

The meeting of the Douglass Township Planning Agency was called to order at 7:02 P.M.

Members in attendance were: Josh Stouch, Joe Richardson, Bill Zern, Tom Wynne, Ed Reitz, Carl Adams, and Joan DiCicco. Also in attendance; Solicitor Matt Doll, Josh Hagadorn of Gilmore & Associates, Maggie Dobbs from MCPC, Supervisor Alan Keiser and 16 residents/developers.

Mr. Wynne led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Mr. Wynne asked if there were any changes, corrections, or additions to the Planning Agency minutes of January 10th, 2019. No changes, corrections, or additions were given.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Zern to recommend approval of the January 10th, 2019 Planning Agency minutes. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

Zoning Hearing Board Application – Hoffmansville Road R-1 Residential addition to a non-conforming lot. (Richard Gehris & Ryan Bellevou). Mr. Bellevou stated that he is seeking a dimensional variance (side yard & front yard setbacks) for renovations and a proposed 1400sf addition to a non-conforming building located on a non-conforming lot, due to the characteristics of the lot he is requesting relief to accomplish this. Mr. Bellevou is attempting to keep the property within his family and to ease the financial hardship of his in-laws by purchasing the house from his in-laws and build an addition that would provide enough room for both them and his family to live comfortably. Mr. Bellevou states that he is not trying to expand the property larger than required and has done design studies and worked with an architect to minimize the overall size of the addition to the most compact it can be while still delivering the requirements that he seeks, he is not increasing the degree to which the structure is non-conforming, the intent is to follow a line parallel to the side of the existing structure with the new addition. He is increasing the length of the structure however there will be no further encroachment upon the property line. Ms. Dobbs asked if the addition is attached to existing house, Mr. Bellevou stated that it is attached. Mr. Reitz asked if the side footprint remains the same and is there public sewer, Mr. Bellevou stated that the side footprint remains the same and the house is connected to public sewer. No other questions were asked.

A motion was made by Mr. Wynne, seconded by Mr. Zern to recommend support of Mr. Bellevou's Zoning Hearing Application for a dimensional variance for an addition to an existing non-conforming lot to the Board of Supervisors and Zoning Hearing Board. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Zern-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

Subdivisions and Land Developments

Graterford Properties – 400 Gilbertsville Road, 10 residential lots, to BOS for Final Approval of Plan & Waivers.

Quigley Bus Service – (Land Use Appeal Pending) will attend future P/A Meeting.

Danny Jake/Hallowell Cluster- (Possible Plan Revisions Pending)

Wynstone Subdivision – New Hanover Township, no new information.

Danny Jake Corporation, Zern Tract – Proposed 241 Single Family Townhomes on 28.5 acres, Zoned R-3. Preliminary Plan Approval Granted. P/A recommended final approval to the BOS.

Minister Creek LP – Mixed use project – (Project on hold).

Sign Ordinance – U. S. Supreme Court Case, revisions pending.

PA Medical Cannabis Legislation – No new information.

Holly Road – Neighborhood mixed use on 52 acres. Revised Sketch Plan Review dated 9/12/18. (Awaiting preliminary plan submittal).

303 Gilbertsville Road – 20 lots (Awaiting official plan submittal for reviews).

650 Englesville Road – R-3 Andrew Bellwoar & Rolph Graf – Mixed use Overlay Ordinance

Amendment recommended approval by P/A to BOS. (Draft Ordinance from M. Doll dated 1/10/19).

Specht Family – Letter dated 2/7/19 regarding rezoning of residential properties along Swinehart Road. Mr. Specht was inquiring about the possibility of rezoning his parcels on Swinehart Road since the other side of Rt.100 was allowed an overlay. Mr. Doll explained that rezoning is quite expensive requiring a zoning map change and hearings. Ms. Dobbs stated that overlay language was added to the R-2 District for 25 acres or more and there was no need for rezoning or map changes. Ms. Dobbs stated that when updates are needed to the Comprehensive Plan we could reconsider the Long Property and surrounding properties, Mr. Doll added that there could be potential changes with the Rt.100 Corridor and your request could then be considered. Mr. Wynne stated that it is a timing issue and this may be considered in the future.

Joseph Margusity – Avante Apartments Expansion – No one was present.

Mr. Wynne stated that tonight’s workshop discussion was concerning the Long Property on Jackson Road. Peter Williamson was present on behalf of the Natural Lands Trust, Jeff Marshall appeared on behalf of the Heritage Conservancy along with the Conservancy Solicitor Susan Caughlan, Esquire. Jeff Karver appeared as the attorney with Mr. Brian Kriebel as the personal representative of the Estate of Mary Jane Long. Mr. Karver asked for the meeting so that all parties could openly discuss the long term plan for the Route 100 Corridor in light of Mrs. Long’s wishes that her farm property be preserved. Mr. Wynne advised that the Township has had the Route 100 Corridor and the proposed Market Street as a long term plan for a very long time and that the proposed Market Street is designed to run from Philadelphia Avenue south down to Grosser Road as such it would run directly through the long Farm and also advised that the Township’s priority is Market Street as opposed to development of the Long Farm into residential or commercial properties. The Trust and Conservancy representatives stated that they understand the Township’s plan with respect to the proposed Market Street butt their main goal is to honor the wishes of the land owners who entrust their land to them. Attorney Caughlan suggested that the Township should redesign Market Street because if the Long Farm is to be preserved as a farm, the Conservancy could not allow Market Street to run through the middle of the property and requested copies of the Market Street Overlay as well as the DVRPC Access Study that discusses traffic and the proposed Market Street. It was agreed that the Township would provide those copies to both the Trust and the Conservancy and Mr. Kriebel would discuss the situation with the Trust and Conservancy before any conveyance of the Long Farm occurs.

Workshop Items

(ACTIVE)

- a. Act 209 Study – Act 209 Committee Meeting Schedule TBA (Workshop 2/14/19 @ 6pm to discuss Act 209 updates and the Long Property on Jackson Road).
- b. Signage/Lighting
- c. Zoning/SALDO Updates (Codification in process) Draft Code to Township for Review.

(INACTIVE)

- d. Green Building Ordinance
- e. Revitalization

Pottstown Metro Regional Planning Commission Update – Ed Reitz

Mr. Reitz stated that PMRPC had their reorganizational meeting and he was appointed as Chairman and North Coventry Vice Chairman. DVRPC named the 9 intersections for traffic study and Middle Creek Road & Congo Road were named for low cost improvements such as possible signage improvements, visibility help, stop bars, a street light, and the possibility of installing 4 stop signs. No questions were given.

Public Comment

Mr. Updegrave stated that Market Street will not alleviate traffic, it will get worse and also the traffic on Jackson Road and Oberholtzer Road is terrible. Mr. Link commented that years ago there was a right-of-way opportunity behind Summer Hill that unfortunately was never utilized for traffic diversion. Mr. Kolb commented that there is equipment activity at a dangerous curve doing testing in New Hanover. He also asked why we don't make Diehl Drive a traffic release route. Mr. Wynne reminded everyone that we can't stop development if it is a by right use, however we can make suggestions to try to improve the situation. Mr. Carlson who is in negotiations to purchase the Zern's Farmers Market Property, asked if adding ballfields would be considered part of land preservation if he were to get involved in the purchase of the Long Property, he would love to be involved in the possibilities for the Long Property. He is also revisiting the Sports Complex idea in New Hanover Township since the YMCA has left that Township hang. Mr. Carlson handed out a conceptual plan for the New Hanover Property. He stated that many people have approached him asking for him to consider reopening the farmer's market because now most people have to travel to Quakertown, Kutztown, or Adamstown for fresh produce and he asked the P/A what their feelings are. Members thought it would be a great idea to reopen as a farmers market. Mr. Carlson stated that he is looking at business days to be Thursday through Sunday, Mr. Wynne commented that the market is very run down. Mr. Carlson said that he is only interested in the back portion of the property and the neighbor is very interested in the front portion for parking and is willing to make a deal. Mr. Steffenburg of 50 Fox Hollow Drive asked what the long term plans are for the Stafy Tract because his property is being flooded. Mr. Wynne said that it was approved for 6 homes. Mr. Steffenburg said that Ryan Homes hasn't finished the discharge system and there is erosion. Mr. Hagadorn stated that easements will be needed and the developer is on record to fix the problem. Ms. Dobbs wanted to discuss planning goals at a future workshop meeting involving street scaping through the main street in Gilbertsville along with Main Street Greenways Study, and the Revitalization Plan. Mr. Kolb asked if this included all the mailboxes in the middle of the sidewalks on E. Philadelphia Avenue, Ms. Dobbs replied yes. Mr. Clarence Kolb said he heard there is going to be 200 apartments going in at 303 Gilbertsville Road, Mr. Wynne stated that we have seen two or three versions for that area and they are only conceptual plans. The P/A Members asked for a Staff Meeting Summary for the Zern Tract. Mr. Stouch commented that he sees the same people come to the meetings, it is very important to get information and urges more people to attend these meetings to get the correct information.

Deadline Dates for Subdivision Submittals:

- I. Cobblestone Commons – Indefinite.
- II. Quigley Bus Service – Land Use Appeal Pending.
- III. Zern Tract – Awaiting Final Plan
- IV. Graterford Properties – Indefinite
- V. Holly Road – December 2020
- VI. Gilbertsville Road – Sketch Plan

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Wynne to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

The next Planning Agency Meeting will be held on March 14th, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by,
Marcy Meitzler