

Gerald Delong called the Regular Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, May 7, 2007. Planning Commission Members present included Doug Worley, Keith Kneipp, Robert Yothers, Kyle Koffel, and Robert Flosdorf. Assistant Township Manager Jamie P. Worman, Township Engineer Cynthia Van Hise and Watson Olszewski from the Montgomery County Planning Commission were also present for this meeting. Kerrin Musselman was absent from the meeting. (Excused)

Mr. Delong started by opening the meeting up to the public requesting that if the concerns were in regards to something on the agenda that it wait until that item was up for discussion. No public comment was made at that time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Worley made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2007 regular Planning Commission Meeting. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

Todd Walker Subdivision – Mininger Road (#12-05)

Ms. Worman informed the group that revised plans had been submitted for this project earlier that day and reviews were pending. No further discussion took place on this application.

Donald & Linda Hagey Subdivision – Schoolhouse Road (#16-05)

Ms. Worman reported that the PennDot issues have been resolved in regards to this project. Ms. Worman also reported that the applicant's engineer was finalizing the plans and hoped to have a resubmission within a week or so. No further discussion took place on this application.

The Weimer Group Land Development- Rte. 113 & Schoolhouse Rd. (#03-06)

Mr. Zach Ranstead of Stout, Tacconelli & Associates was present to discuss this application. Mr. Randstead reported that revised plans had been submitted in April and reviews were received back from the township engineer. He continued that he had no real issues to discuss as all the remaining items were minor clean-up issues that they would address. He then introduced the Herzog's who were present to represent their support of the existing vegetation buffer. Mr. Randstead reminded

the group that the applicant was proposing a 20-foot landscape buffer on the Herzog's property that the Weimer Group would help maintain. Mr. Herzog confirmed that they did not see the need for additional buffering. A photograph of the existing vegetation was presented to the commission. Mr. Herzog continued that there were a few open areas that they would agree to plantings if required but they were okay with the current buffer. Mr. Ranstead then mentioned that obtaining a drainage release from the Peter Becker Community was mentioned in the Metz letter. He noted that in the past Peter Becker was verbally okay with the drainage release so they did not anticipate a problem getting that in writing. Mr. Delong asked if the curb situation had been resolved with PennDot. Mr. Ranstead replied that so far PennDot has not commented on the design and therefore, they don't anticipate an issue. Ms. Van Hise explained that her concern was that PennDOT may ask for a revised curb radius to provide a greater separation between the proposed curb line and the existing traffic signal pole. Ms. Van Hise confirmed that PennDOT has reviewed these plans twice and has not brought this up as an issue. Mr. Delong asked if she was comfortable with what was currently proposed. Ms. Van Hise confirmed that she was okay with it. Mr. Flosdorf asked if parking was still an issue. Mr. Ranstead replied that it had been addressed. Ms. Van Hise then informed Mr. Ranstead that he needed to provide a revised waiver request due to the changed plantings in the buffer area. Mr. Ranstead then requested that the project be considered for preliminary plan approval or that an expedited review of the revised plans be considered. Ms. Van Hise replied that she would support either request. Ms. Worman confirmed that Ms. Van Hise was comfortable with the curb radius. Ms. Van Hise replied yes. Mr. Koffel made a motion to recommend the application for conditional preliminary approval to the board of supervisors. Mr. Flosdorf seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ken Taggart Subdivision- 521 Cowpath Road (#05-06)

Ms. Worman informed the group that a recommendation for denial would be necessary if an extension of the 90-day time limitation was not received prior to the next board of supervisors meeting. Mr. Kneipp made a motion to deny the plan in the absence of an extension. Mr. Koffel seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

Reformed Baptist Church Subdivision (#09-06)

Mr. Brad Clymer of Richard C. Mast Associates gave a quick update on this project. He reported that it had gone before the board for a conditional use hearing on April 16th, 2007. He also

mentioned that they are currently working out stormwater details before resubmitting. No further discussion took place on this application.

MCC Resource Center Land Development (#13-06)

Mr. Brad Clymer of Richard C. Mast Associates was present to discuss this application. He explained that he wanted to discuss in detail the waivers and frontage improvements listed in the Metz letter dated January 4, 2007. He started by reporting that the 50-foot buffer was no longer shown on the plans because it is not needed since it is an easement. Therefore, the building setback is actually at the edge of the easement. Mr. Clymer then mentioned that the original proposal showed no internal curbing. He reported that he reviewed the drainage of the site and added curbing to the areas where he felt it was needed. The curbing was added to the lower end of the building near the aisle way and along the lower side of the site to the radii. He explained that it was not needed in the parking area and that there would just be bumper blocks there. Mr. Clymer mentioned that the group was a non-profit organization and is looking to keep cost down but feel the curbing proposed would handle the stormwater. Mr. Clymer then moved on to discuss frontage improvements. He explained that they are interested in proposing improvements along the portion of the site that they are actually developing. This would leave the other portion to be improved when development occurred. He explained that they now show widening of the road at 20-feet. He then asked if sidewalks would be requested in this area. Mr. Delong replied that a trail along the easement would be desired and perhaps a deferral of sidewalk would be possible. Mr. Clymer asked for feedback on the idea of splitting the property and doing the improvements for the portion of the site being developed. Mr. Delong asked if the upper portion was owned by MCC. Mr. Clymer replied yes but that the side across the street had been condemned and he was unsure of the status of that. Mr. Clymer mentioned that he did think all the stormwater facilities would have to go in now for the entire track. Ms. Van Hise noted that if the upper portion never developed nothing would ever be done to that frontage. Mr. Kratz, a member of the MCC organization, mentioned that at one point there was a plan to straighten Souder Road in conjunction with the East/West Connector Project. He continued that that was no longer on the table and they were concerned of putting in frontage improvements only to have the road realigned changing their frontage. Mr. Delong replied that when things develop that is the opportunity to get the improvements completed and the only thing the commission could really do would be to defer to the board of supervisors. Mr. Clymer then mentioned that he thought it would work to widen the roadway up to the driveway and then terminate it after that. Ms. Worman asked Mr. Clymer if he had spoken to the Public

Works Director to see what he wanted out there. Ms. Van Hise replied that he had wanted full frontage improvements. Mr. Clymer replied that he would be in favor of meeting with the Public Works Director to discuss. Mr. Clymer then asked what the position was on the internal curbing. Mr. Yothers replied that if the stormwater works then he saw no problem with it. He continued that the other items would have to be deferred to the supervisors for their input. Ms. Worman offered to try and schedule the project on the next work session agenda for discussion. Ms. Worman informed the group that a recommendation for denial would be necessary if an extension of the 90-day time limitation was not received prior to the next board of supervisors meeting. Mr. Worley made a motion to deny the plan in the absence of an extension. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

Lincoln Woods Subdivision (#01-07)

Mr. Richard Parry of T.H. Properties was present to discuss this application. Mr. Parry gave an update on the Lincoln Woods project. He reported that the project had gone before the board for a conditional use hearing on April 16th, 2007. He also reported that revised plans had been submitted earlier that day. The revised plans show an additional 25-foot buffer along the PA Turnpike bringing the total buffer to 50-feet. He noted that small berms were also added to further increase the buffering. He then reported that changes to the trail extension into Lower Salford had been made at their request. The trail will now go through the woods and then down to Yoder Road connecting to East Wood Road and also along Yoder Road into Summerwind 2. The trail would also extend out to Kulp Road. He then handed out a minimized copy of the plan along with a few pictures of the frontage along Kulp Road. Mr. Parry mentioned that they were currently having an issue with the amount of room available for the frontage improvements along the Ruth Property on Kulp Road. He explained that with the road widening there would not be enough room for the sidewalk. He mentioned that they were discussing possibly extending the sidewalk to Schoolhouse Road instead. Ms. Van Hise clarified that their plan was to tie the sidewalk into the trail and eliminate it in front of the Ruth Property and then extend it up to Schoolhouse Road. Mr. Parry replied that that was the plan. Ms. Van Hise suggested the situation be discussed with staff. Two Lower Salford residents stood up to ask questions about the proposed development. Mr. Matt Holliday of 101 Arrow Lane, Harleysville and Ms. Robin McLaughlin of 103 Surrey Lane, Harleysville were both present to raise their concerns with the proposed project. Mr. Matt Holliday stated that he had two issues with the project, trails and drainage. He continued that a portion of the proposed trail runs right along his back property line and the added traffic concerned him because he has small children. He stated

that he was mainly concerned with the trail and asked that it be removed in that section or shifted. Mr. Kneipp asked if there was sidewalk in the front of the lots along Garland Court and if there was a buffer between the trail and the property line. Ms. Van Hise replied that a buffer was not required in that area. Mr. Parry replied that there was sidewalk in front of the lots and that landscaping would be provided along the trail. Ms. Van Hise then noted that the trail was 10 feet off of the property line and there was no requirement stating it needed to be a certain distance off of a property line. Mr. Kneipp then asked how cars would be kept off the trail. Mr. Parry replied that the trail would intersect with the sidewalk with curb. Mr. Worley added that bollards could be added. Mr. Holliday commented that he was more concerned with the additional foot traffic. Mr. Delong noted that Lower Salford has trails throughout the township and that there has never been any issues. Mr. Worley added that the concern is safety and most of the time there is no history to support that concern. Ms. McLaughlin then added that her property was also very close to the trail and she felt they would be greatly impacted by a trail. Mr. Worley replied that the private homeowner may need to consider buffering or putting up a fence but the trail is for the public good and a trail is a benefit overall. Mr. Holliday asked if it could just get put someplace else. Mr. Parry replied that perhaps they could move the trail closer to the THP houses and move the plantings to the Lower Salford side. Mr. Holliday then explained that his sump pump and the pumps of his neighbors currently discharge into the farmer's field. He questioned whether the pumps would drain right over the trail. Ms. Van Hise replied that she would make sure they would not discharge over the trail. Ms. McLaughlin added that she was greatly concerned with the drainage. Mr. Worley replied that she should find that the drainage is better when the development goes in. Ms. Van Hise added that Franconia Township always pays close attention to concerns regarding drainage and any issues would be addressed. Mr. Holliday asked again if there was any way that portion of the trail along his property line could be removed. Mr. Worley and Mr. Delong both stated that they did not support removing the trail. Mr. Flosdorf asked why the trail couldn't be removed or put somewhere else if there is drainage concerns. Mr. Koffel noted that if you remove that portion of the trail it wouldn't really interfere with the rest of the trail throughout the development. He continued that the bottom portion could be removed and those property owners would still have access to the trail. The commission then decided to take a vote on removing that portion of the trail from the plan. The commission voted with the majority in favor of removing it from that area. Mr. Olszewski asked if there had been any consideration given to a recreational facility. Mr. Parry said that they had considered it but decided that the buyer of these types of houses will be older and a tot lot would not

fit with the development and would not be desired by the homeowner. No further discussion took place on this application.

Guidemark Land Development (#02-07)

Ms. Worman informed the group that a recommendation for denial would be necessary if an extension of the 90-day time limitation was not received prior to the next board of supervisors meeting. Mr. Worley made a motion to deny the plan in the absence of an extension. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

New Business

Albert & Kathleen Yoder Minor Subdivision (#03-07)

Mr. Worley made a motion to formally accept the subdivision application of Albert & Kathleen Yoder. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

Paul Miller Minor Subdivision (#04-07)

Mr. Worley made a motion to formally accept the subdivision application of Paul Miller. Mr. Flosdorf seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

Ms. Worman reported that the Church of Latter Day Saints had made application to the Zoning Hearing Board to permit a church in a residential district. The church is looking to develop a property along Route 113 across from Maple Avenue. She reported that a hearing is scheduled for Monday, May 14th, 2007.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Eric Dull of Limerick Properties was present to discuss a sketch plan. He addressed the commission and gave an overview of his plan. He explained that the company he represents was interested in purchasing the two separate properties at the corner of Allentown Road and Souder Road. The rear lot would be developed as a site for contractor storage which was permitted through the current zoning. The corner lot would be developed as a daycare center which is only permitted as an accessory use. He then explained that the entrance would be situated on Souder Road for

safety purposes, and they would probably use a shared driveway for both facilities. He mentioned that the daycare center is being proposed on a parcel that is 3.8 acres, which was more than enough space. He also mentioned that the need is supported by the demographics of the area. The demographics indicate that there are 4,200 children in a 3-mile radius ages 0-5 and 9,000 children ages 0-5 in a 5-mile radius. He explained that the facility would handle approximately 180-190 children and it would be governed by state law. He also noted that the owner is a national organization. Mr. Dull then repeated that the daycare is permitted as an accessory use but they are planning on keeping the lots separate and the daycare would not be accessory to the contractor business. He then commented that they felt a contractor storage area would be an ideal use of the back parcel. He then reported that he had presented this information to the supervisors at a work session and they did not oppose it. However, they were interested in gathering information about the rateables. Mr. Flosdorf asked if there would be offices in the storage building. Mr. Dull replied that there would be a small office in each space. Mr. Delong asked if there would be only one tenant. Mr. Dull replied that it would be a flex space with multiple tenants. Ms. Worman noted that a zoning hearing board approval would be needed to permit an accessory use to be a stand alone use. Mr. Dull replied that he did not believe it would be necessary to go through a hearing. Ms. Worman replied that they would have to look into it. Mr. Worley commented that it seemed like a good use of the properties.

Ms. Worman then reported that a conditional use application had been submitted by Abram and Phyllis Godshall. The applicants are interested in subdividing off a 2-acre lot in the Rural Resource District which requires a conditional use approval. Ms. Worman distributed the application and plans to the commission, and asked that they forward any issues to Mr. Baver's attention prior to the hearing. The hearing is scheduled for Monday, May 21st, 2007 at 5:00 p.m.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled Planning Commission meeting is Monday, June 4, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

There was no further business discussed at the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie P. Worman, Assistant Township Manager