

**DERRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 11, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER

The Tuesday, December 11, 2018 Derry Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Derry Township Municipal Complex, Administration Building, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, PA, by Chairman Glenn Rowe.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present: Glenn Rowe, Chairman; Don Santostefano, Vice Chairman; Joyce St. John, Secretary; Matt Tunnell; Tom Wilson

Commission Members Absent: None

Also Present: Chuck Emerick, Director of Community Development; Matt Bonanno, HRG, Inc.; Diane Myers-Krug, Dauphin County Planning Commission representative; Jenelle Stumpf, Community Development Secretary

Public Registering Attendance: Mike Kearney, Ben Leshner – Monarch Development Group, LLC; Dave Getz, Wix, Wenger & Weidner; Chuck Hess, P.E. – Navarro & Wright; Dennis Burd, Hershey; Mark Hackenburg, RGS Associates, Inc.; Randy and Heather Eckels, Goddard School

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made by Secretary St. John and seconded by Member Tunnell, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the November 7, 2018 meeting, as written.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Board of Supervisors' action regarding the Preliminary/Final Lot Consolidation and Land Development Plan for Derry Township Community Center, Plat #1303**
- B. Report of the Board of Supervisors' action regarding the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for the Milton Hershey School Central Operations Facility Expansion, Plat #1306**

Chuck Emerick reported that the Board of Supervisors conditionally approved both plans.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review of the Sketch Plan for Gateway to Hershey, Plat #1310**

Mr. Emerick explained that this sketch plan proposes to further subdivide the residue lands of Dennis L. and Karin M. Burd located along Middletown Road. The property is within the Planned Campus West zoning district and is also subject to the Middletown Road Overlay. Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, and R were

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created in 2002 by the Subdivision and Land Development Plan of Dennis Burd, Plat #981. That plan also proposed land development details for Lot 1 as a Turkey Hill Minit Market. Lot R contains the garden center operated by Stauffers of Kissel Hill. Lot 2 was developed as the Goddard School, and Lot 3 was developed as a car wash and lubrication facility. Lot 4 remains undeveloped. One of the purposes of the planning done through these plats was to provide an access road to service the commercial development, thus avoiding multiple driveway connections to Middletown Road. This sketch plan also proposes to combine 4 properties held by the Burds. Mr. Emerick's understanding is that the first project that will result from this proposal will be the expansion of the Goddard School. The land proposed to be added to the school would effectively terminate the present access road from servicing the remainder of the land. The applicant is proposing to reserve land to construct a new roadway connection consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in addition to planning some future lots, as was done on the prior plans. Access to the Goddard School site is presently possible from Middletown Road via a right-in driveway that was built as part of the Turkey Hill development, or by way of the connection of a private driveway to Kaylor Road.

Mr. Emerick and Matt Bonanno, HRG, went over their plan review comments.

Member Tunnell inquired if the Burd properties and the properties to the north have the same zoning classification. Mr. Emerick responded that all of the referenced properties are in the Planned Campus West zoning district. Member Tunnell also confirmed with Mr. Emerick that the properties to the east are in the Conservation zoning district, and the properties to the south (Dartmouth Farms) are in the R-2 zoning district.

Chairman Rowe asked if there will be deed restrictions so that access to the site has to be on the proposed collector road and not Middletown Road. Mr. Emerick commented that the Township would highly discourage any access to Middletown Road, but PennDOT would have the final say.

Member Tunnell inquired if Dartmouth Road is a Township road. Mr. Emerick answered yes. There is also a private lane (Gish Lane) that leads from Dartmouth Road to a couple of houses. Member Tunnell confirmed with Mr. Emerick that the plan proposes to replace a portion of Gish Lane with a public road. Vice Chairman Santostefano asked if the new lane would have to be developed as a first step. Mr. Emerick replied he does not know. The problem is that with the steep slope area, the frontage of Lot C needs to be on the south side of the lot.

Chairman Rowe commented he likes that the applicant is proposing to shift the access road away from the Middletown Road/Kaylor Road intersection. Mr. Emerick clarified that the existing access road will remain but having another option for entering the site will be beneficial.

Applicant Dennis Burd stated that he is working with a number of people who could bring commercial development to the site. He has been trying for approximately five years to bring a grocer to Middletown Road but he has not had much luck. Mr. Burd thinks the community needs a pharmacy in this area of the Township, as well as a good, sit-down family restaurant. He stated that he and his wife travel Middletown Road every day and he believes there have been major improvements in the traffic flow on Middletown Road since the construction of the turn lane at Route 322 and the access drive behind Sheetz and Stoverdale Commons. Traffic flows extremely well any time during the day, with

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the exception of rush hour. The Township has been proactive with their planning regarding the Middletown Road corridor. Mr. Burd commented that people have to recognize that Middletown Road is a connector corridor between Route 283 and Route 322, which are four-lane highways. There has been a lot of residential development on Middletown Road and currently the residents have to go out of the area for services which results in numerous vehicle trips.

Chuck Hess, Navarro & Wright, explained that Mr. Burd was very adamant from the beginning about the traffic congestion and the Township's long-range plans for Middletown Road, which the engineer took to heart because it is important to keep the existing residents happy while accommodating this development. In response to some of Mr. Emerick's review comments, Mr. Hess clarified that they looked at the Middletown Road Overlay district requirements and the notation on the plan was meant to imply that the applicant will take care of their half of the improvements, but the other side will be done "by others." The applicant does not have any immediate plans to develop the site but he and the engineer have looked at concepts and options for future traffic distribution. The developer will probably propose one right in/right out onto Middletown Road which will eliminate the left-turn conflict movement out of the site. Mr. Hess stated that they planned for the new access road to be a minor road and not a collector road, and that cross section would allow for two lanes of travel and on-street parking. The applicant does not see the access road as an alleviator route for Middletown Road, and they are not planning for on-street parking for safety reasons and because the uses are intended to have enough on-site parking. Mr. Hess thinks this is a better option than a collector road, which requires 40 feet of paving. The applicant can discuss the matter of whether this should be a minor or collector road with the Township at a later date. Mr. Hess noted that at this point the applicant cannot answer many of the questions raised in the review comments (such as the location of sidewalks and fire hydrants) because the purpose of sketch plan was mainly to show the future expansion of the Goddard School.

Vice Chairman Santostefano inquired if Stauffers of Kissel Hill will remain at its current location. Mr. Hess thinks that it will be.

Regarding access management on Middletown Road, Mr. Emerick commented that the Zoning Ordinance requires vehicular access to parking areas along Middletown Road to be provided from a service road to the rear of the property, or if the property is a corner lot, access can be provided from the side street. Where a rear service road is not feasible, a shared access drive onto Middletown Road shall be constructed to provide a single access to two or more adjoining lands. Based on that, the rear access road would prohibit the right-in/right-out that was mentioned by Mr. Hess.

It is not necessary for the Planning Commission to make a recommendation on a sketch plan.

B. Review of the Sketch Plan for Pinehurst Site, Plat #1311

Mr. Emerick explained that this sketch plan proposes to demolish the former Milton Hershey School student home and construct a 4-story, 76-unit market rate apartment building. The subject lot contains 3.178 acres and is incumbered by utility and drainage easements. The lot has frontage on Northeast Drive, West Derry Road, and "P" Street. The applicant is proposing relocation of the existing

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driveway on Northeast Drive and the construction of a new driveway at the intersection of North Third Street and “P” Street. In order for the site to be developed as proposed, approval of a Conditional Use for a Master Plan will be required. The applicant has noted that this is meant to be the required sketch plan necessary to begin the Conditional Use process. The sketch plan also proposes 129 parking spaces which is the minimum requirement per the Zoning Ordinance; however, the applicant notes that they would like to defer construction of 15 of the parking spaces. This authorization will require action from the Zoning Hearing Board. Likewise, the applicant is proposing a building height in excess of that permitted by Ordinance, which will also require relief from the Zoning Hearing Board. Due to the known issues with the intersection of Northeast Drive and Park Avenue, a traffic study will be required for this proposal. Stormwater is proposed to be addressed in the existing low area of the lot, although no formal design has been presented at this point. It is anticipated that either a fee in-lieu of park and recreation facilities will be paid by the developer, or there are early conversations about promoting the bicycle/pedestrian connection from downtown to the Outlet Center through a public/private partnership.

Mr. Emerick and Matt Bonanno, HRG, went over their plan review comments.

Chairman Rowe asked why the Township would consider granting a waiver for the installation of sidewalk along Northeast Drive. Mr. Emerick explained that the Outlets just installed a trail that comes up to the eastern side of the Historical Society property. Mr. Emerick is asking that the applicant continue the trail across their driveway and into their parking lot. As part of the Starbucks land development plan at the Outlets, the applicant was granted a waiver from installing sidewalks along the south side of Northeast Drive with the assumption that if sidewalk was ever installed on Northeast Drive, it would be done on the side that is adjacent to the Outlets. In granting that waiver, the Township collected a fee in-lieu of sidewalk construction for use in other areas of the Township where sidewalks are needed.

Secretary St. John inquired how much taller the building is proposed to be beyond the maximum height permitted in this zoning district. Mark Hackenburg, landscape architect and principal with RGS Associates, stated that the applicant is still working through the details for the building design. Because there is a 20-foot grade differential from the northern to southern portions of the site, the masses of the building break into two. Both ends of the building meet the 50-foot maximum height requirement but because of the way the Zoning Ordinance defines building height, which is to the peak of the roof, it is approximately 75 feet when looking at how the Ordinance requires the calculation of grade.

Mr. Hackenburg stated that the applicant has had conversations with the Historical Society about the design of the structure and the change in use of the property. So far, the feedback has been positive and the applicant has agreed to work with the Historical Society regarding the use of materials, integrating historical elements, and respecting the roofline and the character of the Pinehurst building that is being replaced. Mr. Hackenburg noted that the property is owned by Hershey Trust Company and is intended to be retained by them and leased by the applicant.

In response to questions from Secretary St. John, Mr. Hackenburg stated that the building will contain one- and two-bedroom apartments and will be long-term rentals (i.e., not short-term vacation rentals).

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Chairman Rowe commented that it seems like a tough site to market, given the proximity to the railroad tracks and the Outlets. Mike Kearney, Monarch Development Group, stated that they own and manage nearly 900 units across Pennsylvania, and they have dealt with lots of difficult sites. They think there is a strong market for this type of housing.

Vice Chairman Santostefano inquired if the existing building is currently empty. Mr. Kearney answered yes.

Secretary St. John commented that aesthetically it is not a great location, but it is convenient for accessing nearby services.

Vice Chairman Santostefano asked if there is a concern about the public using the proposed connection between Northeast Drive and West Derry Road and cutting through the apartment building's parking lot. Mr. Hackenburg replied that the applicant had a fairly extensive discussion about this issue. The initial thought was not to connect the property to West Derry Road, but that would force all of the apartment building traffic out to Northeast Drive. He thinks that the connection will not be evident to the general public due to the grade differential on the property; however, the connection will be a positive for the apartment residents because it will offer them another option for entering and exiting the site.

Mr. Hackenburg stated that the applicant is willing to work with the Township and other involved parties in regards to promoting the bicycle/pedestrian connection from downtown to the Outlets through a public/private partnership. Mr. Hackenburg noted that there are a number of existing easements on the site and the applicant has not yet met with DTMA. There is a sinkhole on the back portion of the property that Mr. Hackenburg expects is located over the sanitary sewer line, so in redeveloping the property, the applicant might be able to solve some of the larger utility challenges. Mr. Hackenburg expects the applicant will request waivers regarding sidewalk installation and some of the dimensional requirements that may be related to existing roadways.

Mr. Hackenburg explained that prior to beginning the Master Plan process, the applicant's next step will be to go to the Zoning Hearing Board for relief regarding building height, buffers, and parking. Based on their observation of other communities they operate, the applicant thinks the amount of guest parking proposed seemed excessive. They are considering Zipcar and shared ride services in response to new demographics and residents that might not need to have a vehicle. Based on that, the applicant questions if they really need to provide all the parking spaces required by the Zoning Ordinance. They have suggested in their narrative that they could forego 10%-15% of the required parking spaces initially and instead provide financial security to the Township for a period of 2-3 years so that a determination of the necessity of the additional parking spaces can be made after the building is fully occupied.

Secretary St. John asked if there will shared common areas in the building for those who do not have a lot of space in their own apartments. Mr. Kearney responded that they have not yet determined how much shared community space there will be in the building.

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Member Wilson inquired if stormwater management will be designed for the full amount of required parking spaces. Mr. Hackenburg answered yes. Mr. Wilson asked if there is an opportunity for outdoor recreation for the residents. Mr. Hackenburg stated that most suitable area is off the back of the building. There is an outdoor space that connects to a lower-level common area within the building, and the adjacent lawn area seems to be the most logical location.

Mr. Hackenburg stated that they will study the existing traffic problem at Northeast Drive and Park Avenue and how this project may impact the problem.

It is not necessary for the Planning Commission to make a recommendation on a sketch plan.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce St. John
Planning Commission Secretary

Submitted by:

Jenelle Stumpf
Community Development Secretary (*stenographer*)