

MINUTES

SUSQUEHANNA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

SEPTEMBER 28, 2020
TIME: 6:00 P.M.

Vice Chairman Kerry Wilson called to order the Regular Meeting of the Susquehanna Township Planning Commission on Monday, September 28, 2020 at 6:04 P.M. via a video conference.

ROLL CALL: COMMISSION MEMBERS

Frank Chlebnikow – Excused
Mitchell Kemp
Brian Moore
Kerry Wilson
Jonathan Bowser – Excused
William Thomas
Delonne Wilbourn – Excused

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Tara A. Burns, Esquire
Robert C. Grubic, P.E.
DCED Director Betsy Logan
Commissioner Gary Rothrock
Commissioner Jody Rebarchak
Zoning Officer Michael Rohrer
Fire Marshal George Drees
Lauren Weaver, TCRPC
Alex Greenly, P.E.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mark DiSanto, Nic DiSanto, Charles Courtney, Stephen Drachler, Wayne Bender, Diane Kripas and Daryl Rabold.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular Meeting
August 24, 2020

Brian Moore moved the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 24, 2020 be approved as published; Seconded by Mitchell Kemp and unanimously approved.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS:

TABLED – HOUSES AT OAKHURST CONDOMINIUMS – A FINAL SUBDIVISION PLAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBDIVIDING OFF ALL “WITHDRAWABLE” LAND FROM THE HOUSES AT OAKHURST CONDOMINIUMS. THE NEW LOT WILL CONTAIN 9.33 ACRES AND IS LOCATED IN THE R-4, RESIDENTIAL URBAN DISTRICT AND THE BOR, BUSINESS-OFFICE-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.

The Plan was Tabled at a previous Planning Commission meeting. No further action has been taken.

TABLED – RICHARD & CONNIE HUBER – A PRELIMINARY/FINAL SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMBINING TWO EXISTING TRACTS INTO ONE LOT. THE NEW LOT WOULD BE DEVELOPED WITH A 4,300 SQUARE FOOT OFFICE BUILDING

AND A 4,000 SQUARE FOOT RESIDENTIAL BUILDING WITH ACCESSORY PARKING AND STORAGE. A 1,400 SQUARE FOOT ACCESSORY BUILDING IS ALSO PROPOSED. THE PROPERTY CONTAINS 1.62 ACRES AND IS ZONED BOR, BUSINESS-OFFICE-RESIDENTIAL.

The Plan was Tabled at a previous Planning Commission meeting. No further action has been taken.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT OF PARCEL 62-023-096 – TRIPLE CROWN CORPORATION, INC. IS REQUESTING TO REZONE A 25.61 ACRE PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF ELMERTON AVENUE FROM MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R-2) TO BUSINESS-OFFICE-RESIDENTIAL (BOR) IN ORDER TO DEVELOP TOWNHOUSES.

Attorney Charles Courtney of McNees Wallace & Nurick, LLC representing Triple Crown Corporation, Inc. along with Mark DiSanto reviewed for the 3rd time with Planning Commission members the revised Zoning Map Amendment request to rezone about 26 acres located on the Southern side of Elmerton Avenue from (R-2) Medium Density Residential to (BOR) Business-Office-Residential.

Mark DiSanto reported he contacted the School District regarding the approximate amount of students who will be enrolled in the district from this development.

Mr. DiSanto commented he was informed by the School District they do have the capacity to accommodate the additional number of children expected to attend classes from the community.

Mr. DiSanto explained he spoke to Peter Sussenbach, Director of the Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management from the PA Game Commission about acquiring an easement to bring interconnectivity to Veterans Park by crossing in front of the PA Game Commission grounds.

Mr. DiSanto stated he had an outreach meeting with Harris Hills neighbors about the community which went very well.

Mr. DiSanto remarked a Traffic Study was done and the preliminary analysis showed there was no problem with the volume of traffic that will be coming out of the community.

Attorney Courtney of McNees Wallace & Nurick, reviewed use regulations, layout design and architectural design of Neighborhood Design Developments.

DCED Director Betsy Logan reviewed Township comments with Attorney Courtney and remarked the comments from the Staff report will stay as is regarding layout.

Mark DiSanto stated the overall density of the community will be 150 units with six (6) dwelling units per acre.

Mr. DiSanto remarked he thinks the plan of Michael Baker International is a two-dimensional design.

Township Engineer Robert Grubic commented he had no additional comments for Attorney Courtney.

Commissioner Rothrock remarked he thinks there is a bigger picture issue here because part of the Comprehensive Plan called for a re-write of the Zoning Ordinance and that process is underway right now.

Commissioner Rothrock stated he thinks it is pre-mature to consider re-zoning one parcel when we are looking at the entire Township so he is not supportive of making a change in zoning on this particular parcel at this time.

Commissioner Rothrock commented down the road it may be decided that this type of development is what the township wants.

Attorney Courtney remarked Triple Crown's goal is to have a project that everyone embraces.

Stephen Drachler of 3209 Twinn Avenue explained he prefers the area remain zoned for single-family residential.

Mr. Drachler remarked a large amount of land in the tract is not developable and at the meeting that was held with Triple Crown they indicated a willingness to create a conservation district and then he commented he thinks 150 units are too many for that tract of land.

Mr. Drachler stated also at the meeting with Triple Crown they indicated a willingness to add at least 10-additional units that are fully accessible for people with disabilities.

Daryl Rabold of 3200 Andrea Avenue stated the wooded areas that surround the culvert between Harris Hills and this parcel of land should remain wooded as well as the areas around the Capital Area Greenbelt.

Mr. Rabold commented this area is rich with wildlife such as deer, fox, bear, plus falcons and by doing away with the wooded areas it will change the entire appearance of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Mr. Rabold remarked the Township should also make sure that water runoff is handled properly so the townhouses do not pollute the stream that runs along the Capital Greenbelt.

Diane Kripas of 508 Marcel Drive questioned if anyone has spoken to the folks at the Capital Area Greenbelt about the connection to Harris Hills and the plan to protect the forested areas and wetlands.

Attorney Courtney stated Triple Crown has not yet reached out to the folks at Capital Greenbelt but they definitely will.

Wayne Bender of 504 Marcel Drive remarked residents have been asking for years about a sidewalk to the High School which has finally been completed this year.

Mr. Bender commented a lot of children from Harris Hills walk to school instead of ride the bus; however, that section of Elmerton Avenue is an extremely dangerous walkway with very little shoulder along the road.

Mr. Bender stated there are definitely issues to get sidewalk connectivity; however, children could walk down the Capital Greenbelt into Harris Hills on their way to school.

Mr. Bender expressed concern about the sewer issues down on the Capital Greenbelt and also the problem of erosion.

Attorney Courtney suggested a meeting be set up between DCED Director Betsy Logan, representatives from Michael Baker International, representatives from HRG and Robert Fisher from R. J. Fisher and Associates to resolve tonight's discussions on the revised rezoning Amendment.

No Action was taken on the revised rezoning Amendment by the Planning Commission members.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Update:

Lauren Weaver of Tri-County Planning Commission reminded the Planning Commission members Tri-County Regional Planning Commission will hold their 2020 Annual Luncheon via Zoom on Thursday, October 1, 2020 from 11:30 A.M. to 12:45 P.M.

Planning Commission Members Comments: None

Zoning & SALDO Amendments Updates:

DCED Director Betsy Logan reported the Township Official Map and Ordinance Draft are ready for review by the Planning Commission members.

Director Logan explained the highlights of Township Official Map to the Planning Commission members.

Director Logan remarked a preliminary Zoning Map has been created and the Township is working on finalizing that and well as working on the Text Amendment.

Director Logan commented the Township is looking at switching mainly to a form base code.

ADJOURNMENT:

William Thomas moved the meeting be adjourned at 7:30 P.M.; Seconded by Brian Moore and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonniene Urban
Executive Assistant