

# East Whiteland Township

Planning Commission

Wednesday – February 26, 2020

## Minutes

**Members Present:** Deb Abel, Chair; Jeff Broadbelt, Vice-Chair; Peter Fixler; Dante Bradley; Todd Asousa; John Laumer; and Tim Kelly.

**Also Present:**

Zachary Barner, Director Planning & Development and Brittany Carosello, Planning Coordinator

**Call to Order:**

Ms. Abel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes:**

Approval of the January 22, 2020 meeting minutes.

Mr. Broadbelt noted he was not present at the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting and did not second Mr. Fixler's motion to approve the December meeting minutes. The January meeting minutes should be amended to reflect that Mr. Asousa was the one to second Mr. Fixler's motion.

**Action:** Mr. Fixler made a motion, seconded by Mr. Asousa, to approve the amended January minutes. The motion carried unanimously **(7-0)**

**Zoning Hearing Board Applications:**

1. [ZHB-06-2020 for Ducklings Early Learning Center](#) (Planebrook Partners, LLC) – Zoning Hearing Board application seeking a variance from §200-57.D.1,2,6 for disturbance of “very steep” slopes along the frontage of the property. This relief is associated with a Land Development application (LD-17-2019) for the construction of an 11,000 s.f. children's day care facility, parking lot, stormwater management, and associated improvements. The property, located at 105 Church Road, is within the R-1 (Residential) District.

Vic Kelly, engineer for the Applicant, explained that the Zoning Hearing Board has already granted relief for the use of a daycare at this location. The applicant now needs a variance to disturb areas of “very steep” slopes along the site frontage. The steep slopes that will be disturbed are man-made (likely from previous road construction). The slopes will be removed in order to gain access to the site and create improved site distance.

Mr. Bradley asked if there was a chance the applicant could share an entrance with the Hoover Financial office. Vic Kelly explained that there is a slope near the property line that would need disturbed in order to create an entrance from the existing Hoover Financial office entrance. This would also require similar zoning relief.

Ms. Abel asked if the applicant had any renderings of the proposed building. The building is intended to match the style of design of the Hoover office and historic house. Mr. Barner noted that because this property is within 200 feet of an historic building it would need to be reviewed by the Historic Commission.

Vic Kelly clarified that he and the applicant will return to the Planning Commission for Land Development review after they receive Zoning Hearing Board approval.

**Action:** Mr. Fixler made a recommendation, seconded by Mr. Broadbelt, to recommend approval of the requested variance to the Zoning Hearing Board. The motion carried **(7-0)**.

### **Land Development Applications:**

2. **LD-04-2020 for Uptown Worthington** (Worthington Associates Holding, L.P.) – Amended Master Plan and Amended Final Land Development Plan for Phase IV of the previously approved mixed-use redevelopment of the former Worthington Steel property. The current plan reduces the overall development yield and now includes a total of 19 buildings containing 466,712 s.f. of entertainment, retail, and restaurant space; 195,350 s.f. of commercial office; and 753 apartments units (including existing buildings already constructed). The current plans no longer contemplate structured parking. The property, located at the intersection of Morehall and Matthews Roads, is within the ROC/R (Regionally Oriented Commercial/Residential) District.

Attorney for the Applicant, Alyson Zarro, introduced herself and the engineer on the project, Mark Thompson. Ms. Zarro provided an overview of the project and explained that Phase IV of the project includes construction of a cinema, children’s pediatric office, and “building 3” - which will be designated as office and retail space. The total office space increased from 136,000 sq.ft. to 195,000 sq.ft. and the commercial space decreased from 700,000 sq.ft. to 466,000 sq. ft. The theatre will be branded as a Cinemark, a company based out of Dallas, Texas similar to Regal or AMC theatres.

Ms. Zarro acknowledged that she and her client plan to attend next month’s Planning Commission meeting after they receive engineering reviews and have time to make changes to the plan.

Frank Donohue of Trout Unlimited asked if the Stormwater Management plan would change or be replaced? Mark Thompson explained that all but 2 stormwater basins are functional and with the latest plan revision the amount of impervious coverage has decreased. The existing stormwater basins have shown to hold up during heavy rains.

Mr. Broadbelt asked about the occupancy on the apartments. Ms. Zarro responded that the apartments are currently 94% occupied.

3. **LD-15-2019 for WaterWalk Hotel** (Oakwood WaterWalk Hotel) – Preliminary / Final Land Development and Amended Master Plan application to construct a 153-room extended stay hotel, interior courtyard, surface parking, and stormwater management facilities. This project is associated with the Uptown Worthington Master Plan. The property, located at 85 Matthews Road, is within the O/BP (Office/Business Park) and ROC/R (Regionally Oriented Commercial/Residential) Overlay Districts.

Ms. Zarro, attorney for the applicant, asked the Planning Commission members if anyone had questions or comments regarding the review letters.

Mr. Broadbelt asked about the turning radius for the firetrucks and Mr. Asousa had questions about the brand affiliation of the hotel. Ms. Zarro explained the turning radius had been reviewed with Township staff. The hotel brand would be Oakwood Waterwalk.

Mr. Laumer asked where employees for the hotel would park? Mark Thompson, engineer for the applicant explained that there is a total of 174 parking spaces, 21 additional spaces over the amount of rooms. There is also a bus route nearby.

Mr. Thompson explained that part of the need to disturb steep slopes is to create a dedicated access road to the Township’s sewer meter pit.

Mr. Barner reminded the Planning Commission members that Land Development and Master Plan approval still requires Zoning Hearing Board approval (for disturbance of “very steep” slopes), Conditional Use approval (for disturbance of “steep” slopes), and overall compliance with review letters.

**Action:** Mr. Bradley made motion to recommend Preliminary/Final Master Plan approval contingent upon compliance with all Township review letters, as well as Zoning Hearing Board approval and Conditional Use approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Broadbelt, The motion carried **(7-0)**.

#### **Ordinance Amendments:**

4. The following Ordinance Amendment is scheduled for a public hearing before the Board of Supervisors on **March 11, 2020:** Ordinance amending the East Whiteland Township Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 200, Article XIII, Signs, Section 200-85, [Off-Premises Signs](#).

**Action:** Mr. Bradley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fixler, to recommend advertisement of the proposed ordinance amendment to the Board of Supervisors.

#### **Letter of Support:**

5. The Township is in the process of applying to Chester County for a [“Municipal Park and Trail Improvement Grant”](#) in the amount of \$100,000 to help support the construction of Phase 1 of the Bacton Hill Park Master Plan.

**Action:** Mr. Asousa made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fixler, to sign a letter in support of the township applying to Chester County for an Improvement Grant.

#### **Information Sharing:**

6. Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau undertakes the Decennial Census. Your response ensures that more than \$600 billion in federal funds are directed to state and local governments to fund critical services. Invitations to complete the 2020 Census will be mailed out mid-March. Residents can respond online, by phone, or by mail. For more information on the 2020 census you can visit the East Whiteland Township [website](#) or the 2020 Census [website](#).

#### **Adjournment:**

Ms. Abel adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

~ **Next Meeting** ~  
March 25, 2020  
(subsequently cancelled)