

Hilltown Township Planning Commission
March 2006 Work Session Minutes

The Planning Commission met at the township building on Monday, March 6, 2006 at 7:30pm. Members present were Chuck Kulesza, Brooke Rush, Ken Beer, Mike Beatrice, Joe Marino and Bill Bradley. Denise Hermany was on vacation.

Members from the public included Marilyn Teed, Jim Sensinger, Nancy Boise, and Kirk Hansen .

Public Comments – None

February Work Session Minutes – Ken Beer made a motion to approve the minutes, Joe Marino seconded. Minutes were approved 5-0. Mike arrived after minutes were approved.

Buffer Ordinance – The Planning Commission reviewed the changes to the Buffer Ordinance which were discussed at the February 23, 2006 Special Work Session. In reviewing the requirements for a Type 2 Single-family/multifamily separation buffer, Bill Bradley questioned how a new required buffer could be placed on an existing multi-family development instead of the single-family property which is being developed. After a long discussion, the PC decided that the buffer location would need to be placed on the property being developed, similar to requirements for all other Types of buffers. The PC agreed that Brooke would check with Lynn Bush on this issue. Chuck Kulesza questioned what happens when two plans (single-family/multifamily) come in coincidentally. Brooke Rush believes that both developments would need to draw in a buffer and which ever development is completed first would be required to put in the buffer.

Under General Buffer requirements, Section A.2, Brooke Rush commented that John Apple suggested that access driveways shouldn't be limited to crossing the buffer at a perpendicular angle from the property line. The PC agreed that there are times when a driveway should come across a buffer at less than a 90 degree angle. After much discussion and a review of the SALDO, Chuck Kulesza suggested that the angle be between 45 and 90 degrees. The PC also discussed the wording "substantially perpendicular" knowing that it could be left to some interpretation. Brooke agreed to discuss the final wording with Lynn Bush.

The PC also discussed whether the planted area should meander within a Type 2-reverse frontage buffer. The PC agreed to keep the planted area meandering within the buffer. It was also agreed that the planting requirements for ornamental trees and groundcover plants be the same for a Type 1 and Type 2 buffer.

The PC also recommended that John Apple's buffer illustration be added to the Buffer ordinance as one example of a Type 1 buffer. Brooke will discuss the addition of the illustration with Lynn Bush.

Definitions – completed

Use Chart –The Use Chart should be reviewed in conjunction with the ordinances.

Next Supervisor Work Session Meeting - Brooke Rush commented that he will give the supervisors the Buffer ordinance and Definition section at their March 13, 2006 work session meeting. Ken Beer stated that he believes the completed ordinances should be put forward to the public and that the PC should be allowed to continue to review the remaining sections of the amended zoning. The PC agreed. Brooke will request that the PC receive supervisor approval to continue the review of the remaining ordinances.

Future Ordinance Review - Chuck recommended that the PC discuss the sequence of future ordinance review, if approved. The PC agreed to look at CR1, CR2, LI, PC, etc. and Uses. The Village Overlay will be discussed later. Joe was concerned that the a discussion of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) concerning the Village Overlay might bog down the village overlay discussion

McGrath – The PC received a revised sketch plan that indicated 404 units with a note from McGrath indicating that the previous, revised submission incorrectly showed 384 units. Brooke commented that at the February 20, 2006 PC meeting, the PC directed McGrath to come back with a plan that showed less units. The PC also requested a copy of a by-right plan, which according to McGrath would contain 134 homes. The PC noted that the existing sketch plan shows 3500 sq. ft. units, which would equate to a very large quad unit of 14,000 sq. ft.

Joe Marino mentioned that he believes that McGrath plans to come to the March 20, 2006 PC Meeting. Brooke suggested that each PC member think about whether they support this type of use, in some form at this location. Ken Beer commented that it is hard to go from a by-right plan of 134 homes, as stated by the developer, to 404 homes. “That is a lot of cars and people.” Joe mentioned that the homes would be limited to 2 people. Other PC members did not agree. Brooke believes that this is an excellent use of property if all things were equal in terms of number of homes, but they are not equal. McGrath wants a very large increase in density. Brooke feels that this age-qualified community zoning ordinance proposal should move forward in some form, but he clearly stated that he does not support this plan. He further commented that it seems that McGrath disregarded our present age-qualified ordinance when considering this piece of ground.

Mike Beatrice commented that this type of community should be close to services and should not be located in the RR area. Walk-able communities are located in the CR1. Chuck Kulesza believes that this type of community would fulfill the needs of those people looking for 55+ housing, but we are not going to stop families with school age children from moving into our community. Many families with children will move into those homes where 55+ families are leaving. Chuck would like to ask McGrath why our existing age-qualified ordinance isn't appropriate. Bill Bradley is not happy with the

density tradeoff that McGrath is proposing. “Why are you trading off?” When you go 3-4 times the amount of homes, you are increasing the number of people who are on the road and demanding services.

Joe Marino commented that we should have a new traffic study. Ken Beer said that years ago the reason why the township previously wanted an industrial site at this location was to keep the traffic out of the township and on Route 313. Chuck Kulesza commented that he believes that there are no improvements planned for Rt. 313 and 309 and that we have lost the opportunity to put in a Rt. 313 bypass. Ken Beer mentioned that he does not want to see a stipulation agreement proposed for this site and have the planning process removed from the PC. The PC agreed.

Gitlin-Johnson – The PC questioned if there was supervisor approval regarding public sewer to this development. Joe Marino believes that this was discussed at the previous supervisor’s meeting. Nancy Boice who also attended the supervisor’s meeting, agreed. The PC impression is that the final plan w/sewer proposal submitted by Toll Brothers was at the direction of the supervisors. Brooke questioned if there would be less disturbance of the natural features – woods, steep slopes, etc. if public sewers were allowed to this development. The consensus was – yes.

Coventry Meadows – No stipulation agreement was submitted, although Ken Bennington in an email mentioned that the PC is supposed to be receiving the agreement. Brooke commented that he asked the supervisor’s at a previous meeting for direction with respect to future stipulation agreements, but he didn’t get a definitive response. There was a conversation among the PC regarding stipulation agreements. Brooke Rush believes if the PC is asked to review a plan, then the PC needs to see the agreement. Ken Beer commented that if the supervisors agree to a stipulation agreement then don’t ask the PC to approve waivers.

Orleans-Bennett – The PC believes road access to this development needs improving. Brooke Rush would like to see a road to Keystone Drive through the piece of land that is landlocked. Ken Beer believes that a daughter may own a portion of the land. He is going to research the ownership. Another option is to go out to Cherry Road; however, that would require purchase of additional land. If the applicant would prefer a P-loop as shown, then the number of homes should be limited to 25. As of yet, there was no Park & Rec and Open Space review of the plan.

Cinnabar Farm – The PC received the original final plan from the applicant. Joe Marino commented that the applicant stated at a previous supervisor’s meeting that they were going to proceed with the original plan unless the supervisors approve the consolidation plan for White Chimney and Cinnabar Farm. Brooke questioned whether the original house septic system was to be removed. The ordinance also requires a full road overlay, but the applicant is requesting to do only a half overlay.

Wilson - The PC discussed the lot width to depth ratio waiver request for this minor subdivision. The applicant would like to keep the lot depth smaller so that he can farm

additional land to the rear of the proposed property line. Many PC members commented that the applicant shouldn't be granted the waiver request and that the rear lot line should be extended to fall in line with the adjacent property. Without any corner pin marker, the applicant can continue to farm that additional portion of land since the minor subdivision will be owned by a family member. The PC believes that at some point in the future, the original farm parcel will be sold and further subdivided.

New Business – Mike Beatrice believes that the Township should have regulations in place for appointed Board members to annually sign a code of ethics stating that they will comply with the township ordinances and requirements and refrain from voting when they have a conflict of interest. Brooke Rush thought that it was a great idea, which Mike should pursue with the supervisors.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise Hermany
Planning Commission Secretary

Note: These minutes were written based on a review of tapes taken by Joe Marino.
(*These minutes are not considered official or approved until voted upon by the Planning Commission at a public meeting).