



UPPER UWCHLAN TOWNSHIP

Planning Commission Meeting

April 14, 2022

7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Approved

LOCATION: Township Building, 140 Pottstown Pike, Chester Springs PA 19425

In attendance:

Sally Winterton, Chair; Joe Stoyack, Vice-Chair; Chad Adams, David Colajezzi, Jim Dewees, Stephen Fean, Jim Shrimp, Jeff Smith

Mary Lou Lowrie, P.E. – Gilmore & Associates
Gwen Jonik, Planning Commission Secretary

Absent: Ravi Mayreddy

Sally Winterton called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. There were 7 citizens in attendance.

Byers Station Parcel 5C Lot 2B Commercial Lot ~ Amended Final PRD Plan - Introduction

Alyson Zarro, Esq., on behalf of Prosperity Property Investments, introduced the amended Plan for the currently vacant Lot at Pottstown Pike and Station Boulevard, proposing 1820 SF eating/drinking establishment, 13,200 SF of retail space, 10,500 SF daycare center and shared parking. Ms. Zarro noted that Equus had approval in 2019 for 2 pad sites but interest went dormant. There's a new client who would like to make changes. Richard Hoffman and Allan Greenberg of Celebree (the daycare center) would be the owner and developer and operate the daycare center. They propose the Iris Lane exit to Pottstown Pike; PennDOT's highway occupancy permit shows a dedicated left in turn lane traveling south on Pottstown Pike, a right in traveling north, and only a right-turn out. Stormwater will be managed through the basin on the other side of the Enclave, the townhouses.

The eating/drinking establishment is an 1,820 SF coffee shop or other fast causal food, with a drive through. The other pad will include the daycare center, and 2 retail stores -- 6,000 SF and 7,200 SF.

Richard Hoffman has been involved with Celebree Schools for 27 years; caring for infants through pre-K, plus before- and after-school care. Potentially 140 children, they serve a 3-mile radius, Monday-Friday 6:30 – 6:30. Parents drop the children off and go so parking needs are minimal. The retail sites could be pediatric in nature – a pediatrician or child dentistry. They have someone in mind for the eatery but not the retail sites. Architectural schematics were displayed. The facades visible from Pottstown Pike will look like the fronts of the buildings. There are design standards within the PRD approval. Pitched roofs except the restaurant looked flat and would be visible from Pottstown Pike.

Planning Commission members made comments regarding heavy traffic through this area at morning rush hour(s) and adequate stacking for the left turn in from southbound Pottstown Pike, use the Village Design Guidelines for architecture, adequate area for truck deliveries, fenced dumpsters.

Jeff Smith moved to accept the plans for consultants' review. Chad Adams noted they need to provide the maximum size truck that can move through the site. Following a second by Joe Stoyack, the motion carried unanimously.

Natural Lands Trust – Shryock Subdivision/Lot Line Change

Jack Stefferud of Natural Lands Trust (NLT) and Brian Nagel, Esq., landowners counsel and assisting NLT, were in attendance. Mr. Stefferud presented NLT's plan to purchase 2.7 acres of Shryock property, which includes the County's Struble Trail easement and the Dorlan's Mill miller's house, which is collapsing. The Struble Trail extension will connect with Marsh Creek State Park. The edge of the acreage will be the edge of the Struble Trail, and the State will then own the parcels. There is a pre-existing utility easement. The Township Zoning Hearing Board granted variances April 13, 2022. Several waivers are requested; the consultants had no objection to most, but the waiver from the historic impact statement was deferred to the Township Historical Commission (HC). The HC does not want the Board of Supervisors to waive the Applicant providing the impact statements and would like to see the miller's house, or a portion thereof, preserved in some manner. They suggested a number of options and asked that experts in the field take a look at the condition of the house prior to consideration by the Board. Mr. Nagle distributed a letter from Skip Brion, Esq., counsel for the County, and summarized it as follows: that the County has worked for 15 years to connect the Struble Trail to the Park; this parcel is the last gap; the County would like to construct the trail this year; the County supports the zoning variances and the approval of the lot line change; and it is hoped that the Township will waive the historic impact statements and allow the miller's house to be demolished and a plaque constructed detailing the history of the house.

Discussion included: the letter says the State won't take the parcel if the house remains and NLT is not interested in the parcel then; Shryock owns the property and didn't improve the house over the last 15 years; perhaps the foundation or footprint of the house could be preserved; a plaque can be erected; demolition would include removing the roof, the structure would be collapsed into the basement, and there will be enough rubble to fill the basement as well as spreading some of it up the hillside; NLT doesn't have the funds to do more than that; several members would like to see at least the foundation remaining; some members think the house has lost all the historic significance; the trail is more important; have an artist create a rendering of the mill and house for the plaque; researching grants for preservation would add years to the project, with the house further deteriorating; adaptive reuse of the structure is not feasible; if the HC makes recommendations, the Board should follow; the Board could decide to spend the money to buy the property and restore the house but there's not enough safe structure left - it'd have to be knocked down and rebuilt; perhaps the Board should consider dedicated funding for open space or historic preservation; investigate the cost to leave the foundation walls or footprint preserved.

The waiver regarding the 50' ultimate right of way was discussed. Mr. Nagle noted it's a State road, there's not enough room for that and it's not necessary. PennDOT approved the trail crossing without requiring the road be widened.

Chad Adams moved to recommend approval of the lot line change, granting of the waivers and that the applicant should construct an historical marker on the site to be reviewed with the Historical Commission. Jim Dewees seconded, and the motion carried with seven (7) in favor and one (1) abstention (Stoyack).

Approval of Minutes

Joe Stoyack moved, seconded by Jeff Smith, to approve as presented the minutes of the March 10, 2022 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Open Session

Joe Stoyack advised the Comprehensive Plan update is moving forward. An email address will be posted on the website for residents to provide comments and suggestions regarding the Plan.
CompPlan2024@upperuwchlan-pa.gov

Gwen Jonik noted the current ordinances editorial and legal analysis responses were submitted to General Code and they are reviewing our responses.

Adjournment

Jim Dewees moved, seconded by Chad Adams, to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen A. Jonik
Planning Commission Secretary

6:00 p.m. Work Session

Topics discussed:

1. Parking, shared parking in the Village, overnight parking in cars or RVs in residential areas, commercial areas – Police or property owner, not zoning; shared parking needs conditional use approval; let businesses enter into agreements with each other; perhaps annually report to the Township that they're meeting their requirements; parking impacts occupancy; overflow parking; propose revision so businesses don't need conditional use or special exceptions; if subdivision is required, okay, otherwise perhaps conditional use should be necessary.
2. Overlay Districts F1, F2, PRD. How many eligible properties remain; pros and cons of deletion.