



**Planning Commission
Minutes
May 2, 2011
7:30 PM**

Present:

Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
David Mosesso
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Staff:

Joseph Leis, Director of Community Planning
Russ Benner, Township Engineer

Absent:

William Schalleur
Robert deHaan

Opening Comments

Chairman Brett MacKay called the meeting to order at 7:32 P. M.

Minutes

Chairman MacKay asked if there were any comments on the minutes. Chairman MacKay asked for a motion to the March, 2011 minutes, Dave Mosesso moved to approve and Tim Shafer seconded.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Dave Mosesso
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay announced next agenda item.

Presentation from Anne Leavitt-Gruberger, Senior Planner with Montgomery County Planning Commission. She used a slide show that described the different types of planning materials prepared by the County for municipalities. She highlighted the residential business model that would help in the commission's study on Welsh Road.

Chairman MacKay announced next agenda item.

New Business

Town Square Stage IIA -- SLD779

John Anderson represented the applicant; he gave a history of the development including Phase I. He explained why they are phasing IIA.

Dave Mosesso asked did the hotel originally face Sumneytown Pike. Mr. Anderson said no this has been the original configuration.

The original hotel had 150 rooms, this has been reduced to 140 because of the conference and meeting rooms, including an indoor restaurant and outdoor pool. The footprint has changed slightly for the additional conference and banquet facility on the first floor. The rest of the building has changed slightly as well.

Dave Mosesso asked if the architecture has changed. Mr. Anderson said the finishes have not changed just the exterior.

Dave Mosesso requested plans be submitted.

Mr. Anderson described the pool, its wall and the seating area.

Dave Mosesso said he read somewhere about moving the building closer to the street. Mr. Anderson said the outside architectural features are up against the right of way.

John Vickers asked did this increase the square footage of the building. Mr. Anderson said no.

Mr. Anderson also described the future phasing with the new entrance and Washington Street.

Tim Shafer asked for clarification on the entrance especially Sumneytown and whether the entrance would change the concrete median.

Mr. Anderson said no the emergency access would be closer with just one access.

Chairman MacKay asked why the phasing.

Mr. Anderson explained the Penn DOT review process.

Tim Shafer asked since they have access shouldn't Penn DOT grant the new driveway.

Mr. Anderson said the review comments they have received will not change the proposal.

Tim Shafer commented that the parking lot shifted towards the Uninvest Bank.

Mr. Anderson said no, they agreed to build the parking lot on the preliminary plan.

Tim Shafer asked would this allow a reduction of on street parking.

Mr. Anderson said no, on street parking is proposed with Stage I, not this application.

Dave Mosesso said there was a concern about blocking the lanes where parking is located.

Mr. Anderson said the Stage I approval indicates the developer would remove the parking and curbing if requested by the Township.

Dave Mosesso asked will you have enough.

Mr. Anderson said yes, based on the traffic study.

Dave Mosesso asked if staff agrees with the parking.

Russ Benner and Joe Leis said yes.

Tim Shafer asked can less parking be built to have more green space.

Mr. Anderson said no, but they are landscaping.

Mr. Anderson described the areas where they need additional waivers.

On August 12, 2009 the Board of Supervisors granted preliminary plan approval and the following waiver:

- L.U.D.M. Landscape Buffer Requirements, Section 1.A, which states that the Buffer Type 'A' shall be at least 25 feet in width, located 5 feet from adjacent sidewalks and shall be designed to create a visually transparent buffer composed of mixed plant materials to provide an aesthetically pleasing transition from one land use to another. *This waiver is only for the buffer width along the Uninvest property.*

The applicant is requesting a waiver from L.U.D.M. Parking Requirements, Section C.4, which states that perimeter of surface parking adjacent to a building shall be protected by Buffer Type A. In accordance with Landscape Buffer Requirements Section 1.A, Buffer Type A shall be at least 25 feet in width. The applicant is requesting this waiver for the following locations:

- Between the restaurant and proposed parking. The buffer width varies from 10 to 20 feet
- Between the proposed hotel building and the proposed parking. The buffer width along the front and side of the hotel ranges from 0 to 15 feet.
- Between the side of the school building and the proposed parking. The buffer is only 8 feet wide

Tim Shafer asked if there was an issue with fire department access with the parking lot configuration.

Mr. Anderson said the configuration hasn't changed just the depth of the buffer.

Dave Mosesso asked what changed to need this waiver.

Mr. Anderson said the original footprint did not meet the Marriott needs, so the building is wider but shortened.

Dave Mosesso said Mr. Nicoletti said before there would be no restaurant.

Mr. Anderson said Marriott requested the restaurant.

Dave Mosesso said is that why you reduced the numbers of rooms?

Mr. Anderson said they were reduced because they added conference rooms and the restaurant.

Tim Shafer asked if the crosswalks are raised.

Mr. Anderson said no but they are a different material.

Nancy Becker asked will this be impacted by the other hotels.

Mr. Anderson said the new proposed hotel is business class hotel and won't be competitive. The Holiday Inn is the competition.

Nancy Becker asked if these hotels can compete.

Mr. Anderson said his clients indicate yes.

Chairman MacKay asked if they can go over the review letters.

Mr. Anderson said they will comply other than the waivers.

Chairman MacKay brought up the Simone Collins review comments about the Towamencin Avenue access.

Mr. Anderson described the comments and what they are doing to resolve the question including stairs.

Chairman MacKay asked him to describe the façade.

Mr. Anderson said there is a separating wall with stair, a fire pit area and pool.

Dave Mosesso asked about the Sumneytown frontage.

Mr. Anderson said there is a plaza area and landscaping with a pedestrian walk.

Dave Mosesso asked was there a fence?

Chairman MacKay and Tim Shafer thought it was discussed.

Mr. Anderson said the fence and wall were along Towamencin Avenue.

Chairman MacKay said the review letters talked about additional buffering along Sunneytown Pike.

Mr. Anderson asked to defer to Phase II so he can work it out with Peter Simone.

Nancy Becker said not necessarily a fence but some art or other architectural feature.

Mr. Anderson said yes they can work with Peter Simone.

Dave Mosesso asked what are you asking for.

Mr. Anderson said the waivers for Phase I.

Nancy Becker said you are asking for a waiver to reduce the buffer depth from 25 to 5. She also asked why are the buffers so big.

Mr. Anderson indicated the buffer in question and where they occur on the plan.

Mr. Anderson explained the conflict with the Land Use and Design Manual and the Land Development Ordinance.

Chairman MacKay asked about the connection to the Uninvest property.

Mr. Anderson said he will provide an easement.

Dave Mosesso asked about Washington Street.

Mr. Anderson said it will be an emergency access.

Dave Mosesso asked will it be paved and made a road eventually.

Mr. Anderson said yes they will do what the Township requests.

Nancy Becker asked could the emergency access be green.

Joe Leis indicated that because of the uses the Fire Marshal will require paving.

Chairman MacKay asked for a motion on the following:

The applicant is requesting a waiver from L.U.D.M. Parking requirements, Section C.4, which states that perimeter of surface parking adjacent to a building shall be protected by Buffer Type A. In accordance with Landscape Buffer Requirements Section 1.A, Buffer

Type A shall be at least 25 feet in width. The applicant is requesting this waiver for the following locations:

- Between the restaurant and proposed parking. The buffer width varies from 10 to 20 feet.

Tim Shafer moved to approved, Paul Rea seconded.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Dave Mosesso
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay asked for a motion on the following:

The applicant is requesting a waiver from L.U.D.M. Parking requirements, Section C.4, which states that perimeter of surface parking adjacent to a building shall be protected by Buffer Type A. In accordance with Landscape Buffer Requirements Section 1.A, Buffer Type A shall be at least 25 feet in width. The applicant is requesting this waiver for the following locations:

- Between the proposed hotel building and the proposed parking. The buffer width along the front and side of the hotel ranges from 0 to 15 feet.

Tim Shafer moved to approved, Nancy Becker seconded.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Dave Mosesso
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay made the following motion:

The Planning Commission recommends the Board of Supervisors approve land development application #779 Town Square Phase IIA, which consists of plans prepared by Cornerstone Consulting. The plans are dated December 1, 2008, last revised September 21, 2010, subject to and conditioned upon compliance with the item as outlined in T & M Associates letter dated April 29, 2011, Simone Collins, April 4, 2011, Fire Marshal March 2, 2011, and Pennoni Associates April 4, 2011 correspondence. The Planning Commission also recommends that the

Board of Supervisors approve the waiver, as requested. This recommendation is conditioned on the following:

1. Applicant will provide screening or art at the Plaza.
2. Emergency access will be removed and driveways installed with Phase II.
3. Easement for connection to Uninvest shall be provided.

Nancy Becker seconded the motion.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Dave Mosesso
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay announced next application.

Greene Tweed & Co. – SLD791

Jim Garrity represented the applicant. He explained the company and the prior approval.

He explained the 2001 plan indicating what was built including parking, storm water and which additions. In 2005 a mezzanine was built within the existing building.

Mr. Garrity showed an aerial of what exists with the proposed new additions highlighted.

He also described the new architectural features. Mr. Garrity said they will comply with the T & M letter.

Mr. Garrity described the conditional use issue under discussion with the Solicitor.

Mr. Garrity then showed the new architecture featured on each façade.

His next comment was about tree protection which they will do. They will work out the fees with the Township.

Comment 5, Page 5 of T & M review letter.

5. *In accordance with S.L.D.O. Section 517.A.1, all lots shall be graded to secure property drainage away from all buildings and to allow the collection of stormwater in water detention basins or other approved locations. A minimum slope of 2% shall be used for directing water away from structures.*

We are concerned that if Yard Drain #1 becomes clogged, backed-up water will adversely affect the building. Provide additional spot elevations ensuring that water will drain to the parking lot prior to reaching the building entrance elevation of 288.39. Show the grate elevation on sheet 6.

Mr. Garrity said they are trying to make grade work by adding new inlets.

He stated they will relocate 8 parking spaces as noted in the review letter. They will comply with everything else.

He said they will comply with the Pennoni letter.

Tim Shafer asked about the 8 spaces by the cafeteria.

Mr. Garrity said they are moving those as stated previously.

Nancy Becker asked will this create more jobs.

Mr. Garrity and Rick Cheevers immediately said no, these are employees from the other site. Maybe a couple new ones in the future.

Dave Mosesso asked about the use of the drive.

Mr. Cheevers said it is employees and Dock Woods Residents.

Dave Mosesso asked uses around them.

Mr. Cheevers described them.

Tim Shafer mentioned that the sidewalk was waived previously.

Mr. Garrity said yes it was because they built the trail.

Dave Mosesso said the Township policy has been no waivers of the sidewalk. He suggested that they build the sidewalk now.

Mr. Garrity said the sidewalks were waived not deferred and they would prefer the trail.

Tim Shafer asked if there are any sidewalks in the area.

Mr. Cheevers said no except maybe the old Nice Ball Bearing site.

Dave Mosesso said he still thinks it is a good idea.

Paul Rea asked why the trail doesn't go to any streets.

Dave Mosesso said this configuration is not user friendly.

Mr. Cheevers said he has no problem connecting to existing street.

Dave Mosesso said he would like a sidewalk.

Mr. Garrity said he would discuss with the Board of Supervisors.

Tim Shafer said he doesn't want the trees to be removed and prefers the trails.

Dave Mosesso said he doesn't want to feel like he's trespassing that's why he wants the access to the street.

Gravel spurs to access the trail.

Chairman MacKay asked for a motion. Tim Shafer moved to approve and Nancy Becker seconded.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Against: Dave Mosesso

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay announced next application.

Zoning Amendment – Article VI Provisions

Joe Leis described the proposed amendments to increase the setbacks for carports from the current three foot in certain districts.

After some additional discussion Chairman MacKay asked if there was a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the ordinance as proposed.

Nancy Becker made a motion and Tim Shafer seconded.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers

Dave Mosesso

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay announced next application.

Zoning Amendment – Stream Bank Stabilization

Russ Benner described the amendment and why we are recommending the change.

Nancy Becker asked if they would still need DEP approval.

Mr. Benner said yes.

Chairman MacKay asked if the EAC should review.

Russ Benner said the thought their input would be useful on environmental ordinance change.

After some additional discussion Chairman MacKay asked if there was a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the ordinance as proposed.

Dave Mosesso moved to approve, Tim Shafer seconded.

Voting for: Brett MacKay
Tim Shafer
Nancy Becker
Paul Rea
John Vickers
Dave Mosesso

Absent: William Schalleur
Bob deHaan

Chairman MacKay asked if there was anything further, hearing none. Nancy Becker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Tim Shafer seconded.

Chairman MacKay adjourned the meeting at 9:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph T. Leis
Director of Community Planning

JTL/ck