

**RICHLAND TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2009**

**MEMBERS**

Tim Gaichas – Chairman  
Diane Pontoriero – Vice Chairman  
Bob Goetz – Secretary (absent)  
Jim McChesney  
Joseph Pillart

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Jeff Walzer – Building & Code Enforce. Officer  
Suzanne Owens – Recording Secretary

The meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Mr. Gaichas on April 20, 2009 at 7:10 p.m. There were 12 people in the audience.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Pontoriero made a motion to approve minutes from Planning Commission Meeting of January 12, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. McChesney and approved by all.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The Planning Commission acknowledged a letter dated April 2, 2009, from Timothy B. Murphy and Ann C. Stewart-Murphy of Environmentally Sound Enterprise of 245 Summerlawn Drive, Sewickley, PA 15143 regarding a proposed residential neighborhood called Olde Westbury to be located in the Arcadia Plan of Lots. Ann Stewart-Murphy spoke of the Arcadia Plan of Lots that was recorded in 1914 and is on the books at the County but it was never developed; therefore, everything is paper – the roads, the lots, everything. They are proposing to do an eminent domain and wipe out the old Arcadia Plan of Lots from the County records. They would then come in and present a new plan showing what they are proposing to do – which is develop a residential neighborhood consisting of 112 homes with green space. The Board of Supervisors made and approved a motion authorizing Mr. Bastianini and Mr. Means to meet with the Murphy's, their attorney and representatives of the School District and Allegheny County to explore this matter and present their findings to the Supervisors. Mrs. Murphy stated they were attending the meeting simply to show the Planning Commission what they are proposing.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Stephen L. Selkowitz of 5912 Heckert Road, Bakerstown, PA 15007 – Request only for discussion purposes, a proposed project located in Bakerstown.

Mr. Selkowitz discussed his interest in opening up a take-out soft serve ice cream shop at 5912 Heckert Road, Bakerstown. Mr. Selkowitz and Richard Blecher presented photos and a site plan for their proposed ice cream shop. The building currently is in operation as an education furniture store – Morgan Interior Systems. Mr. Walzer pointed out there is no existing site plan that shows any kind of parking layout with the ordinance. They would have to do a new site plan and have storm water management go into any type of paving that may be required, follow whatever buffer requirement is recommended by the Planning Commission Members, and consider parking requirements (roughly 22 spaces) for the retail space, apartments and ADA compliance. There was also some discussion about a common or designated parking area for the Bakerstown businesses. Mr. Pillart mentioned issues about lighting being in compliance, the sidewalk deteriorating and being in compliance with ADA (handicapped ramp) and perhaps adding some planters and hanging baskets for buffering. Mr. Walzer will check with Mr. Goetz regarding the Traffic Impact Fee. They have a 600 sq.ft. furniture store they would like to convert to a take-out restaurant.

John D. Finney member of Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church – Request only for discussion purposes, a potential renovation of the existing garage structure on property situate at 3916 Bakerstown Road. Zoning District “RA” One Acre Residential, Lot & Block No. 2189-N-126.

Mr. Finney discussed the church currently holding worship in a building approximately 962 sq.ft. They would like to take the old existing building, currently marked as “Existing Structure/Future Social Hall” and clean it up so they can get roughly a 2,000 sq.ft. space for worship and a fellowship hall. They have worked with the school district to get the drive from Eden Hall entrance to their property so they can have an exit from the church to the light. Mr. Finney distributed a drawing to show what they intend to do to the existing building. They are not a large church so they plan to do the work themselves and do it in steps or phases. Mr. Walzer stated the first thing they would need to do is go for a Special Exception in front of the Planning Commission. The next step would be to go to the Zoning/Hearing Board then back to the Planning Commission for recommendation of the site plan and then to the Board of Supervisors for final approval. Mr. Gaichas suggested if they have an agreement to seek some relief from parking with the school district, they should get this in writing. There were other issues discussed such as seating/number of people at capacity, paved parking areas and drainage.

Carolyn Yagle of Environmental Planning and Design – Proposed amendment for technical changes and revisions to the Zoning Ordinance.

There was no representative from Environmental Planning and Design present to discuss the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Walzer stated they had a meeting with Mr. Bastianini, Mr. Means the Township Solicitor, Shoup Engineering the Township Engineer and Carolyn of EPD. The amendment basically covers technical refinements for the Zoning Ordinance.

Many of these changes are issues the County has written, but there are also some mistakes and typos that were corrected – all changes are highlighted. He stated that the revisions are technical and the ordinance is not changing. A few specific items that were discussed were buffer yards, signs and building transparency for non-residential uses. Mr. Walzer said it was asked that the Planning Commission take a look at the revisions to see if they think the corrections are fine or are there additional questions, comments or changes.

Ms. Pontoriero made a motion to accept the proposed amendment for the technical changes and revisions to the Zoning Ordinance with the one exception that on page 56 “distribution facility” be removed from item (c). The motion was seconded by Mr. Pillart and approved by all.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Pillart commented that with the televisions and the technology we have available in the public meeting room, can we request that people coming to present plans in front of the Planning Commission bring in their plans in the appropriate digital format so they can be projected for everyone at the meeting to view.

Ms. Pontoriero asked if something can be done regarding the hillside area near Park Vale Bank. The landscaping does not look very nice and there is a lot of garbage laying there. Mr. Walzer said he would take a look at this area.

Ms. Donna Snyder of 5857 Valencia Road voiced her environmental concerns with Environmentally Sound Enterprise’s proposed development. The property they are looking to develop is approximately 85% wooded. The topography of the land is very steep slopes and there is a stream that runs through her property that starts back on the Arcadia Property. She is concerned that someone will do something with this stream and the fact that retention ponds will be in people’s yards. Mr. Gaichas stated that without there being an actual site plan, there is nothing that the Planning Commission can comment on at this time.

Ms. Annette Robinson of 108 Applewood Drive inquired about the eminent domain Environmentally Sound Enterprise spoke about earlier. Ms. Pontoriero stated that this will be a Township Supervisors’ issue, the Planning Commission has no concept of the legal ramifications they will have to go through to obtain the land.

Ms. Robinson also inquired about the changes and revisions that are being considered for the Zoning Ordinance. Once this is all approved, will it be made into a printed addendum? Mr. Gaichas said the changes the Planning Commission reviewed and made the recommendation on are typos and simple omissions except for the one specific

issue that had to do with a particular use in the ordinance. Mr. Walzer added that once it is advertised, there will be something out to show people. Mr. Gaichas said that once combined, there would probably only be a page or two of changes. It was suggested by Mr. Gaichas that an addendum be typed up with the changes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Approved by,

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gaichas, Chairman

Suzanne Owens, Recording Secretary

sro/

cc: Richland Township Board of Supervisors  
Zoning Hearing Board