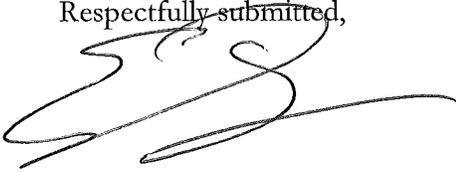
Mr. Dinnocenti made a motion to recommend preliminary approval of the Spring Valley Farms II project, conditioned upon the provisions of the Township Engineer letter of September 17, 2015, the Township Sewer letter of September 17, 2015 and the Fire Marshal letter of September 10, 2015. Mr. Cherico seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

Mr. Wolfgang asked for the status of the sign ordinance and if the fire companies can be excluded. Mr. Wagner advised the attorneys are looking into that matter.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Dinnocenti made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wolfgang seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor. Public meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Wagner', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Edward C. Wagner, Township Manager