

East Whiteland Township

Planning Commission

Wednesday – October 28, 2020

Minutes

Virtual Meeting Livestreamed via Township Website

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

Also Present:

Zachary Barner, Director Planning & Development; Brittany Carosello, Planning Coordinator; Ted Locker, Zoning Officer; Steve Brown, Assistant Township Manager; Joe McGrory, Township Solicitor; James Craig, Deputy Township Solicitor; Darrell Becker, Township Engineer; Chris Williams, Township Transportation Engineer; and Tim Phelps, Co-Chair of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Committee & Member of Parks and Recreation Board.

Call to Order:

Ms. Abel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

Approval of the **September 29, 2020** meeting minutes.

Action: Mr. Bradley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Broadbelt, to approve the September meeting minutes.

The motion carried unanimously **(6-0)** [Note: Mr. Asousa was not present for this motion]

Introduction of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan:

1. The [draft PROS Plan](#) contains detailed analysis and recommendations regarding Open Space, Parks and Recreation Facilities, Trail Connectivity, Land Use Regulations, Programs & Services, and Organizational & Financial Considerations. This Plan will constitute an amendment to the Township's Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2016.

Steve Brown and Tim Phelps were in attendance to present the draft PROS plan. The plan is an amendment to the municipal comprehensive plan and addresses parks, recreation, and open space including trails throughout the Township. Mr. Brown explained the amendment needs to be reviewed by the planning commission for feedback and that he and Mr. Phelps can answer any questions. At next month's meeting, the Consultant Team will provide a more formal presentation.

Mr. Brown provided a memo to the Commission which included a brief introduction to the plan, consultant team, and a review of highlights that may be of primary interest to the Commission. Mr. Phelps explained the whole process morphed over 18 months, in which two public meetings were held with 50 to 60 residents in attendance. Mr. Brown expressed that the Township has an existing Parks & Recreation Plan, as well as various trails studies, but there has never been a plan that has addressed

open space. The plan is to designate an action team consisting of members from the Planning Commission, Park & Rec Board, Open Space Committee, and Environmental Advisory Council to monitor the plan and make sure it is being implemented.

Mr. Laumer wanted to know if certain parcels were identified as suitable for open space. Mr. Phelps and Mr. Brown both acknowledged that there are very specific goals and types of features that properties may have that the plan recommends the township pursue to preserve them. The Plan does not focus on specific parcels.

Mr. Kelly asks how funding will be procured. Once the plan is activated the Board can investigate the different avenues of funding - including grants, impact fees, or even a referendum. Mr. Brown expanded that the BOS have been setting aside money annually towards a potential open space fund.

Ms. Abel asked if any of the park and rec money that's paid by developers based on the park and recreation fee in lieu could go towards the open space fund. Mr. Brown explained the roughly \$2,800 per residential dwelling unit that's received by the township from developers is to go towards park acquisition and park development.

Some of the members thought the report was a bit aggressive on some of the specific improvements called out for individual parks but agreed that the plan is incredibly thorough.

Commission members were encouraged to make comments and ask questions concerning the draft plan and submit them to township staff. The adoption of the plan will go into the new year.

Development Applications:

2. [LD-08-2020 for 514 Lapp Road](#) (Builders, Inc.) – Preliminary / Final Land Development Application to construct an 11,150 sq.ft office / flex building, internal driveway, parking, and stormwater management facilities. The property, located at 514 Lapp Road, is within the O/BP (Office/Business Park) District.

Alyson Zarro, Joe Russella, Frank Tavani, and Greg Hill were all present to introduce the project and answer questions. Ms. Zarro, attorney for the applicant, explained that the applicant plans to move his general contracting business from Havertown to 514 Lapp Road. The 2.73 acre parcel is undeveloped and is located in the Great Valley Corporate Center. The parcel currently contains a stormwater basin which will remain and serves a portion of the Corporate Center. The applicant (Builders, Inc.) plans to house the office and clerical staff in the proposed building. The construction staff and project managers will likely not spend much time in the office often as they are out on project sites.

The applicant resubmitted plans recently and is waiting for responses and review letters from the township and consultants. Ms. Zarro addressed comments from the McMahan review letters, specifically pertaining to the township's multimodal transportation plan. The scale of the project is small, so the applicant is offering some alternatives instead of meeting all the specific requirements of the multimodal plan and road widening requirements. With the likelihood of other developments

occurring in the area, it makes more sense to have the applicant offer right of way to accommodate future improvements. The applicant would defer installation sidewalk along Lapp Road but offer a covenant to finish the remaining sidewalk when the surrounding pedestrian network develops. The applicant is also willing to offer an easement for a future trail connection, which is shown on the townships multimodal plan. The township has envisioned that when surrounding parcels are developed a trail could be connected from Mill Lane (near the Township Complex), through the Knickerbocker site, and out onto Old Morehall Road. If Lapp Road were to be extended out to Route 29, as has been proposed in the past, the trail could ultimately connect into Valley Creek Park.

Mr. Mcgrory explained to the Commission that a note can be added on the plan stating that once the Township gives notice the applicant, the applicant will have 1 year to install the trail or sidewalk.

Joe Russella, the applicants engineer explained the difficulties with adding in a trail where it is shown on the multimodal plan. In his opinion, it would be more accommodating to the natural landscape to relocate the trail to extend through the exiting railroad underpass beneath Old Morehall Road. Mr. Russella will work with township staff and consultants to find a solution and tentative location for a future trail.

The property contains a series stone ruins that are not on the townships historical resource list. The applicant will try to incorporate existing stone on the site to develop a sitting wall near the buildings entrance.

The existing storm water basin on the site will not be used for the future development of this site but for the already existing sites in the corporate center. The stormwater management proposed for this site would be an underground (manage release concept) under the parking lot.

The applicant prepared a report regarding the existing trees. John Hosbach, with JH Trees, created an inventory to assess the size, type, and health of the trees on-site.

The applicant is not seeking a recommendation for approval at this time.

3. [LD-10-2020 for 400 Three Tun Road](#) (DeMarco Real Estate, LLC) – Preliminary / Final Land Development Application to construct a 16,476 sq.ft office / flex building, internal driveway, parking, and stormwater management facilities. This project is associated with previous a Conditional Use Application (CU-10-2019) for disturbance of steep slopes and a Zoning Hearing Board Application (ZHB-01-2019) related to perimeter setbacks. The property, located at 400 Three Tun Road, is within the I (Industrial) District.

Chris Daily, engineer for the applicant presented the application and acknowledged the plans are on the third round of reviews, which at this time are relatively clean. Mr. Daily has submitted to the Chester County Conservation District as a part of the NPDES permit.

The Applicant, Steve DeMarco, explained that the future use of this site would be used for warehouses. About 6,000 square feet would be used by Mid Atlantic Mechanical and the rest of the building would be used as flex warehouse space for lease by another entity (to be determined).

The applicant is requesting 6 waivers from the township's ordinance regarding the reduction of parking spaces, sidewalk installation, and tree replacement. Mr. Daily explained that meeting the full replacement number on-site would be difficult. The Commission discussed sites for additional tree plantings. The Applicant offered to plant excess trees elsewhere, such as a township park.

Mr. Fixler is concerned about the steep slopes and wants proper replanting of trees to help mitigate any potential erosion issues. Mr. Daily explained that a retaining wall is proposed to help combat future issues. The vegetation within the right of way will not be disturbed.

Commission members discussed the parking lot configuration and drive lane sizes.

Action: Mr. Broadbelt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Asousa, to recommend Preliminary/Final land development approval to the Board of Supervisors - subject to compliance with all comments in the review letters.

The motion carried **(7-0)**

4. [LD-11-2020 for Science Pavilion](#) (Immaculata University) – Preliminary / Final Land Development Application to construct a 15,369 sq.ft building containing new classroom, laboratory, and office space to replace existing facilities elsewhere on the campus. The property, located at 1145 King Road, is within the INS (Institutional) District.

Kerry Jones, Neal Camens and Brett McKay, presented on behalf of Immaculata University. Mr. Camens explained the science building would be 1 story and would mostly be laboratory space for science and nursing students. The university will not be adding any additional students. This facility is meant to replace outdated lab space.

Mr. Jones explained that the university went from a 2-year nursing program to a 4-year nursing program. The new program has elevated the university's rank in nursing schools, making them the fourth highest ranked nursing school in PA. The new building will have mostly lab space, some offices, and a classroom space.

Roadway widening and traffic was discussed. The applicant is requesting a waiver from doing a traffic study. The applicant is also requesting waivers regarding stormwater. Mr. Becker does not have any specific concerns with the waiver requests.

Mr. Fixler questioned the applicant on the air quality safety given the current pandemic and potential use of a UV light cleaning process. Mr. Jones knows that the filtration systems in the new building will be the best they have on the campus. A UV lighting cleaning system that may be more efficient in the older buildings, the university hasn't found much scientific evidence that the UV lights would be more effective, but all options are being considered.

Mr. Jones expanded that he will be asking the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, whom Immaculata University leases the land from, to offer dedication to the township to expand the right of way on the northern side of King Road for a future trail or road widening. If the Sisters approve that will be noted on the plan.

Mr. Jones advised that this project is 90% funded, primarily through donations, and can be ready to break ground upon approval.

The applicant is not seeking a recommendation for approval at this time.

Public Comment:

No public comment

Adjournment:

Ms. Abel adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

~ Next Meeting ~
Tuesday - November 17, 2020
(due to Thanksgiving)