

# East Whiteland Township

## Planning Commission

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

### Minutes

(agenda items [linked](#) to online documents)

#### **Members Present:**

Todd Asousa, Vice-Chair; John Laumer; Jeff Broadbelt; Tim Kelly; and Bill Wrabley.

**Members Absent:** Deb Abel, Chair; and Dante Bradley

#### **Also Present:**

Zach Barner, Director of Planning & Development; Brittany Carosello, Deputy Director of Planning & Development; Bernadette Kearney, Township Solicitor; Braun Taylor, Township Solicitors Office.

#### **Call to Order:**

Regular Meeting beginning at **7:03 p.m.**

#### **Minutes:**

Consideration of the **May 24, 2023** meeting minutes

Mr. Broadbelt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Laumer, to approve the **May 24, 2023**, meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously **(5-0)**

#### **Conditional Use Applications:**

1. [CU-02-2023 for Chester County Intermediate Unit](#) (Chester County School Authority) – Conditional Use Application to permit a proposed educational use, a school along with playground areas and associated improvements for a maximum capacity of 170 students ranging from ages 4 to 21, and conditional uses pursuant to Sections 200-57.E(4) and F(1) to permit sewer lines in areas of steep slopes and very steep slopes. The property, located at 40 Moores Road, is within PO (Professional Office) District. A hearing before the Board of Supervisors is scheduled for the **July 12, 2023** meeting.

Debbie Shulski, attorney for the applicant introduced Joe Lubitsky, director of services for CCIU; Barry Singleton, landscape architect for the project and Brian Keaveney, Traffic engineer. The parcel known as unit 3 was associated with a previously approved Land Development plan for an office complex that was 150,000 to 200,000 square feet with 4 stories. The newly proposed school is a lesser intensity than the previously approved office use and is proposed to be 75,000 square feet and no more than 2 stories.

Joe Lubitsky is the director of administrative services for the CCIU. The CCIU has a board of directors which is made up of 1 representative from each of Chester County's school districts. The students who are enrolled in the CCIU range from the age of 4-21. The headquarters for the CCIU is in Caln township. The core service of the CCIU is to provide young people with special needs and the services necessary to guide them through life. The most intensive service for the students is handled at the Caln township location. The Caln township facility is currently at capacity of 350-360 students, with a waiting list of upwards of 120 students. The CCIU currently has an agreement with Avon Grove School district to lease property within the township.

There is a large growth within the eastern part of Chester County and the potential Great Valley campus can alleviate some of that growth. The 40 Moores road site is 22 acres. If the CCIU receives Conditional use approval, they will go through the Land Development process and will hope to begin construction in 2024 and hopefully open the school by the 2026 school year. The CCIU plans to open with approximately 125-130 students and will

possibly grow as the population of Chester County grows to 180 students. The districts are obligated to provide these types of programs for their students who need it and require the resources of the CCIU. Primary sending districts would be Great Valley, Tredyffrin, West Chester, Downingtown and possibly some Delaware county school districts.

The typical school day begins with staff entering the site around 7am-8am with students arriving around 8am-9am with a full day of education. Students leave around 2:30 pm and staff would leave around 3:30pm/4:30pm. There will likely be a maximum staff of 110, with a maximum student capacity at about 170 for a total of 280. Mostly the students arrive at staggered time as they are being transported from different areas of the County. Students mostly come in vans, smaller buses or are dropped off by parents, there are no student drivers. There are no night activities or sports. Programs include speech, mobility, behavioral therapy. There are simulated apartments for students who are learning basic life skills like cooking, laundry etc. The school would have 2 fenced in playgrounds.

There is school security and a response team set up to handle any incidents. There are very little police calls for this type of facility. There will be no court ordered students. The school will have many security systems in place such as cameras, automatically locking doors and additional security measures and software.

Barry Stingle, site and civil engineer for the project explained the layout of the property. The intermediate unit is proposing to purchase 2 of the units on the St. Gobain property. There is potential for some expansion in the future. Mr. Stingle explained the traffic flow for the property, explaining the circulation. There was discussion about the existing features. This plan is between 100,000 and 125,000 square feet less impervious than the approved office plan. There is an existing sewer line that runs behind the property for St. Gobain, the CCIU is proposing to come in behind the building which would disturb steep slopes. Conditional Use approval is required to disturb steep slopes. The previous office applicant did not receive Conditional Use approval, this matter was overlooked at the time of Land Development and was approved without Conditional Use. The previous applicant received a Chapter 105 permit to tie into an existing sewer manhole, the CCIU plans to do the same and use the same permit. There is flexibility for the alignment and there will be erosion control including silt socks for control. Retaining existing tree canopy is necessary and hope the applicant will do what they can to limit disturbance of the existing trees in that area.

All of the commission members are in support of the use and believe it is a good use for the township.

#### **Public Comment:**

Martin Lutz: Strongly supports the use of the property but would like staff and the applicant to be cognizant of the impact on the pristine woodland areas specifically in the rear of the property where the proposed sanitary sewer line is to be constructed. Mr. Lutz would like to see as much preserved as possible and would like the applicant to look at alternative pathways for the sanitary sewer line. He would like any planning commission recommendation to include the preservation of trees.

**Action:** Mr. Broadbelt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wrabley, to recommend Conditional Use approval to the Board of Supervisors contingent upon the applicant paying particular attention to the Staff Review letter and also contingent upon the applicant working to find the best path that would limit tree disturbance for the sanitary sewer line. The motion carried unanimously **(5-0)**

#### **Development Applications:**

2. [MP-03-2023 for Great Valley Corporate Center Redevelopment](#) (Philadelphia Suburban Development Corporation) – Master Plan Application to redevelop a portion of the Corporate Center in two separate phases of development. Phase 1 is proposed to include 270 Apartment units and 130 Senior Adult Housing units. Phase 2 is proposed to include a 304,000 s.f. Research & Development Facility. The property, situated west of Morehall Road (Route 29), south of Great Valley Parkway, and west of Old

Morehall Road, is within the O/BP (Office/Business Park) District and GVR (Great Valley Revitalization) Overlay District.

Lou Colagreco presented on behalf of the applicant explaining the previous ordinance that had been approved by the township. The previous submission was from Liberty and included a hotel, retail, and apartments with a maximum height of 75 ft. That ordinance has since been changed and downsized. The new applicant and owner is PSDC who will be working with Greystar to develop the residential portion of the project. The tract size is a minimum of 25 acres. The project will be developed in two phases, first is residential with about 400 apartments, phase two is 304,000 square feet of research and development with a parking structure. Mr. Colagreco introduced George Hayward from Greystar, Paul Lepard from Nave Newell, and Eric Ostimchuk from TPD.

There were many questions regarding the traffic improvements to Route 29, the traffic improvements are still happening but at a different scale as the project has been downsized. There will still be robust traffic improvements to route 29, involving 3 lanes that will neck down to 2. The historic structures will be retained.

George Hayward from Greystar explained the breakdown of the residential portion of the plan. There will be an age restricted component which will only be for rent for those age 55 and older. There will be 130 age restricted units spread between 2 buildings which will be broken down into 1- and 2-bedroom units. There will be 270 apartment units which will not be age restricted. The nonage restricted units will be broken down into studios, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms and 3 bedrooms ranging from 600 square feet to 1500 square feet. There will be 404 parking spaces for the apartment buildings. The buildings are built with the grade of the site in mind, creating a step-down appearance. The buildings will be between 4 and 5 stories. There will be a signal directly across from the Valley Creek Park entrance.

Many of the Planning Commission members echoed their disappointment with the idea of 3-bedroom units. The Commission members also would like to see more green space.

There will be an emphasis on pedestrian connectivity with this plan, which plans for trail connection a linear park and connection to the Valley Creek Park. Discussion included a tunnel under route 29 which was found to not be likely feasible. However, there will be a pedestrian crosswalk. There will be accessibility to the townships trail network which will connect to the proposed trail into the knickerbocker development through the Lapp Road commercial development at 512 Lapp Road. There was discussion about the significant grade from Old Morehall and the existing culvert on the site. Discussion included a tunnel under 29 which would be a very heavy financial undertaking.

The renderings of the residential portion of the Master Plan show appealing pitched roofs and stone materials showcasing a historic Chester County vibe. Each of the apartments would feature many amenities seen in newer apartment living. Mr. Hayward did say all renderings are preliminary.

3. [WLD-04-2023 for Peoples Pantry](#) (Covenant United Presbyterian Church) – Request for a Waiver of Land Development to construct a 660 s.f. addition for pantry storage at the rear of the building and a glass vestibule at the front of the building. The property, located at 384 Lancaster Avenue, is located within the FC (Frontage Commercial) District.

Jim Carr, engineer, member of the church and a Board member for Peoples Pantry presented the proposal to the Planning Commission. The proposal is to construct a covered vestibule area to be used for entry and a small shed to be used for storage. The proposal includes less than 1000 square feet of additional building coverage and under 500 square feet of disturbance. The project meets all setbacks except for the rear and side yard in which the applicant has received Zoning Hearing Board approval. The applicant would like to begin construction within 30 days of approval.

**Action:** Mr. Kelly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Broadbelt, to recommend a Waiver of Land Development approval to the Board of Supervisors. The motion carried unanimously **(5-0)**

**Ordinance Amendments:**

Consider formal recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the following [Amendments](#) to the Township Zoning Ordinance, following the discussion and initial recommendation at the May 24, 2023 meeting.

4. [Zoning Map and Text Amendment](#) related to Multifamily Route 30 (MF-30) Overlay District:
  - a. Text Amendment to existing ordinance language of the MF-30 Overlay District to create additional submission requirements, expanded architectural standards, revised language regarding height and number of stories, and additional references to other existing plans and ordinances.

**Action:** Mr. Asousa made a motion, seconded by Mr. Broadbelt, to recommend approval of the Zoning Text Amendment to the Board of Supervisors. The motion carried unanimously **(5-0)**

- b. Map Amendment to add three parcels at 310 Lancaster Avenue (42-4-309, 42-4-310.2, and 42-4-310) to the existing MF-30 Overlay District. The site is currently zoned FC (Frontage Commercial) and is improved with an existing boat dealership and repair facility.

**Action:** Mr. Asousa made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wrabley, to recommend approval of the Zoning Map Amendment to the Board of Supervisors. The motion carried **(5-0)**

**Public Comment:**

Peter from Trout Unlimited: Commented on the stormwater plans for the development and wanted to know how the applicant plans to handle the stormwater on the site. Mr. Lepard addressed Peters concerns and explained that the stormwater will discharge into an off-site basin. The applicant fully plans to comply with all township and NPDES stormwater requirements.

Stephanie McNichol submitted an email comment to the Planning Commission her comment was in opposition to the Map amendment regarding route 30.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 p.m.**