

EAST ROCKHILL TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 14, 2009

The May 14, 2009 Meeting of the East Rockhill Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Dean Frankenfield at 7:00 PM. Also present were Vice-Chair Nancy Booz, and Members Anne Fenley, David Nyman and Bert Daikeler. Also present were Township Engineer Steve Baluh, P.E., and Township Manager Anne Klepfer.

Minutes

Chairman Frankenfield asked if there was motion regarding the April 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes. By motion of David Nyman and second by Nancy Booz, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the April 9, 2009 Minutes.

Correspondence: Correspondence listed on the Agenda was noted as received. Also, Engineer Steve Baluh mentioned that Rockhill Developers need to provide an extension to the Board of Supervisors for action on its minor subdivision on Callowhill Road. This plan has been acted on by the Planning Commission so there is no need for the Planning Commission to take action this evening.

Old Business

Geisert 5-lot subdivision Blooming Glen Road, Blooming Glen Road. The applicant's representative J. Cheryleen Strothers of Cowan Associates was before the Commission again to follow up on the issue of driveway width for the proposed common driveway for lots #2, 3 and 4. The driveway entrance is proposed to be widened to 18 feet in accordance with Section 22-511 of the Subdivision Ordinance and then narrows down to 10 feet. The Planning Commission previously recommended the driveway be widened to 18 feet. Ms. Strothers had indicated that she would consult with the Fire Chief to see what width the Fire Company is comfortable with. The Fire Chief commented in a letter dated April 29, 2009 recommended a minimum width of twelve feet wide and any radii be consistent to allow access by Engine 26 without leaving a paved surface – 43'7". She modified the original plan showing an 18' width 50', or approximately two car lengths and narrowing to 12' wide. She has also revised the radii to comply with the Fire Company's request. The driveway is proposed to be paved up to the right-of-way line and it would be up to the buyers to pave beyond that point. She asked if these modifications are satisfactory to the Planning Commission so that they can proceed with the rest of the revisions.

Mr. Frankenfield asked if anything has changed regarding the alignment of the driveway to protect the existing trees? Ms. Strothers said they are trying to save two large existing trees. One tree can probably be saved the other one is questionable. Chairman Frankenfield indicated that he thought the revisions were an improvement from what was originally proposed. The other Planning Commission members agreed.

Mr. David Slotter, of 108 Bridgeview Drive asked if the Township Engineer had anything new to report with regard to the existing storm water system and previous plans that were approved for projects adjacent to the Geisert property. The Township Engineer indicated that review of the Geisert Plan and

passed plans is still underway. Mrs. Strothers offered that she has not yet met with the Township on-site to address the Township Engineer's storm water comments since she wanted to resolve the driveway issues first. She has not discussed what can or cannot be done out there yet.

New Business

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Suburban District: The Township has prepared a draft Zoning Amendment that proposes to amend the Zoning Ordinance to revise the Suburban District regulations for the Performance Standard Development (Use B3) for townhouse, performance standards, dwelling unit mix, and parking requirements. It also proposes a new use, Age-Qualified Development and would add the new use (B13) to the use provisions and use regulations. These revisions are being pursued pursuant to the East Rockhill Township Comprehensive Plan Update adopted in 2005. The proposed ordinance will address fair share and multi-family fair share housing provisions as well as riparian buffer regulations.

Chairman Frankenfield acknowledged comments on the draft ordinance received from Bucks County Planning Commission and John Kennedy Associates, a planner engaged by Clay Heckler, Select Properties for the McClennan property which is located in the Suburban District. Township Engineer Steve Baluh reviewed the May 6, 2009 Bucks County Planning Commission letter with the Planning Commission. Mr. Kennedy also shared his thoughts summarized in his letter with the Planning Commission.

In general, Planning Commission was in support of the proposed amendment; however, it was their consensus that the items contained within the above correspondence should be reviewed and the Ordinance revised where appropriate. Planning Commission made specific comments on the following items:

1. Maximum lot impervious surface ratio for each dwelling type should be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure that the maximum impervious surface ratio is greater than the allowable building coverage for each individual use. (Refer correspondence dated March 24, 2009 from C. Robert Wynn Associates, Inc.).

2. Planning Commission indicated that it would be desirable to include community center/clubhouse regulations within the age qualified community regulations. However, the Planning Commission felt that the chart provided by the Bucks County Planning Commission should be revised to include clubhouses for developments less than 100 units, and the requirement for minimum clubhouse size should be reviewed.

3. Consideration should be given to include a reference to barrier free access within the age qualified community requirements,

4. Within Riparian Buffer Zone1, existing agricultural uses should be permitted. New agricultural uses should be restricted from Zone 1.

5. Planning Commission recommended that solar access window allowance be deleted from the Riparian Buffer Zone.

6. Retention/detention basin construction should be deleted from the uses permitted by conditional use within Zone 2.

7. Planning Commission was in agreement with Bucks County Planning Commission comment that outdated dwelling types should be deleted from the Ordinance.

8. There was significant discussion regarding the number of attached townhouse units permitted, or/and maximum building length as suggested by John Kennedy. Planning Commission appeared inclined to not increase the amount of attached units permitted.

9. Planning Commission was not opposed to reducing side-to-side building spacing to 25 feet for townhouse units.

10. It was suggested that the chart for required mix of dwelling types within both B3 and B13 developments be revised to only require a maximum of three dwelling classes. The number of units for each class should be revised accordingly.

11. The restriction from use of a garage for required parking spaces should be modified to prohibit only the first garage space (e.g. two car garage would have one allowable parking space).

12. Planning Commission was not opposed to revising the definition of building height to be measured to the mean roof height in-lieu-of the highest point on the roof.

13. Clarification of watercourse types which require riparian buffers was reviewed. The office of C. Robert Wynn Associates recommends that the regulations be revised to reflect three types of watercourses defined by PADEP, including perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral. Riparian buffers should be applicable to perennial and intermittent streams. Minimal protection for ephemeral watercourses may be considered.

14. Planning Commission discussed transferable development rights (TDR) and the ability to transfer open space, recreation land, clearing, or other environmental protection standards. The Planning Commission did not appear to be in favor of developing a TDR program at this time. However, further investigation regarding transfer of open space/recreation or environmental protection areas may be considered.

Adjournment: With no further business or additional public comments, Anne Fenley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM. The motion was seconded by Nancy Booz and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Sam Martin
Secretary

Recorded:

Anne W. Klepfer
Township Manager