

**RICHLAND TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2008**

MEMBERS:

Tim Gaichas – Chairman
Joseph Pillart – Vice Chairman
Bob Goetz
Jim McChesney
Diane Pontoriero

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeff Walzer – Bldg. Code Enf. Officer
Suzanne Owens – Recording Secretary

The meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Mr. Gaichas on April 21, 2008, at 7:10 p.m. There were approximately 15 people in the audience.

Ms. Pontoriero made a motion to approve minutes with changes submitted from the Planning Commission Meeting of March 17, 2008. The motion was seconded by Mr. McChesney and approved by all. Mr. Goetz abstained, not being present at the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Planning Commission acknowledged a letter dated March 31, 2008, from Mr. Jeff Walzer to Mr. Ron St. Clair regarding Lot 7 of Foggy Hollow Road and the request that he come back in front of the Planning Commission regarding a revised landscape plan. Mr. Walzer stated that contact has been made on this item.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Tractor Supply Company/The Keith Corporation – Zottola Property – Consideration of a two lot subdivision for the property situated at 6080 William Flinn Highway, Oak Ridge Plan of Lots No. 2. Lot & Block No. 2190-H-25. Revised plans dated March 27, 2008. Deemed approval date of May 17, 2008 waived per letter dated February 18, 2008.

Mr. Robert McCollim, R. A. Smith National, presented the revised plans for consideration of a two lot subdivision which would create a 4.7 acre lot for a Tractor Supply Store at 6080 William Flinn Highway. Ms. Wendy Fulton, Keith Corporation, was also present.

Mr. McCollim discussed the comments contained in Mr. Shoup's review letter dated April 15, 2008. The two topics discussed included:

Item 1 – Sewage Facilities Planning Module Exemption – Mr. McCollim stated they have the letter from Deer Creek Drainage Basin Authority along with flow numbers from Tractor Supply. He spoke with Allegheny Valley Joint Sewer Authority and it was indicated they have capacity in their line. Mr. Gaichas asked if this information was provided to Mr. Shoup and Mr. McCollim said yes.

Item 2 – Revision and/or additions to the sanitary sewer line easements – Mr. McCollim stated they have not yet been contacted by Shoup Engineering. Mr. Gaichas requested Mr. McCollim make a note to follow up with Shoup on this particular issue.

Mr. Goetz made a motion to recommend for approval the proposed two lot subdivision for the property situated at 6080 William Flinn Highway, Oak Ridge Plan of Lots No. 2, conditioned on the two comments in Mr. Shoup's April 15, 2008, letter. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pontoriero and approved by all.

Tractor Supply Company/The Keith Corporation – Zottola Property – Consideration of preliminary land development plans for the construction of a Tractor Supply Store on property situated at 6080 William Flinn Highway, Oak Ridge Plan of Lots No. 2, Parcel A-2. Lot & Block No. 2190-H-25. Revised plans dated March 31, 2008. Deemed approval date of May 17, 2008 waived per letter dated February 18, 2008.

Mr. Walzer gave a brief summary on the final decision of the Zoning Hearing Board. He stated that the Zoning Hearing Board did grant the Special Exception; however, part of their approval was to let the Planning Commission decide the landscaping and performance standard items.

Mr. McCollim, R. A. Smith National, presented the revised plans for consideration of preliminary land development for the construction of a Tractor Supply Store at 6080 William Flinn Highway.

Mr. McCollim discussed the comments contained in Mr. Shoup's review letter dated April 15, 2008. The topics discussed included:

Item 1 – Exterior building façade materials – Mr. McCollim stated this was discussed at the last meeting and Mr. Gaichas agreed the façade materials are as previously discussed.

Item 2 – Sewer line manhole – Mr. McCollim stated this was discussed at the last meeting and the Township is taking care of this item.

Item 3 – Dumpster enclosure – Mr. McCollim stated this is shown on the plans. Ms. Fulton added the dumpster will be the same base material and same color so it will match. The gate on the front of the dumpster enclosure is vinyl chain link in black. Also, change location of dumpster, depict it on the plan and note material that is going to be in the fence.

Item 4 – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit – Mr. McCollim stated they are in the process of responding to comments they received from Allegheny County.

Item 5 – Sewage Facilities Planning Module Exemption – Mr. McCollim stated they have a letter from Deer Creek Drainage Basin Authority indicating there is capacity (same as subdivision). Mr. Gaichas said even though it is redundant, make certain this is applied to both comment letters.

Item 6 – Parking Lot Buffer Plantings – Mr. Gaichas stated that photos would help along with the cross sections that are provided. It was recommended to plant a straight row of trees that are a mix of pines. Suggestion was 20' on center.

Item 7 – Off-site and on-site signage – Mr. McCollim stated he understands they would need a variance for the off-site sign. Ms. Fulton stated there will be a free standing sign. Mr. Gaichas suggested a monument sign. Sidewalks – Ms. Fulton stated they are willing to put in the sidewalk. Mr. Gaichas asked how far down they are proposing to put the sidewalk and Ms. Fulton responded all the way to the existing sidewalk. Mr. Walzer stated he would contact Mr. Moersh to see if Parkview Estates Homeowner Association would give permission for Tractor Supply to extend the sidewalk.

General Discussion:

Mr. Goetz questioned Note 5 on the Landscaping Plan regarding what type of planting is being referred to on the rendering. Mr. Goetz asked Mr. McCollim if they are substituting trefoil for the crown vetch and he said he believed so. Mr. Goetz also mentioned that the note needs to be revised from “All slopes greater than 2:1 ...” to “All slopes 2:1 ...”

Mr. Gaichas asked if the façade and design work for the mechanical units (which are both heating and air conditioning units) on the roof are a quiet type. Mr. Walzer suggested placing a type of vent or baffle on the roof that would direct the noise upward. Ms. Fulton said she would discuss this with the architect. Present a cut sheet for the decimal rating of the noise.

Mr. Walzer questioned the delivery hours and Ms. Fulton said they could be whenever. During normal business the hours are generally 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. However, the maximum hours are 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. (usually for a special promotion). The delivery hours were discussed and it was agreed on 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday - Saturday and 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. No deliveries before 6:00 a.m. and past 8:00 p.m.

Ms. Pontoriero commented on the use of the viburnum and juniper along the back edge for screening. She would like to add more height to some of the plantings.

Mr. Gaichas questioned whether the lights would be turned off after business hours. Ms. Fulton said the building lights stay on for security purposes but all other lights would go off within an hour of closing. From midnight to 5:00 a.m. the building perimeter lights and one light on the side yard will remain on. Mr. Gaichas asked if it is possible to dim or soften the lights at night. Ms. Fulton said she would inquire about this.

Mr. Gaichas stated the sidewalk will need to be placed on the plan. Especially the part that is on the land that Tractor Supply is developing. Mr. Goetz asked if the intent is to run the sidewalk up the driveway and into the lot. It was suggested to run an additional 75 to 100 feet of sidewalk from the driveway to the parking lot. Depict on the plan the sidewalk coming all the way on to Tractor Supply property so someone could walk safely from the residential area down or from the other commercial area up to the store. It was clarified that this sidewalk will not be ADA.

Mr. Pillart made a motion to table consideration of preliminary land development plans for the construction of a Tractor Supply Store until the following issues are addressed:

- Explore noise mitigation techniques.
- Hours of operation.
- Dimming or making lights at rear of the building at dark as reasonably possible after business hours.
- Turn off pole lights in a reasonable period of time after business hours.
- Deliveries Monday - Saturday no earlier than 6:00 a.m. and no later than 8:00 p.m. and Sunday deliveries 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. when necessary.
- Sidewalk issues and how the sidewalk will work inside the development itself.
- Written responses to Mr. Shoup's comment letter dated April 15, 2008.
- Landscaping and overall esthetics of the site.
- Signage and landscaping.
- New landscaping on the northern most section where the cut slope is.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Pontoriero and approved by all.

NEW BUSINESS

Mark Platt – Consideration of land development plans for Lot 3 in the Richland Industrial Park Plan, for the construction of a 6,000 s.f. garage/shop/office building and associated driveway/parking on property situated at Foggy Hollow Road. Plans dated March 10, 2008. Deemed approval date July 19, 2008.

Mr. John Schleicher of Gibson-Thomas Engineering presented the plans for construction of a garage/shop/office building at Foggy Hollow Road. Proposed use is for contractor's equipment, material storage, service yard and structure. There would be 6,000 s.f. building with a 2,000 s.f. office in the front and 4,000 s.f. garage in the rear portion.

Mr. Schleicher discussed the comments contained in Mr. Shoup's review letter dated April 15, 2008. The topics discussed included:

- Item 1 – Zoning District on site plan – Mr. Schleicher stated they will indicate the zoning district as well as the set back information on the plan.

Item 2 – Height of proposed building – Mr. Schleicher stated he did not have that information at the time, but will note the building will be approximately 25' in height.

Item 3 – Parking lot dimensions – Mr. Schleicher stated they had 60' in width for double loaded parking lots and 42 in width for single loaded lots. He stated there will be no problem; there is plenty of room on both sides of the parking areas.

Item 4 – Handicapped stall width dimensions – Mr. Schleicher stated the stalls are shown in accordance with ADA requirements and the dimensions will be added to the plan.

Item 5 – Cross section of driveway – Mr. Schleicher stated there will be well beyond the minimum requirement to handle the type of traffic. This will be added to the plan.

Item 6 – Dumpster and enclosure area – Mr. Schleicher stated that a dumpster and the appropriate screening will be shown on the plan.

Item 7 – Outdoor lighting fixtures – Mr. Schleicher stated they will have cut off, wall mount type fixtures. They will be well within the 0 foot candle requirement at all property lines.

Item 8 – Height or diameter of proposed trees – Mr. Schleicher stated they will provide the minimum, but would like to discuss this further.

Item 9 – Revisions to lot and plan references – Mr. Schleicher stated that Lot 2 had been revised to acquire an additional 30' from Lot 3; therefore, the proposed lot line as shown are the latest. The lot line revision has not yet been recorded. Mr. Gaichas stated that it needs to be depicted on the plan stating "2R" and "3R" rather than just 2 and 3. It was approved at our last meeting and should have been recorded in the last few weeks. Mr. Schleicher said they will address the lot numbers.

General Discussion:

Mr. Gaichas asked what is going to end up in the area marked as the proposed gravel parking area/landscape material storage. Mr. Schleicher stated there could be machines and trucks, but there also could be landscape materials depending on the season. Mr. McChesney asked if there were plans to fence this area in. Mr. Platt stated that there will be a buffer of evergreens.

Ms. Pontoriero commented that she would like to see a cross-section through the site back to the residential area and photos of the existing vegetation to see if the screening is going to be enough.

Mr. McChesney commented that it would be nice to have some architectural rendering at least for the back of the building. Mr. Schleicher stated he just received some information from the manufacturer showing a similar building color scheme that is being proposed. They are proposing a metal building with a metal roof and the colors will be a dark blue and gray. Mr. Gaichas suggested the garage door on the back be the same shade as the building rather than stark white to reduce the glare coming off the back of the building.

Mr. Pillart questioned the height of the trees they plan on putting around the pine trees. Mr. Schleicher said he believes the minimum requirement is 4' but they are considering 6' minimum around the residential area. It was agreed to wait and see what the cross-section looks like to determine what might be needed.

Mrs. Silvester, of the audience, commented on buffering from her vantage point (Valencia Road). The properties all sit above him and she feels that there is not enough of a buffer. It was suggested to mound the tree line along the back.

Mr. Spreng, of the audience, questioned what the shaded area represents on the rendering. Mr. Schleicher stated it represents the existing wood line.

Mr. Gaichas gave Mr. Schleicher the potential Transportation Impact Fee, based on the plan presented, in the amount of \$8,680. He stated that the amount could change based on what the plan looks like when recommended for final approval.

Mr. McChesney made a motion to table consideration of land development plans for the construction of a garage/shop/office building at Foggy Hollow Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goetz and approved by all.

Consideration of an ordinance designating gas and oil wells as Special Exception Uses in the Commercial Industrial (CM) and Restricted Light Industrial (M) Districts.

Mr. Bastianini spoke about having drilling proposed in residential neighborhoods. The Board of Supervisors authorized the Township Solicitor to prepare an amendment. Under the terms of the MPC, prior to it being considered for adoption, it needs to be presented to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation. The proposed update to the Zoning Ordinance would allow drilling in the CM and M districts by Special Exception.

Mr. Boff, of the audience, stated they are drilling a well in Washington County near his sister's house. They have been drilling for about one week and the noise is 24 hours, three 8-hour shifts. It will be about two more weeks until complete.

The Planning Commission is in favor of making a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt this amendment which would permit oil and gas drilling within the CM and M districts with the following conditions:

The Township Solicitor review the necessity of inserting the word only in §901.D(8) – Gas wells or oil wells **only** in the ...

In section (a) consideration be given to increasing the distance to three-hundred (300) feet from a residential dwelling ...

Evaluate establishing decibel levels at the property lines for operations and for drilling. Mr. Bastianini will ask the Township Solicitor for direction on the drilling operation.

Does it make sense to have a lot size restriction and do we want a restriction regarding other uses on the same site.

Suggest within a two (2) acre or greater conforming lot.

In section (f) add “and oil well” before the word shall.

Recommend putting security fencing around area while actual drilling is taking place.

Mr. Bastianini will follow up with Mr. Gaichas on the recommendations.

Ms. Pontoriero made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the adoption of the ordinance with the changes suggested. The motion was seconded by Mr. McChesney and approved by all.

General Comments:

Mr. Spreng, of the audience, questioned upon drilling could they disrupt existing water well. Ms. Pontoriero said she would investigate this and follow up with Mr. Bastianini.

Mr. Sutter, of the audience, suggested that since there is a well driller on Route 910 perhaps he would have a packet of information that would be useful in clearing up some of these questions and/or misconceptions.

OTHER BUSINESS

Carolyn Yagle, Environmental Planning and Design, presentation of the Public Review Draft Update of the Township Zoning Ordinance dated April 2008.

Carolyn Yagle, EPD, gave a presentation and spoke about the status of the Public Review Draft in its updated form and the next series of activities associated with its review. She also spoke about how it would progress on through the Planning Commissions review, the publics review, the Board of Supervisors review and towards its adoption.

The EPD had met with the Township staff several times and also met with the technical committee, the technical consultant for the Township, the Township solicitor and the Township engineer. There have been many changes incorporated into the ordinance as well as consideration of the zoning map changes from the last discussions with the public and the technical committee. The significant changes discussed are as follows:

Northwest corner – changing items to Higher Intensity Residential as well as residential land to industrial land and the nature of commercial district along the Bakerstown Warrendale Road corridor. Also incorporating one change for industrial at Foggy Holly as it goes into the beginning of the industrial park.

Grubbs Road – Previously more Rural Residential land. Portions will remain Rural Residential along Montour Road side then on to Grubbs Road is one acre.

Route 910 and Gibson/Grubbs Road intersection – incorporated a core area of Light Industrial land.

Southern end of Route 8 – Cook Road corridor land along Route 8 has been made into Community Commercial. On the Cook Road side there is land that is Neighborhood Commercial and on the western side of Cook Road, serving as a buffer between Route 8 and residential properties on the east side of Cook Road.

Between Ewalt Road and Applewood – All of the base zoning remains residential; however, there has been a designation of a Route 8 Overlay.

Route 910 near intersection of Route 8 – There has been changes making things contiguous in terms of Neighborhood Commercial.

North central portion of the map – Planned Campus Overlay has been introduced and changes have been made according to uses within that area.

Bakerstown Warrandale Road area – There was discussion about possible extension of the Mixed Use area and at the public meeting it was recognized that the Mixed Used designation was suitable. After the technical committee looked at the implications and/or opportunities of extending this a bit beyond on the west side of Route 8, it has been keep at was on the previous zoning maps. One thing that has changed is the density of residential development that is permitted - it is raised to eight (8) units per acre.

Mr. Bastianini stated it has been a long time since the updates were presented to the public. The meetings last year were March and May. The primary members of the committee were Diana Pontoriero and Joe Pillart of the Planning Commission along with Herb Dankmyer and Ray Kendrick. The members met with Ms. Yagle and the recommendations are based very strongly on the input from the public meetings. There was a rather formal procedure where residents made specific recommendations and requests pertaining to properties.

Mr. Bastianini referenced the Tentative Schedule for Adopting Comprehensive Amendment of Zoning Ordinance and Map As Per: Section 607. Enactment of Zoning Ordinance Amendments of the MPC. There will be a Public Meeting on Monday, May 12, 2008 that the Planning Commission will host. Assuming that the Planning Commission gets input at that point, the Committee and the Board of Supervisors ask that the Planning Commission make a recommendation at the May 21, 2008 meeting. The Board of Supervisors could either adopt a resolution creating a pending ordinance or it could not. A copy of the amendment would be submitted to the Allegheny County Planning Department by May 23, 2008. The Board of Supervisors would hold a public hearing on July 9, 2008 and they could complete an adoption at their meeting on July 16, 2008.

Mr. Pillart made a motion that a Special Public Hearing be held on May 12, 2008 to discuss the New Proposed Zoning Ordinance and Map. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pontoriero and approved by all.

There being no further business, Ms. Pontoriero made a motion to adjourn at 11:00 p.m. Mr. McChesney seconded the motion.

Approved by,

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gaichas, Chairman

Suzanne Owens, Recording Secretary

sro/

cc: Richland Township Board of Supervisors
Zoning Hearing Board