

Gerald Delong called the Regular Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:04 p.m. on Monday, March 5, 2007. Planning Commission Members present included Doug Worley, Keith Kneipp, and Robert Yothers. Assistant Township Manager Jamie P. Worman, Township Engineer Cynthia Van Hise and Watson Olszewski from the Montgomery County Planning Commission were also present for this meeting. Kyle Koffel, Kerrin Musselman and Robert Flosdorf were absent from the meeting. (Excused)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Worley made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 5, 2007 regular Planning Commission Meeting. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

Hendricks Land Development – Godshall Road (#06-04)

No action was taken on this proposal. A formal withdrawal of this application has not yet been received.

Reinford Subdivision- Godshall Road (#07-05)

Mr. Reinford was present to discuss this application. He explained to the commission that the perc test results had been submitted to the township a few hours prior to the meeting. He asked if the commission would consider a preliminary approval even though the engineer did not have sufficient time to review the test results. Mr. Delong replied that they would like to see the perc sites on the plans and suggested he come back next month for an approval recommendation. Mr. Reinford agreed. There was no further discussion on this application.

Todd Walker Subdivision – Mininger Road (#12-05)

Ms. Worman informed the commission that revised plans had been submitted on February 26th and reviews were pending.

Donald & Linda Hagey Subdivision – Schoolhouse Road (#16-05)

Ms. Worman informed the commission that the applicant had received a letter from PennDot and that she had expected to see a representative for the project at the meeting. However, no one was

present. Ms. Worman informed the group that a recommendation for denial would be necessary if an extension of the 90-day time limitation was not received prior to the next board of supervisors meeting. Mr. Yothers made a motion to deny the plan in the absence of an extension. Mr. Worley seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

The Weimer Group Land Development- Rte. 113 & Schoolhouse Rd. (#03-06)

Mr. Zach Randstead of Stout, Tacconelli and Associates was present to discuss this application. He started by saying that they had made all the required changes to the layout of the plan. He explained that the sand mound had been removed and public sewer provisions added. He also stated that they had made the necessary changes to the stormwater design as well. He then reported that they were in receipt of a review letter from Metz Engineers dated February 28th, 2007 and a PennDot letter dated January 17th, 2007. He also stated that he had submitted a formal waiver letter to the township. Mr. Randstead then went through the waiver items with the commission. He explained that they were seeking a waiver for curbing and sidewalk along Route 113 and a deferral of sidewalk along Schoolhouse Road in conjunction with the Peter Becker Community sidewalk deferral. He explained that the Weimer Group will install sidewalk at the same time Peter Becker installs their sidewalk. He also mentioned that widening was proposed along Schoolhouse but not along Route 113. However, they would extend the curbing around the radius. Mr. Randstead continued with the waiver requests stating that they were seeking a waiver of the site datum. They plan to address it by putting a note on the plan. He continued that they would be seeking a landscaping waiver in regards to the 25 foot buffer requirement. He explained that there was no room on the site to provide the required buffer. The driveway is 25 feet and would have to be moved to Route 113 and they wanted to avoid an entrance on the busier road. Mr. Randstead stated that they are providing the arborvitae to buffer the site from the adjoining uses. The arborvitae combined with the existing trees really adds to the buffer. He then went on to say that they were seeking a partial waiver for the 2-3 foot high berm. The reason for this was that there was not enough room to grade-up the berm. However, the plantings would be provided. There is also berming already existing around the basin courtesy of Peter Becker. Mr. Delong questioned whether they would consider getting the neighbors input on the arborvitae. Mr. Randstead replied that they have to approach the neighbors as required by the PennDot review letter so they could mention this during that time. Mr. Delong replied that the group had no real issues with the waiver requests. He continued that they were happy to hear that the curbing the radius would not be a problem. He asked the commission if they would be more comfortable with a deferral of sidewalks

along Route 113 as opposed to a waiver. Ms. Van Hise mentioned that the waiver was granted to the Maloni Street Project along Route 113. The commission agreed that they would support the full waiver. Mr. Delong questioned the position of the commission in regards to the landscaping waivers. Mr. Worley replied that he was concerned with the residential neighbors and the buffering and would feel better if the applicant approached the neighbors. Mr. Wimmer asked if they would want something in writing from the neighbors. Mr. Delong and Mr. Worley replied that that would be acceptable. Mr. Randstead then addressed the Metz review letter. He stated that most of the items listed were clean up items and they would comply with the majority of the items. He then turned his attention to a comment under the construction improvement section of the Metz review letter. The comment dealt with curb cuts. Mr. Randstead explained that the first curb cut was for lawn mowers and the second cut was for runoff to be directed down toward the basin to help breakup the impervious surface. He explained that they were trying to follow the spirit of the ordinance to allow infiltration but putting in an inlet and pipe would go against that approach. Ms. Van Hise then suggested eliminating the lower curbing stating that it might make for a cleaner design. Mr. Randstead replied that that would be okay but thought they'd need a waiver for that. Mr. Randstead then mentioned that Del-Val Soils was going out to the site to do the infiltration testing although they suspect there will not be a good outcome. However, they plan on doing what is required. Ms. Van Hise replied that as long as they meet the spirit of the ordinance it will be okay. Mr. Randstead explained that they were trying to work in the gravity and water items. The water will go through the Peter Becker basin after it leaves the site so it will be double filtered. He then stated that they can comply with the 2-year post construction stormwater report and work on the emergency spillway if required. Ms. Van Hise then questioned if they had received a review letter from S.C. Engineers regarding the sewer. Mr. Randstead replied that they had received a letter and that the sewer authority engineer was still strongly requesting a full gravity line down Route 113. Mr. Randstead explained that they would agree to abandoned the grinder pump and tie into a gravity line in the future if it came down Route 113 but that it was too costly for this project to install one at this time. Ms. Van Hise asked if they had contacted the sewer authority yet and suggested they attend the next meeting to keep the project moving. Mr. Randstead then reported that there were no major items listed in the PennDot letter. Ms. Van Hise questioned if PennDot was aware of everything they were planning. Mr. Randstead replied that they were and that they will incorporate everything into their next plan revision. No further discussion took place on this application.

Ken Taggart Subdivision- 521 Cowpath Road (#05-06)

Marty Eustace of Eustace Engineering was present to discuss this application. He gave a brief overview of the project located at 521 Cowpath Road and then gave an update on the plan status. He explained that when the plan was originally submitted it was a 7-lot subdivision with a 30-foot wide cul-de-sac road and a sub-surface detention basin. He continued that since that time the plan has been revised. The basin has been removed and replaced with a traditional surface basin which caused a loss of one unit. Mr. Eustace explained that he and the applicant had met with staff and came up with a new design because the structures have to be 75-feet from the basin. In order to meet this requirement a reduced pavement and right-of-way width was suggested. The cul-de-sac would become a private road and a waiver for a reduced width would be requested. He explained that they are currently proposing a 24-foot wide roadway as opposed to 30-foot wide roadway required under code. They would also be eliminating the interior sidewalk to reduce the impervious coverage. If this was permitted they could then move the buildings forward and bring them into compliance with the setback requirement. Mr. Eustace explained they were looking for feedback from the township. Ms. Van Hise noted that the 75-foot buffer requirement was in the zoning code and could not be waived. Mr. Worley asked Ms. Van Hise if she felt this revised plan was a better plan. Ms. Van Hise replied that she did feel it was a better plan but that there was still work to be done and issues to be resolved. Mr. Kneipp questioned whether 5 driveways were permissible, as he had thought it was only 4 driveways. Mr. Worley said that since it was a private road 5 driveways were allowed. Mr. Delong verified that no internal sidewalk was being proposed. Mr. Eustace confirmed. Mr. Kneipp then questioned the location of the trail. Mr. Eustace explained that they would provide an easement for the trail along the back and then tie into the sidewalk along the frontage. They would provide the easement and the required funding and then the township would go in at a later date and install the trail. Ms. Worman then asked if they were in fact proposing sidewalk along the frontage. Mr. Eustace replied that they would be providing sidewalks across the entire frontage. Mr. Delong added that it made sense to tie the trail in at that point and he added that he felt it was a better design. Mr. Worley agreed. Mr. Taggart added that they felt the trail would be even better if it was closer to the creek. Ms. Worman added that this trail can connect into the trail easement that was granted through the Serratore Subdivision. Mr. Kneipp then asked if the roadway width is reduced how it would affect the bulb size and would emergency vehicles be able to get in there. Mr. Eustace explained the entire narrow concept. He then asked how the township would view the drainage swales on both sides of the road and what would be required for these easements. Ms. Van Hise agreed to discuss this at staff level with the applicant. Ms. Worman

informed the group that a recommendation for denial would be necessary if an extension of the 90-day time limitation was not received prior to the next board of supervisors meeting. Mr. Worley made a motion to deny the plan in the absence of an extension. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further discussion took place on this application.

Reformed Baptist Church Subdivision (#09-06)

Mr. Brad Clymer of Richard C. Mast Associates gave an update on this project. He reported that the applicant had received a zoning hearing board approval that had been required. He then mentioned that there had been an issue with an alternate septic site. However, after talking with the Executive Director they were able to get a letter from the authority indicating that public sewer would be available within the next 5 years. The Montgomery County Health Department accepted that as the alternative. The system in place is currently functioning. Due to the change in the septic situation the lot configuration has changed somewhat. He mentioned that they were in the process of submitting a conditional use application and that they had made application to PennDot for a driveway permit. He then informed the commission that they would be back in when all of these issues have been resolved.

Earl Moyer Tract Subdivision (#10-06)

No action was taken on this proposal. Revisions not yet submitted for review.

MCC Resource Center Land Development (#13-06)

Mr. Brad Clymer of Richard C. Mast Associates gave an update on this project. He reported that they had gotten a hold of PECO regarding the utility line and they confirmed it is only an easement. Therefore, they can move the building. He then stated that they are just starting the revisions to the plans. They would still like to discuss the road improvements. No further discussion took place on this application.

Garges Minor Subdivision (#14-06)

Mr. Brad Clymer of Richard C. Mast Associates gave an update on this project. Mr. Clymer gave a brief overview of the project. He reported that all of the items listed in the Metz Review letter dated January 3, 2007 have been addressed and the plans were revised and submitted along with the conditional use application. Ms. Van Hise mentioned that the plan would need to be updated with a note stating the plan received conditional use approval by the board of supervisors. Mr. Clymer

then continued to explain that the width of the flag had been increased from 30-feet to 50-feet which wouldn't do much except slightly reduce the open space. He then noted that they had received a review letter from the county that had suggested installing trails, sidewalks, and landscaping for buffering purposes. Mr. Clymer stated that the applicant was not inclined to pursue these recommendations. Mr. Delong added that they were just suggestions. Ms. Van Hise requested that Mr. Clymer provide a proof copy of the plan prior to submitting the plans for recording. Mr. Worley made a motion to recommend the application for conditional preliminary/final approval. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Lincoln Woods Subdivision (#01-07)

Mr. Richard Parry of T.H. Properties was present to discuss this application. He gave an overview of the project stating that the primary access would be off of Kulp Road. The project will consist of 83 single-family residential lots. The Ruth Homestead will remain as one of the lots. The site is approximately 85 acres and a cluster option will be applied. Mr. Parry then mentioned that he had received reviews from both Metz Engineers and the county planning commission. He explained that he would not be going through the review letter in detail at this meeting but instead would just touch on a few points. He then mentioned that they have proposed widening along Kulp Road. Sidewalks and trails were other items he discussed. He reported that they did intend to tie in a trail to the Peter Becker Community. Mr. Delong questioned if there was buffering and a sound barrier proposed for the properties along the turnpike. Mr. Olsweski added that a 50-foot wide strip should be reserved along the turnpike because of future expansion. Mr. Parry replied that they have made application to the turnpike commission because they will possibly be running a sewer line under the turnpike and that this item will most likely be addressed at that time. He also added that buffering is proposed. Ms. Worman informed the group that because the number of units associated with this plan it is considered a project of regional significance and would go before the regional planning commission for review and comment. Mr. Olsweski then noted that there should be an attempt to connect the trail system into Lower Salford's system. Mr. Olsweski then questioned whether a bus stop would be provided. Mr. Parry replied that a bus stop similar to the one at Breechwood would not be a problem. Mr. Kneipp asked if that would be a sheltered bus stop. Mr. Parry replied yes. Mr. Olsweski commented that there were no active facilities shown such as a tot lot. Mr. Parry said that there were none proposed at this time. Mr. Delong suggested it be considered given the size of the development. Mr. Parry explained that they were not quite at that stage yet in the plan development. Mr. Olsweski asked what the open space areas would be like. Ms. Van Hise replied

that the proposed open space areas were lawn areas with extensive buffering along the perimeter. Mr. DeLong asked if it would be a homeowners association. Mr. Parry replied that that would be up to the township. Mr. DeLong asked if sidewalks were proposed. Mr. Parry replied that there was sidewalk proposed. Ms. Van Hise suggested that THP consider rain gardens in the eyebrow open spaces. No further discussion took place on this application.

New Business

Guidemark Land Development (#02-07)

Mr. Worley made a motion to formally accept the Guidemark Land Development plan. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

Ms. Worman reported that the Reformed Baptist Church's application had been approved as previously noted by Mr. Clymer. Ms. Worman then reported that THP had submitted an application to the Zoning Hearing Board for a special exception to permit an in-law suite at the property located at 320 Elmwood Lane in the Belmont Estates Development. The hearing is scheduled for March 12, 2007.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Worman reported that the Garges Conditional Use Application had been approved as previously noted by Mr. Clymer. She then informed the commission that the Lincoln Woods Conditional Use Application is tentatively scheduled for April 16th, 2007. All comments regarding the application should be forwarded to the township manager prior to that date. Mr. Worley will attend the hearing on behalf of the planning commission. Ms. Worman then notified the commission that a planning module had been received for the Windy Heights Subdivision.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled Planning Commission meeting is Monday, April 2, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

There was no further business discussed at the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie P. Worman, Assistant Township Manager