

MINUTES
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
1031 VALLEY FORGE ROAD, WORCESTER, PA 19490
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21st, 2024 - 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03PM

2. ATTENDANCE

All members were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the October 24, 2024 Planning Commission meeting was made by Mr. Koch and seconded with a correction by Ms. Taylor. They were approved unanimously.

4. EAGLE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Kenny Earnshaw presented an Eagle Scout Project. He wishes to create an orienteering course at Heebner Park and host an event.

Mr. Sherr asked what would be left at the park, who would be financing, and who would be the target user.

Mr. Earnshaw responded that there would be permanent markers and a map on the website. The project would also be financed by the scout through fundraising. He also stated that he would do a wide range of social media and word of mouth to promote the new course. The orienteering posts would not interfere with any current activities.

Mr. Andorn asked about the location of the markers and suggested marketing to other scouting organizations.

Mr. Earnshaw responded that the markers would be near existing paths.

A motion to recommend approval was made by Mr. Andorn and seconded by Ms. Greenawalt. The motion was approved by unanimously.

5. WORCESTER TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE UTILIZATION AND ACQUISITION ANALYSIS

Dan DeMeno, Township Manager, presented a laminated topographical map of an open space parcel in the Township. He explained that he could produce one for each open space parcel and Planning Commission members could mark them up with dry-erase markers at future meetings when discussing open space utilization.

Chair Tony Sherr asked about Mr. DeMeno's research into the legal case at Upper Pottsgrove related to the utilization of open space for a Township administration building.

Mr. DeMeno indicated that that case is not applicable to open space parcels in Worcester Township as none of Worcester's parcels were paid for by funding provided by the County to purchase open space.

Mr. Andorn asked about that Mr. DeMeno create a page for open space on the website showing the large maps, photos, and a profile for each open space parcel listing existing amenities and plans for the future.

6. **LAND DEVELOPMENT**

Consider Recommendation for approval of LD 2024-02 Bradford Minor Subdivision at 3120 Fisher Road.

Paul Yaskowski of Urwiler & Walter, Inc. introduced himself as the applicant's engineer. He indicated that the project included the subdivision of a 10-acre parcel into two lots.

Mr. Brad Smith, applicant and property owner, discussed the history of the parcel including its progression from a farm owned by his parents to a residence and woodworking shop owned and operated by him and his wife. Mr. Smith asked Ms. Suzanne Ryan from PECO to speak about the PECO property that borders his property.

Suzanne Ryan, representative from PECO, informed the Planning Commission that PECO took no issue with Mr. Smith's existing encroachments onto its property as Mr. Smith cooperated with PECO to facilitate the construction of their electric substation bordering his property. She stated that PECO supported Mr. Smith's proposed minor subdivision.

Mr. Yaskowski discussed the Township Engineer's review letter and read a list of waivers from the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance requirements his applicant was requesting including sidewalk and curbs, lot line orientation, street trees, and buffers. He also indicated that the applicant had received relief from the Zoning Hearing Board for existing accessory structures, the woodworking use, and subdivision permission.

John Evarts, Township Engineer, requested that Mr. Yaskowski provide copies of the previously-mentioned Zoning Hearing Board decisions. He also requested a formal letter from PECO permitting the previously-mentioned encroachment. Mr. Evarts further indicated that the buffer is recommended because there is currently none between the newly proposed home and the PECO powerline property. Additionally, he stated that the property line issue could be a problem for future owners as it is an irregular shape.

Mr. Yaskowski reiterated that the proposed property line would be 15 feet off of the existing driveway and would be easily identified because of that.

Mr. Sherr asked if there were any comments from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Andorn indicated he was in favor of the proposed minor subdivision, but would like to see a cleaned-up plan and review before making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Sherr suggested the Planning Commission could grant a conditional recommendation for approval to the Board of Supervisors conditioned upon the applicant revising the plan and complying with the Township Engineer's requirements.

Mr. Andorn indicated that a similar project was before the Planning Commission last month and that the Planning Commission withheld a recommendation until that applicant came back with cleaned-up plans and reviews.

Mr. Evarts indicated that a conditional recommendation for approval could be issued by the Planning Commission and those conditions would need to be met before going in front of the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Mr. Sherr asked if there was any public comment on the matter.

Ms. Susan Smith, Mr. Brad Smith's sister, spoke in support of the project, spoke highly of her brother's character, and spoke highly of her brother and sister-in-law's sense of aesthetics.

Mr. Ludovico Cognata of 3209 Barley Lane has been living on his property for 34 years and indicated that Mr. Smith is an outstanding neighbor. He hopes the Township will approve what Mr. Smith is asking for.

Wini Hayes of 3033 Fisher Road has been Mr. Smith's neighbor for 37 years and couldn't ask for better neighbors. She also stated that Mr. Smith's parents preserved a farm. Ms. Hayes stated she and her husband are in support of the subdivision.

Mr. Koch made a motion to recommend approval of the minor subdivision with the requested waivers conditioned upon addressing outstanding comments and submitting revised plans to satisfy Township requirements, Ms. Greenawalt seconded the motion, and the motion passed 4-0-1 with Mr. Andorn abstaining.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Zoning Ordinance Amendment concerning Accessory Structures

Mr. Sherr suggested the inclusion of the word "shall" in the language of the ordinance.

Mr. DeMeno introduced the current draft of the amendment.

Mr. Andorn asked about a definition for an accessory structure and is concerned about the possibility of confusion without one. He also questioned the number of structures and the dimensional standards for different lot sizes. Mr. Andorn also stated his concern that people might stack multiple sheds exploiting a potential loophole in the proposed amendment. He was also concerned with the five-foot setback requirement and indicated that it may be intrusive. Mr. Andorn expressed another concern that someone could build a detached garage and later connect it to the principal dwelling exploiting yet another potential loophole with the proposed amendment. He also indicated that he would like to see the maximum height limited to twenty-five feet as it currently stands for detached garages. Mr. Andorn further identified a contradiction with section "G" concerning decorative structures.

Mr. DeMeno indicated he would look into all of these concerns and come back with a revised draft addressing what he could.

Ms. Greenawalt asked whether there was going to be a definition for an ADU.

Mr. DeMeno indicated that ADU's were not being addressed with this proposed amendment.

Mr. Sherr concurred with Mr. Andorn that Accessory Structures should be defined.

Mr. DeMeno once again expressed appreciation for the feedback and indicated he would come back with a revised draft.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill McGrane spoke to support the creation of topographical maps of the township parks and properties.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.

active applications (*review period expiration*)

- LD 2017-02 Palmer Village, LLC (*review period waived*)
- LD 2022-01 City View (*review period waived*)
- LD 2024-01 Wangia Subdivision (*review period waived*)
- LD 2024-02 Bradford (*review period waived*)