

WEST DEER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MAY 25, 2017

Mark Schmidt called the Meeting to order with the following members in attendance: Kathy Rojik, Robert Bechtold, and John Butala

Absent Members: Tim Phelps, Adam Woods and Ted Gall

Other Attendees: William Payne, Code Enforcement Officer
Scott Shoup, Shoup Engineering

WORKSHOP MEETING

McIntyre Heights PRD

(Represented by Jeff Martin, Richland Holdings and John Schleicher, Gibson-Thomas Engr.)

Seeking advice from the Planning Commission so they can continue with this project. The Board of Supervisors was not in favor of this project during the public hearing. Mr. Martin stated that the developer/owner feels that the project was developed in the best way to utilize the land. They increased off-site parking that exceeds the Township's requirement but specified that it does not meet the requirement of parking spaces to be within 100 feet of each lot. Feels that they have done everything they can to make this a viable project for West Deer Township.

Dr. DiSanti, West Deer Supervisor, commented that during the public hearing, the additional parking was not presented. Concerns with the project are lot size, wetlands, side yard setbacks, and egress/ingress.

1. Supervisors felt that lot size was considerably smaller than they would like to see.
2. Dr. DiSanti concerned about pond/wetland that consumes 4 lots. Was initially under the impression that it was a "little run-off" when he looked at the drawings, but upon inspection feels it is a rather extensive pond.
3. Ingress/egress: Plan has only one entrance/exit, is it possible to create another entrance/exit? Stated that he felt the Route 910 area could be a safety concern with the increase of traffic.

Mr. Vaerewyck, West Deer Supervisor, stated that his concerns were that the present zoning ordinance took an extensive time to compose as it included numerous public hearings and public comments before it was adopted. During that time, the resident's main comment was to allow developments, but at the same time, keep the rural feel of the Township. Therefore, he does not want a development to resemble housing from the city where houses are crammed together and lose the rural feel completely. The zoning ordinance safeguards against that with the requirement of 21,780 sq.ft. in an R-2 PRD zone. Also stated that deviating from the 30 ft. side yard to 20 ft. feels like city housing. Developments need a substantial side yard to make a housing development feasible. Also explained that short driveways would cause people to park on street. Mr. Vaerewyck went on to say that parking is an issue. Gave the example that a lot of grandparents would be living in this development and family would be coming to visit. Feels that even the 60 spaces, as described by the code, could be pushed to capacity at times - especially on holidays. Mr. Vaerewyck felt that the developer didn't try to meet the Township's zoning ordinance. Understands that they would need a waiver on little items but lot size, parking, side yards separation and cul-de-sacs length are major issues.

Mr. Schleicher, Gibson-Thomas Engineering, addressed the Planning Commission and stated that there are 4 departures from the ordinance that they are seeking. Further explained that the conventional zoning calls for ½ acre lots and the PRD requires 30% open space and still require ½ acre lot. He assumed the zoning ordinance had a typo or an oversight. His understanding of a PRD under the Municipal Planning Code is to provide a perimeter buffer, eliminate density which is allowed under conventional zoning, provide open space and everything beyond that you work through and preserve the natural resources. They have a stream that runs through property, steep slopes and large wooded areas. They are preserving over 50% open space. Their thought was that smaller lot areas will provide the increase open space. They focused on the perimeter setback so no disturbance within 50 ft. of plan boundary. Open space is almost doubled from the ordinance requirement. Ordinance requires 3 units per acre which would put them at 102 allowable units. Their plan proposes only 69 units. Feels they presented a responsible development. The modifications they are asking for are:

- Lot area
- Building separation (requirement is 30 ft. – requesting 20 ft. PRD does not distinguish building separation by type of development.)
- Guest parking (which they added, looking for waiver on proximity of parking area)
- Road length of cul-de-sac

Mr. Martin explained that lots could be made deeper if need be, but doesn't understand the reasoning why to make them deeper. Thought idea was to keep open space with trees. If development not approved as is, will be seeking approval for a "cluster" development which is a permitted use in an R-2 zone. With cluster development, property could be clear cut (no buffer). Mr. Schmidt suggested that if they increased the building separation to the minimum requirement or a little more, it could be possible to gain another parking space on side of driveway. He also favors the lot area modification as making lots the ½ acre would just create bigger back yards but would disturb the open space. Suggested to the developer that the building separation and parking should be addressed, then request the other two waivers. Mr. Schmidt further suggested that the sidewalk placement might have some flexibility that could, along with moving the buildings back a few feet, could increase the driveway length.

Mr. Payne said that he feels the table and chart in the zoning ordinance is flawed. He researched other townships, and stated that Richland Township PRD requirement is 10,000 sq. ft. vs. our ½ acre lot. Building separation is also different for various types of buildings.

Mr. Martin explained that the pond that encompasses 4 lots shouldn't be an issue. Pond was man-made by previous property owners. As it is now, the pond is a nuisance and is dangerous. Pond was also looked at by an environmental engineer and verified not to be a wetland which was a concern to Dr. DiSanti. The wetlands that are on the property will not be disturbed. Mr. Schmidt requested a copy of the environmental study to be submitted.

Starling Hall, 997 Deer Creek Road

(Represented by Ariel & Brandon Forbes, Owner, and John Schleicher, Gibson-Thomas Engr.)

In process of changing their site plan that was submitted last month. Seeking any comments to fine tune plan before submittal.

Main revision was parking in general and handicap parking. Three (3) handicap parking to be required. The original concept was to use the existing loop driveway as drop-off area and handicap parking to south entrance to building. Revised plan will show they moved area to increase handicap area and be able to grade area.

Copied the layout of the residential driveway for the hall so people can be dropped off without vehicles going onto Deer Creek Road. Delivery/loading drop off in same vicinity as last months plan, just flipped access to north of building. Mr. Schleicher clarified that there will be dedicated handicap areas and not shared with delivery area as previous plan outlined. Driveway will be one-way only, mound will be located on the frontage facing Deer Creek Road.

The follow residents' voiced concerns and questions:

1. *Chris Galbraith (4 Shady Lane)*: His house is approximately 300 feet from the Forbes property. Putting a 3 foot mound will still put headlights into his house. Questioned where the parking will be from property line, and is whole site to be excavated. Presently his property receives the water runoff of Deer Creek Road, will he be getting more water on this property? Thought parking had to be dust free. If that is the case a gravel lot will create an abundance of dust.

2. *Tom Opest (1002 Deer Creek Rd.)*: His property is located on the southside of Forbes property. He and neighbor owe a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre pond. Very concerned that pond and dam would be effected by road runoff from parking lots. Concerned that pond could be a settling pond when construction is being done. If parking lot is either gravel or limestone, the runoff could damage pond. Additional runoff from property would create a volume of water that dam would not be able to handle. Very concerned about overflow. Suggested that maybe some type of containment system can be incorporated in the plan for the water runoff to be stored and slowly discharge water onto their properties. This would create a less chance of overflow situations. Would also prevent erosion from entering his pond. Questioned on who oversees the movement of dirt. (*Mr. Schmidt explained that there are a series of people who oversee, including the Township Code Enforcement officer along with the Township Engineer. Erosion is controlled by Allegheny County Conservation District.*)

3. *Joe Wisniewski (934 Deer Creek Rd.)*: Commented that parking area is a sloped hill and concerned also about runoff. Questioned the holding tanks - if they can be placed near or on the leech fields. Was explained to him that the Allegheny County Septic Officer will inspect the site and manage the installation of the tanks. A discussion was held on the holding tanks, Township ordinance requirements and the Township stormwater ordinance as it safeguards against runoff.

4. *Chris Corrado (88 Glasgow Rd.)*: Property is over the hill from Forbes property. Interested in the type of vegetation to be planted on the mounds, suggested evergreens so it will still be screened during fall and winter. (Mr. Schleicher questioned if buffer is a requirement for Mr. Corrado's land.) Mr. Corrado is a working farm with cows and bulls. In his research he noticed that Greystone Fields (Sandy Hill Road – event hall) has an 8 foot high fence that encompasses the total property. Would like the same for the Forbes property as he is afraid of people from hall coming over the hill to his farm. Has a pond that people could drown in and does not want his cows disturbed. Spreads manure on farm land and does not want any complaints about possible smells.

AGENDA MEETING

Roll call was taken and the minutes from April 27, 2017 were submitted and stand approved.

John Ippolito Warehouse – 1628 Middle Rd. Ext.

(Represented by Tom Taylor, Hampton Tech and Mr. Ippolito)

Property zoned SU (Special Use) measuring 5.17 acres. Shoup Engineering submitted a review letter dated May 25, 2017 with following comments:

1. Wall mounted lighting fixtures are not full cutoff
2. Building materials advised to be “metal siding and roof”
3. Caliper of trees to be identified on plan
4. Zoning variance date to be on plan
5. Sewage facilities planning module to be submitted, NPDES permit to be obtained and applicant to enter into a stormwater agreement with Township.

Mr. Taylor explained that variance date is on plan, trees are 2” caliper and lighting plan was submitted to Shoup Engineering prior to the meeting. Building will be a stone veneer front and Mr. Shoup advised to include that on plan.

First motion by Mr. Butala and second motion by Mr. Bechtold to **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of the Ippolito Plan subject to satisfying the outstanding issues of Shoup Engineering letter dated May 25, 2017.