

Lower Heidelberg Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Lower Heidelberg Township Planning Commission was held at the Township Building, 720 Brownsville Road, Sinking Spring, on the above date. Present were: Chairman Michael Levan, Vice-Chair Neal Nevitt, Members William Moser, Edward Emery and Dean Hartman, and Alternate Heath Kearney. Also attending were Township Solicitor Robert Tucker and Township Engineers Glenn Neuhs (SSM), Ryan Rhode (Kraft) and Engineer Pamela Stevens (SDE).

Mr. Levan called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. The minutes from the February 13, 2017 regular meeting and the March and April work sessions were reviewed. **On Motion** by Mr. Levan, seconded by Mr. Nevitt, to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 13, 2017 and the work session minutes for March and April, as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Westerly Tract Annexation Plan

There was no one present for the applicant. Mr. Levan explained that the annexation plan for the Westerly Tract was previously approved by the Township in 2015. The original plan included lot line changes and a lot annexation. The applicant recently communicated to the Township consultants that he proposes a minor change to the plan, which involves eliminating one of the residue parcels, which is currently part of the annexed lot to be conveyed to Forrest Stricker. Mr. Neuhs stated that the wording on Note 5 of the plan has been changed; the County Land Preservation Board should review the new wording to make sure that the revised note is acceptable. Mr. Rhode suggested that the language be reviewed by the Berks County Conservancy. Ms. Stevens noted that the revised plan was not formally submitted to the Township office. The applicant is proposing a major change to the wording of Note 5, which could ultimately result in the Township being in the position of approving a residential dwelling. Mr. Rhode said that with this change to the plan, the applicant should have been available to present the change to the Planning Commission. Mr. Tucker was asked to communicate to Mr. Crotty that the Planning Commission is not prepared to approve the change to the plan at this time. Ms. Stevens suggested that either the Solicitor or the Township office should communicate directly to the applicant that he should attend the next planning meeting.

Time Extensions

Mr. Levan explained that a request for a six month time extension was received from the engineer for the Timberlake Lot 20 Subdivision project. The request has been made in order to allow the applicant to obtain DEP approval to build on an area previously designated as wetlands. Mr. Rhode reported that he spoke with the applicant's engineer; they have engaged an environmental consultant who is running tests to make sure the wetlands are no longer present. They will be seeking a letter of concurrence from DEP; once they obtain the letter, they will appear before the Planning Commission. Mr. Nevitt noted that the Planning Commission normally approves time extensions for 90 days; this would move the deadline to November 6th, which falls between Supervisor meetings. Mr. Nevitt suggested that extending the date to November 21st would allow the Board to act at their November meeting if an action is required.

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On Motion by Mr. Levan, seconded by Mr. Nevitt, to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to grant approval of the extension request for the Timberlake Lot 20 Subdivision project until November 21, 2017. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Levan noted that the next workshop meeting will be held on June 28, 2017 and will begin immediately after the Regional Planning Commission scheduled for 7:00 p.m. that evening at the Lower Heidelberg Township building.

Ms. Stevens reported that a letter was received from the DEP regarding the Longview property on Route 422, which has sat vacant for many years. The Township recently met with a developer who is interested in building on the site. The proposal is a mixed use development that will include apartments and commercial buildings. There is a question on the sewer capacity; the Township has set aside 12,000 gallons that can be utilized, and the applicant plans on using partial capacity from South Heidelberg Township, but will still be short of the required capacity. Ms. Stevens reached out to DEP to see if other options, including an on-lot system, could be used. DEP has responded that using on-lot systems will trigger Chapter 71, 72 and 73 of the sewage planning codes, which will require a higher per day EDU figure to be used for the apartments. DEP states that the developer could move forward with a planning module application, but cautions that the commercial units cannot be tied into the on-lot systems, but must utilize public sewer. Mr. Nevitt noted that the property is not zoned for residential use, and will require either a zoning change or an overlay district. Mr. Levan questioned whether the property is large enough to handle an on-lot system. Ms. Stevens noted that DEP will make that decision.

Mr. Levan asked if the Gaul Road Townhome project, currently at sketch stage, has sufficient sewer capacity. Ms. Stevens affirmed that it does. Mr. Levan asked if there was any movement on the project; Mr. Rhode noted that the applicant has been working through issues with the steep slopes, but it is his understanding that they will be moving forward.

Public Comment

Mr. Levan asked if there was any public comment; there was none.

Adjournment

On Motion by Mr. Levan, seconded by Mr. Nevitt, to adjourn at 7:37 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Conners, Recording Secretary



Approved on: August 14, 2017