

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hilltown Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman David Christ at 7:30 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Also present were Planning Commission members Brooke Rush, Jon Apple, Eric Nogami, and Township Engineer, C. Robert Wynn.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Action on the minutes of the May 18, 2020 meeting – Motion was made by Mr. Apple, seconded by Mr. Rush and carried unanimously to approve the May 18, 2020 meeting minutes with the following corrections: Page 2, 6th paragraph down, the second sentence should read, “He continued to state he could support the proposal if some conditions were met in terms of the density, and he is in favor of reducing the allowable woodland disturbance from the 60% to something closer to 20% as long as there was an increase of the buffer requirements for the adjoining RR properties.” Page 6, E., second sentence should read, “Mr. Quigley stated only two people will be in the trailer on a daily basis so a holding tank will be sufficient, it will be serviced on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, and he agreed to connect to public sewer if there was an increase in sewage usage.” There was no public comment.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: None.

3. CONFIRMED APPOINTMENTS:

a) 1223 Keystone Drive Land Development Sketch Plan – Mr. Jeremy S. Madaras, PE, J. S. Madaras Consulting, LLC, was in attendance along with applicant Alfred Monte, Jr. IRA, to present the sketch plan for a proposed minor subdivision of three single family detached dwellings of 2.18 acres, 2.42 acres, and 2.40 acres, located on an existing 7.4 acre lot on Keystone Drive with an existing house and barn. Mr. Madaras stated he would like the Planning Commission’s opinion with respect to the interpretation of the subdivision. Per the Zoning and Subdivision code, since there is private water and sewer, the minimum lot area is three acres. Mr. Madaras has proposed a waiver to the definition of a minor vs major subdivision. A minor subdivision is classified as two lots and anything three or more lots would be a major subdivision. The definition of minor and major subdivision occurs only in the Subdivision and Land Development section of the code where the word “subdivision” is the only definition in the Zoning Code, and it does not differentiate between major and minor. He is looking for input in regard to support, comments, questions, concerns, etc. with that line of logic. Mr. Wynn stated there is a three-acre lot minimum by the Zoning Ordinance and it has never been modified or waived, and no one has ever brought this up. Discussion ensued on minimum lot size in regard to water and sewer systems, testing and design of sewage disposal facilities, and lot lines (de minimis deviation). Mr. Madaras stated that if the client does a minor subdivision, another minor

subdivision can be done directly after five years. If he cannot facilitate any support for the proposed configuration as is, they are more than willing to do a delay in terms of achieving the three lots immediately. The alternate proposal would be to subdivide off Lot 3 as an initial subdivision which would be over the 50,000 sf requirement, make minor adjustments to the lot line to achieve the 3 to 1 width to depth ratio, and make a small adjustment to the lot line that is not less than the 10°. The applicant would not have to ask for any waivers for width to depth or lot line configuration and in five years, they will have another minor subdivision. Mr. Wynn explained, getting a waiver of a requirement in the Subdivision Ordinance would be to avoid a requirement of the Zoning Ordinance because the three-acre lot minimum is in the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Wynn stated this is unprecedented in Hilltown Township since the Ordinance was adopted for three-acre lots. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that they are not in favor of calling this project a minor subdivision. Mr. Madaras stated they will revise the plan to do a minor subdivision of Lot 3 and follow in five years with Lot 2. Mr. Wynn stated they may show all of their sewage testing areas on the plan, but it may be a problem if they show the future subdivision of the three lots on the planning module. Mr. Madaras stated the requirement increasing the minimum lot size from 50,000 sf to three acres is a footnote in the appendix to the Zoning Code and it should be more prominently displayed. Mr. Wynn agreed and stated it did not use to be in an appendix; it was changed to the appendix when the ordinances were codified by the company many years ago. Mr. Rush added, by proceeding with the project in this manner, the applicant will avoid the Water Resources Impact Study. Since the project is a sketch plan, no action was taken.

b) Weidner Subdivision Sketch Plan – Mr. Ben Goldthorp, on behalf of applicant General Hancock Partnership, along with Mr. Robert Jordan, PE, Woodrow & Associates, were in attendance to present the 29 acre sketch plan for the proposed 21 single family detached dwelling units with access off of Seven Corners Road, East Rockhill Township (3-acres, four lots), and South Perkasio Road, Hilltown Township (26 acres, 17 lots), on a proposed cul-de-sac street. Two future reserve right-of-ways have been proposed with one out to South Perkasio Road and the other to the north from a neighboring property. General feedback and comments included:

1. Since the proposal is in two different municipalities with different codes, roadway widths, right-of-way, etc., a staff meeting with Hilltown and East Rockhill was suggested.
2. Steep slopes are an issue with the Hilltown access from South Perkasio Road and they would never be able to build a road to South Perkasio Road.
3. The more logical reserve access would be the one to the north in the vicinity of Lot 15 as a “T” intersection.
4. A thru road is not practical that is why they would prefer a cul-de-sac road.
5. The Subdivision Ordinance cul-de-sac maximum length is 500’ and the project proposes a 1,680’ cul-de-sac road.

6. Since East Rockhill has ½ acre lots and Hilltown has 50,000 sf lots, East Rockhill has suggested some amount of on street parking would be desired along with a 36' wide paved road. Hilltown has a minimum required cartway width of 26' (28' if curb is required) within a 50' wide right-of-way.

7. Intermunicipal Agreements will be needed.

8. The applicant stated the HOA could own and maintain the road along with maintaining the stormwater facilities but did state this was not discussed with East Rockhill. Mr. Wynn stated he does not think East Rockhill would go for that and Hilltown Ordinance prohibits a private street.

9. In some cases, there are set back portions of properties that are in two municipalities which will not be an issue in respect to Lot 19 and Lot 20.

10. The project may have more than one stormwater facility; possibility a rain garden or two.

11. An easement would be created up the side of Lot 19 for access to the stormwater facility which will be noted in the Declaration.

12. It was noted 12 lots are allowed in a cul-de-sac. A suggestion was made to limit the development to 12 units with the cul-de-sac, put in the easement to the next property, and if the property gets developed, continue on, and do the additional units later. It was also noted the 12-lot cul-de-sac maximum does not include the East Rockhill lots but the 500' maximum roadway starts at the intersection of Seven Corners Road.

13. Mr. Wynn stated snow plowing will need to be discussed with East Rockhill Township and it will be a problem if Hilltown Township is supposed to take care of the road because they have to come in from Seven Corners Road and drive through East Rockhill to get to the street.

14. East Rockhill has sanitary sewer in Seven Corners Road, Perkasio Regional Authority has water 500' up Seven Corners Road, and Hilltown Water & Sewer Authority has both water and sewer in South Perkasio Road. The way the site lays out, the high point is the cul-de-sac bulb and all flow travels towards either East Rockhill or South Perkasio Road. Majority of the lots do make sense to service gravity all to East Rockhill sanitary sewer. Whether or not East Rockhill will service all homes in both Hilltown and East Rockhill is up for discussion. Perkasio Regional Authority could serve the entire property. In the alternative, water could be brought up from South Perkasio Road. If sewer is brought up from South Perkasio Road, all of the homes would have to have a grinder pump to a gravity main.

15. It was noted sewer to Hilltown Township by East Rockhill was briefly discussed by East Rockhill. It was also noted East Rockhill Sewer is a department and not an authority and cannot go outside the boundary. Water and sewer will be discussed in more detail at a joint meeting.

Public Comment:

Sandra Corrado, 1309 Seven Corners Road, stated she owns the 17 ½ acres north of the proposed development and is concerned about how close the houses are going to be to her property line, the water drainage, and how this will affect her well and sewer.

Dave Leopold, 1203 Seven Corners Road and 1406 Seven Corners Road (East Rockhill), stated his concern over water, removal of woods and wildlife, road frontage, right-of-way, and his well. Mr. Wynn stated 20% of woods are allowed to be removed on the entire site and there are landscaping requirements for all stormwater basins and tree replacement requirements even though they are leaving some woods. Mr. Wynn stated this type of subdivision does not require open space and the number of units does not require a play area. Since the project is a sketch plan, no action was taken.

c) County Line Plaza Preliminary Land Development – Mr. Seth Gahman, PE, Bohler Engineering representing County Line Realty Associates, along with Ryan Guheen, Brixmor Properties, were in attendance to present the preliminary plan that proposes to develop a 5,750 SF multiuse building with a medical office (3,200 sf) and eating place (2,400 sf) with a drive thru, as well as redevelopment of an existing parking lot all located in the PC-1 Zoning District on the 16.033 acre shopping center along Route 113. Mr. Gahman stated zoning relief was verbally granted by the Zoning Hearing Board on June 11, 2020 for the drive thru use, increased impervious surface, and parking lot buffer yard planting requirements to permit two perimeter trees in lieu of the required seven perimeter trees. Mr. Gahman reviewed Mr. Wynn’s review letter dated May 5, 2020 and discussed the requested waivers and additional items as numbered in the review letter:

2. SMO Section 134-18, which requires that the stormwater BMP be designed to dewater over a minimum of 24 hours.

SMO Section 134-20.C, which requires existing impervious surfaces to be considered as “meadow in good condition” in the predevelopment condition, for the purposes of analyzing peak rate reduction.

SLDO Section 140-36.D, which requires sidewalk (six feet wide) along existing streets within commercial areas. Waiver is requested to permit sidewalk width to be reduced to a minimum of 3.5 feet to avoid conflict with existing utility poles along Route 113. Discussion ensued regarding continuing the sidewalk to where the Citizens Bank sidewalk ends and then along the frontage of the proposed project. Mr. Gahman stated the sidewalk to Citizens Bank is not their property or their responsibility. It was noted AutoZone extended their sidewalk to Citizens Bank. Mr. Wynn stated he does not see the 3.5 ft wide sidewalk being approved from PennDot because their minimum is 5 feet. Mr. Gahman stated ADA does allow “pinch points” that go down to 30 inches wide and PennDOT standard allows sidewalk down to 4 feet if there are passing areas. Mr. Gahman stated the plan still has to be sent to PennDot for review. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to deny the waiver of the sidewalk. The sidewalk design with “pinch points” is acceptable if approved by PennDOT. Sidewalk width shown as 6 feet may be reduced to 5 feet, but must extend 5 additional feet into the frontage of the adjacent bank property as similarly designed and approved by PennDot for the AutoZone development located at the intersection of Route 113/County Line Road.

SLDO Section 140-37.D, which requires that all parking areas be shaded to a minimum percentage of 50% of the impervious surface area of the parking facility. The applicant is agreeable to provide a capital contribution in lieu of waived parking lot canopy trees.

SLDO Section 140-37.G, which requires replacement of existing trees (having a diameter of 10 inches or greater) removed during construction. The applicant is agreeable to provide a capital contribution in lieu of eight waived replacement trees.

SLDO Section 140-45.C(2), which requires parking spaces to be setback a minimum of fifteen feet from property lines.

SLDO Section 140-45.G(1), which requires all 90-degree parking spaces to be a minimum of 9.5 feet wide by 19 feet deep. The Planning Commission agreed that bollards should be installed along the front of the building to prevent vehicle overhang of the sidewalk area.

SLDO Section 140-45.G(4), which requires a minimum of 20 feet of open space shall be provided between the outside wall of the non-residential building and any parking space to provide access for fire-fighting equipment. Mr. Gahman stated he will send the plan to Souderton Fire Company Station 74 for review.

3. Mr. Gahman stated he will send the plan to Dave Taylor to review the ADA accessibility.
4. Mr. Gahman stated the building design has not been determined.
6. Mr. Gahman stated the applicant is agreeable to the Township Solicitor to prepare the Stormwater Facility Operation and Maintenance Agreement for execution and recording.
7. Mr. Gahman stated the applicant has received the "will serve" letter for sanitary sewer facilities by Souderton Borough.
8. Mr. Gahman stated the applicant has received an adequate letter from the Bucks County Conservation District in regard to the proposed erosion/sediment control measures.
9. Mr. Gahman stated an opinion of probable cost has been submitted to Mr. Wynn and will be reviewed pending the completion of plan revisions.

Motion was made by Mr. Rush, seconded by Mr. Apple, and carried unanimously to recommend Preliminary Plan approval for County Line Plaza Land Development contingent upon Mr. Wynn's review letter dated May 5, 2020 along with the written decision of the Zoning Hearing Board must be received, the sidewalk design with pinch points is acceptable if approved by PennDot, and the sidewalk width shown as 6 feet may be reduced to 5 feet but must extend 5 additional feet into the frontage of the adjacent bank property. There was no public comment.

5. PLANNING: None.
6. ORDINANCES: None.
7. OLD BUSINESS:

a) 781 Minsi Trail Subdivision – Mr. Wynn noted Dave Christ, Chairman of the Planning Commission, executed the Planning Modules for the 781 Minsi Trail Subdivision per the conditions of the approval.

8. NEW BUSINESS: None.

9. PLANS TO ACCEPT FOR REVIEW ONLY: None.

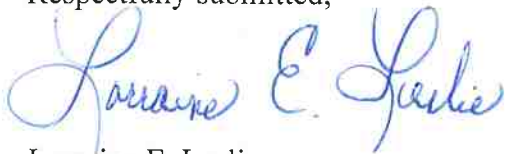
10. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

11. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS: Mr. Christ thanked the Police Officer for being present at the meeting this evening. Mr. Christ was told there was someone lined up to be the additional Planning Commission member and, hopefully, that person will be appointed soon.

12. PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

13. ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Mr. Nogami, seconded by Mr. Rush and carried unanimously, the June 15, 2020 Hilltown Township Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Lorraine E. Leslie
Township Manager/Treasurer

(*NOTE: These minutes were transcribed from notes and recordings and should not be considered official until approved by the Planning Commission at a public meeting).