

**Planning Commission
Minutes
June 7, 2021 VIA ZOOM
7:00 PM**

Present:

Brett MacKay
Joseph Vavra
Dennis McGeehan
Nancy Becker
Patricia Younce
Ed Buonocore
Matt Chartrand

Absent: Douglas Leach

Staff:

Carolyn Shisler, Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer
Jennifer Guckin, Director of Community Planning and Code Enforcement
Mary Stover, Township Engineer CKS

Roll call via zoom 7:00 PM – The above named were present.
Supervisor Rich Marino was present.

Approval of the May 3, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Ms. Becker made a motion for approval of minutes for May 3, 2001 with two changes. Mr. Vavra seconded. All were in favor.

New Business

ZA 2021-01 North Penn School District - Zoning Map Amendment request to Re-Zone School District and MontCo Tech properties from R-125 and R-175 to I- Institutional.

Presented by: Greg Heleniak, Rudolph Clark LLC and Dr. Curtis Dietrich, Superintendent of Schools – North Penn School District.

Mr. Heleniak showed a map of the current area of the split zoning of the school property and the R175 and R125 Districts. He explained they would like to re-zone this District to the I – Institutional District.

Mr. Heleniak explained that re-zoning the properties will bring the campus and the MontCo Tech School into conformity with the requirements of the zoning district in the I - Institutional District. Most importantly is a map amendment to make this the Institutional District more convenient for the uses and for a proposed health clinic use. The current use with R175 and R125 does not provide

for what they need. He explained that they included the tech school, although no representation was there from the MontCo Tech School for the presentation.

Mr. Curt Dietrich, Superintendent of NP School District, presented some history of the properties and how it was purchased for the new school to be built. He explained all of the properties the school district has purchased and their location. Mr. Dietrich stated that the North Penn School District recently purchased the radio station that became available on the neighboring property. He stated the District is making this request because they are looking ahead and they need to update the infrastructure of the high school. Mr. Dietrich explained the need to make renovations to the high school and moving forward to do permanent construction of structures as they renovate the pods. He explained that they would possibly use those permanent structures for a 9th grade center. Mr. Dietrich stated that another future thought is that they would like to build and open a health care center. He gave a short presentation regarding the health care center they would like to propose. Mr. Dietrich explained the financial aspect and the benefits of the health center. He stated the clinic would be free of charge and that it is a win for the school district and the tax payers.

Mr. Chartrand asked if they are planning all new construction or using the existing structures. Mr. Dietrich stated that they looked into both, but would be planning on new construction. He showed a drawing with the setbacks and explained the adjoining residential properties and how it would benefit those properties with the setback requirements. He stated the biggest consideration is the setback requirements and from the standpoint of the campus, it is now existing non-conforming. This would change in the Institutional District Zoning and would bring the property into compliance.

Mr. Chartrand asked if there are any additional buffer requirements for Institutional to Residential District areas and Mr. Heleniak explained there are larger setbacks but he was not sure regarding the buffering.

Mr. Heleniak summed up that they would keep in mind the buffering and do what is required with respect for the surrounding residential areas.

Mr. McGeehan asked if the cell towers will remain and if there would be any revenue generated for the school district and Mr. Dietrich answered yes they are keeping them and they will generate revenue. He stated the AM radio towers will come down.

Ms. Becker asked if the veterinary clinic is it still there and the applicant stated yes, it is and will remain.

Mr. MacKay asked if any other questions.

Mr. Chartrand asked Mr. Dietrich about the 9th grade campus and if it would be on site with the high school. Mr. Dietrich explained the thought is they would build where the current bus area is. He stated that currently with the 9th grade levels not being on the same property as the high school it restricts many things the 9th graders could take advantage of. He explained the plan is that if the buildings are on the same property, the 9th graders could enter the high school; but the upper classmen could not enter the 9th grade center.

Mr. Chartrand said he presumed that with the purchase of the land of the radio station it would require a lot consolation and Mr. Dietrich replied yes.

Ms. Becker asked about the soil pile from the construction of the stadium and if it is staying and Mr. Dietrich explained that currently it is staying and they have no plans for it.

Ms. Becker commented on how great Crawford stadium looks and Mr. Dietrich expressed how happy he is with it and how excited they are to have graduation in it.

Ms. Younce made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend the Board of Supervisors the approval of a Zoning Map Change to rezone the current North Penn High School, the radio station property (now owned by the North Penn School District) and the MontCo Technical School property to the "IN – Institutional District"

Mr. Chartrand seconded.

All were in favor.

New Business

ZA 2021 -02 Cornerstone Premier Properties – Belfair Square, Zoning Text Amendment request to amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for an increase in allowable number of units to the RBP Overlay Zoning District.

Mr. Dave Caracausa presented his request for text amendment for Belfair Square townhouse development on Welsh Road to permit the development of 16 townhouses on their property in the RBP Overlay District.

He explained he was here at the Planning Commission meeting in April and explained what Belfair square is. Tonight he stated he wanted to ask for a recommendation of the above text amendment that would allow that project to move forward.

The Planning Commission discussed the proposed ordinance changes. There was a concern that the reference to "adjacent property" was not clear. The Planning Commission wants to change the language to clearly state that the land must be "contiguous land under common ownership" in order to be included in the density calculation.

Mr. Caracausa explained the proposed text amendment will take into consideration the suggestion to add another column to the RPB District for lot size. With this proposal it is for a lot size of a minimum of 120,000 square feet. He explained all other zoning criteria is less than this with a minimum of 400 foot frontage lot width as well. He stated the driveways can be away from property lines due to having 400 feet road frontage.

Mr. Caracausa explained the overview and that this was reviewed by the two engineers and that there was one item mentioned regarding density. He stated they put in stringent criteria for future development. He asked if the Planning Commission had any questions.

Mr. Chartrand asked if the amendment allows the density and Mr. Caracausa said yes.

Mr. Chartrand asked if this property is on a state road and will need PennDot approvals and Mr. Caracausa stated yes.

Mr. MacKay asked if the Planning Commission was in favor of creating another column or to just change the density to make it simpler. Ms. Younce asked if Mr. MacKay means to allow 4.5 density in the 80,000 square ft. parcel and Mr. MacKay stated yes.

The Planning Commission discussed the parcel, the two lots and the open space.

Mr. Chartrand mentioned the adjacent buffer and expressed he understands this is particular for this site and this project but in thinking ahead regarding the word "adjacent" he thinks they need better language to clarify that this is a different zone and not adjacent. Mr. Younce said it could be clarified as only if owned by the same owner. Mr. MacKay also stated the term "adjacent" should be taken out.

Mr. Buonocore stated the property is continuous and thinks it should not be made more difficult. The Planning Commission all agreed on the word "continuous" and not "adjacent". Mr. MacKay also agreed with the word "continuous" and asked Ms. Guckin if Mr. Dooley could give his recommendation on the word for clarity on adjacent vs. continuous. Ms. Guckin said yes.

Ms. Younce made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the proposed text amendment with the language change from "adjacent property" to "contiguous land under common ownership" in Section 3 of the proposed text amendment which amends Section 153-418.C.

Ms. Becker seconded.

All were in favor.

Additional Business:

Ms. Guckin reminded the Planning Commission that next month's meeting will be in person.

Mr. Chartrand said congratulations to Township Manager, Mr. Rob Ford on his retirement. And Ms. Guckin said thank you and she we will pass it on to him.

Mr. MacKay asked if there was any additional business.

Hearing none, Ms. Becker made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Vavra seconded. 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Shisler

Towamencin Township

Planning Commission Secretary/ Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer