

May 1, 2017

**NORTH HUNTINGDON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
Monday, May 1, 2017 @ 7:00 P.M.
11279 Center Highway, North Huntingdon, PA 15642**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Chapman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

.

ROLL CALL

William Chapman, President	Present	Also Present:
Virginia Stump, Secretary	Present	
Thomas Kerber	Present	Ryan Fonzi
James McHugh	Present	Donald Housley, Mitall Eng.
Stephen Cross	Present	
Joseph Dykta	Absent	
Nicholas Liparulo	Absent	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Mr. Kerber Motioned to approve minutes. (Meeting of April 3, 2017)

Second: Mr. McHugh Motion Carried: 5 ~ 0 ~ 0

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

S-07-2017: Paul Kerber II Subdivision - Proposed boundary line adjustment along First Street and Kifer Lane.

Mr. Fonzi read his memo: "this is a boundary line revision in the Straw Pump area of the Township. Mr. Paul Kerber owns both lots involved. He lives on the proposed Lot 1RR at 281 First Street. Last year, he purchased an adjoining lot that has frontage on Kifer Lane. Mr. Kerber would like to adjust the common boundary line between the two lots. After the revision, the proposed Lot 1RR will be 3.965 acres and the proposed Lot 5 will be

May 1, 2017

3.761 acres in size. Both subject lots meet the minimum dimensional requirements for an R-2 district.

There are a couple labeling errors on the plan, but once the surveyor addresses these issues, I can recommend the plan for approval.”

Mr. Fonzi said he spoke with Dave Samek, surveyor, and everything is corrected.

Motion: Ms. Stump **Motioned to recommend plan for approval.**

Second: Mr. Cross **Motion Carried: 4 ~ 0 ~ 1**
(Abstention: Thomas Kerber)

S-08-2017: Weber Estates - Proposed residential development on Colonial Manor Road.

Mr. Fonzi read Mr. Blenko’s memo: “this is an application for a 21-lot plan of single-family homes on 24.82 acres, proposed by RWS Development. A single cul-de-sac street is proposed, approximately 961 feet long. Since the street crests in the middle, stormwater detention lots are proposed at each end of the street. There is an existing sanitary sewer at the rear of the property. Three lots close to Colonial Manor Road will need to be served by grinder pumps. Public water can be brought in from Colonial Manor Road, although availability of service letters and/or developer’s agreements are needed for sewer and water.

It appears that waivers are requested on sidewalks, cul-de-sac length, vertical curves, and the use of reinforced concrete pipe for storm sewers in the street. The plan also shows 50% maximum lot coverage (rather than 25%) and a front yard setback of just 21 feet for five lots. Obviously the Planning Commission cannot grant these last two items as they are contained in the Zoning Ordinance. Only the Zoning Hearing Board can grant variances on the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Needless to say, I do not recommend a waiver for sidewalks. Walkable communities are an important part of the Township’s SALDO and Comprehensive Plan. I also do not see why the required vertical curve cannot be provided.

Don Housley and I have reviewed the plan, and our comments are attached. Although the development layout is workable, there is additional information and documentation needed on a number of items. There are also outside agency approvals needed for stormwater management and erosion control. An NPDES Permit will likely take a number of months to obtain as this is a high quality watershed. Therefore, I recommend

May 1, 2017

that this plan be tabled until all review items can be resolved and the other matters heard by the ZHB.”

Mr. Graham Ferry, Sheffler Engineering, discussed the basics of this site plan; 24.82 acres for project area, wetlands are 1.86 acres, 14.2 acres of site will be left undisturbed, 21 new lots, standard cul-de-sac, 3 streams in the area, this site has a high quality watershed, 24' wide roadway, it was named William Drive but the township notified us that there is a conflict and it will be renamed, there are 2 on-site stormwater detention facilities, and the stream buffer (100') is the driving force for the shape of the development.

Mr. Donald Housley, Mitall Engineering, asked about the two commercial uses along the north side. The parking lot of one seems to come up to the rear of this development. Is there anything being proposed separating these homes from that commercial area? I don't think there was much shown on the plan.

Mr. Robert Shuster said that parking lot is elevated to the point where there isn't going to be any question where it is; there is already a buffer. We are going to leave the trees along that area.

Mr. Ferry continued: these homes will be single family, minimum width lots will be 65', we are going before the zoning hearing board for the front yard set-backs from the required 30' to 21' on lots 1-5, and lot coverage is proposed at 50% due to the site requirements.

Mr. Shuster said he does not know where the 50% came from; we are not building houses that big in this development. The 25% is the existing requirement and I do not think that is a problem for us.

Mr. Ferry continued: the development proposes a lot size of approximately 13,945 due to the size requirements.

Mr. Housley said to clarify that would leave you with the smallest lot of 1,743 SF of surface area.

Mr. Shuster said that is a problem; maybe we can say 30%. These houses will be from \$350,000 to \$450,000. That would make them 2,600 – 2,800 SF. I do not see us going to 3,000 or 4,000 SF homes. We are being pushed to build ranches. We have built more ranches this year than we have in the entire history of our company.

May 1, 2017

Mr. Housley said maybe we can work with your consultant. I know you have a zoning hearing board application in for the next meeting. We can isolate which lots need the variance. Some of the lots are more than an acre so the 25% coverage will work. We could isolate it down and say a maximum of 3500 SF and you will need to amend your application to include that. I think that should be added to your application. This board cannot approve that change.

Mr. Ferry continued: we are showing that the necessary site distance will be provided at the access road along Colonial Manor Road. Permit issues: the PennDot HOP permit is currently underway, DEP & Westmoreland Conservation District regarding NPDES and Erosion Control Permit has all been submitted and currently under technical review. We have received an exemption from the 537 requirements for new land development from PA DEP and it will be provided. There is a waiver request for the proposed street length of 700' in lieu of the 900' required. There are no cross streets. The vertical curve of 400' in lieu of the 470'. A 470' vertical curve would have a very detrimental impact on the overall development and topography. It causes substantial fill issues, it will create a very large slope at the eastern side of the site. There would be balancing issues causing off-site hauling. The waiver for the sidewalk will hinder the ability to develop a few of the lots, in particular, lots 1-5. This is a relatively small development and probably isn't viewed as practical or necessary from a pedestrian standpoint. The waiver for the 21' front yard set-back is so that the dwellings would not have to be pushed back to the rear of the lot. There is already a substantial amount of grading in that area because of the slopes and site topography.

Mr. Housley said the Planning Commission will not rule on the front yard set-back issue. I have a concern going to the 21' front yard set-back and our ordinance permitting you to go an additional 8' for the front porch. That puts the porch 13' off the roadway.

Mr. Shuster said to let history be a rule on this one. I have never put any of the 1,000-2,000 houses I have built beyond that front building line because it looks terrible. I guarantee there won't be any porches going beyond the 21' set-back. Me and my boys know better.

Mr. Ferry continued: The proposal to use N12 HP pipe instead of reinforced concrete. There are a number of beneficial reasons to use this type of pipe. We understand this is often accepted as equivalent by the township.

Mr. Shuster said we have been using this pipe in all of our subdivisions. It takes a lot less stone to bed this and everything is compacted. We don't have to fight with frost and the pipe holds up. Testing shows it is as strong and lasts as long as concrete. Mr. Blenko

May 1, 2017

has approved this in Lincoln Hills and Hampton Heights. If you look up the recorded covenants for any of our subdivisions, we don't allow sheds unless they are built out of brick and mortar and driveways and sidewalks have to be concrete. The only thing I change in the covenants are the name of the subdivision. I don't install the driveways but it is in the covenants that they are to be put in by the next warm season (approximately 6 months).

Mr. Housley asked if you would object for that to be placed as a note on the subdivision plan that they have to be a paved driveway.

Mr. Shuster said no.

Mr. Housley said for the corner lots, 1 and 21, part of the code says driveways have to be 50' back from the intersection.

Mr. Shuster said we normally put the driveways on the high side of the lot. I don't see this being a problem. They will exit onto the development's road and not Colonial Manor Road.

Mr. Housley said all he received for the wetlands & stream report is a little strip done for the North Huntingdon Municipal Authority down the north property line. I am sure you have a study for the rest.

Mr. Gary Sheffler, Sheffler Engineering, said you must have only received the GP portion of the study. We will get that out to you.

Mr. Housley said he has two questions on the vertical curves. At the entrance way you show starting at the center line of the road a 2% cross-grade. Then it goes to a plus 3-5%. Can we smooth that out? The design shows it as a sharp angle.

Mr. Sheffler said we are presently going through the PennDot application with them, we can look at putting some type of vertical curve there.

Mr. Housley said some small transition. We have a 100' vertical curve and my math shows it should be 170'. That would also request a modification. That will need to be added to the list of modifications. Would you talk about the modification you are requesting for the sidewalks?

Mr. Shuster said he has the requirement of sidewalks in Kingsbury that has 26 lots. I met with clients at Kingsbury and was there for 1 ½ hours and not one car passed us. If

May 1, 2017

you visit Buena Vista, residents are all out in the street. The sidewalks are taking away the beautification of their houses. I predict that most of the residents in this new lot plan will be retired. I question how much traffic will be on this street. Residents walking do not like to cross people's driveways. I understand sidewalks in a plan like Lincoln Hills. Residents are responsible for paving their driveways and sidewalks. Sidewalks will create a problem for the lots that we are asking for the variance on for 21'. I don't think I could even get a permit for sidewalks on the state Colonial Manor Road from PennDot.

Mr. Housley asked what was proposed for street lights.

Mr. Shuster said West Penn Power will do the drawings on the street lights. I do want street lights in this plan.

Mr. Housley said most of the corners of the property have existing pins. The ordinance requires monumentation. It is wrong to pull an existing pin. There are some corners that don't have monumentation in pins or in concrete and nothing was shown on the subdivision plan along the PC's or PT's or anything within the plan. What will you do with that?

Mr. Sheffler said there will be permanent monuments shown in the streets probably on the two tangent sections. We will add pins to the major boundaries where they don't exist.

Mr. Housley asked lot corners within the plan, is that a general rule Mr. Fonzi? I know it is in the code but are developers doing this?

Mr. Fonzi said yes.

Mr. Shuster said when we sale the house, at the closing, the customer is charged for a final survey and at that point front and back pins are all installed (5/8" rebar in the ground with a 3' wood stick).

Mr. Housley said the first thing under stormwater management will probably be addressed by the resolution of the maximum square footage per lot coverage. I think this can be eliminated now because they assumed a 30% impervious area of a 1/3 acre residential lot which takes us up to 4300 SF. I think we are okay on this item with Mr. Shuster saying the maximum square footage of a house being 3500 SF. The submission date on the plan was confusing. It has the preliminary submission date as March 8, 2017. The application is stamped as received on April 10, 2017. I want it on the record that April 10th is the actual date the plan was submitted. I would like to see that date

May 1, 2017

changed to reflect the April 10, 2017 date. Tonight will be the official acceptance of the application. Tonight starts the clock. Does the cut and fill earth work balance on the site?

Mr. Sheffler said yes.

Mr. Housley said the driveway to the stormwater management pond is noted as being gravel and it is 18%. I don't think 18' will hold and will wash out.

Mr. Shuster said they will put some black top down. I don't want to do tar and chip. We will leave it gravel until we are done and when we are doing the final paving we will take care of it. I don't think it is that long.

Mr. Housley said it is pretty long.

Mr. Sheffler said the challenge is to get from the cul-de-sac down to it. It is longer than 150'.

Mr. Housley said the black top is needed in the steep area. I am trying to clarify where the access easement is, you have it shaded in grey. Shading doesn't seem to work; it doesn't photo copy well.

Mr. Sheffler said they would take care of it, he knows exactly what Mr. Housley means.

Mr. Housley said we will correct the modification requests as we have heard tonight. A couple were variances that needed wording changed and a couple others had the numbers written incorrectly. There are many modifications needed and two variances.

Ms. Stump asked what the depths of the mines were under this area.

Mr. Ferry said he didn't know an exact number but I think it is addressed and it is substantial distance.

Mr. Sheffler said we did have a geotechnical report prepared for this site.

Mr. Housley said he read the report and it does state that at one point the coverage reaches approximately 100'. As a general rule of thumb in western Pennsylvania, 100' or more is considered safe and those words are actually used in the geotechnical report.

Mr. Shuster said we did some research on this and it was 180'.

May 1, 2017

Mr. Housley said when you read this, it is referring to rock cover. Soil doesn't give you any stability.

Ms. Stump said the reason I ask is due to the apartment behind the gas station had subsidence issues.

Mr. Shuster said everyone says it was mine subsidence but I disagree because when that building was built, half of it was placed on virgin ground and the other half on fill. The building cracked where the two met. If it wasn't cored, I question if that was mine subsidence.

Ms. Stump asked what the site distance was on Colonial Manor Road.

Mr. Sheffler said there is a HOP underway and the site distance measurements were satisfactory for the PennDot permit in access of 300+ feet in one direction and 400+' in the other.

Mr. Housley asked if they had to grade back at all.

Mr. Sheffler said no. We are grading some of that as part of our entrance but it was not a site distance issue.

Ms. Stump asked if it was anticipated for the people who will be living in this plan to be in need of a trail or something to the streams that run through this property.

Mr. Shuster said he went down that hill with an excavator with a mower on the front of it trying to cut a path so that we could walk through. I had to dig my way out because I was stuck with a 12,000 lb. machine. He doesn't believe anyone would want to walk in this area.

Ms. Stump asked then if the terrain was too steep.

Mr. Shuster said it is very steep.

Mr. Housley asked do you have a sign for this plan. I know you would not be able to place it in the PennDot right-of-way.

Mr. Shuster said they are not putting up a permanent monument plan sign.

May 1, 2017

Mr. Cross said Mr. Blenko's suggestion was to table this plan based on the number of issues that Mr. Housley has identified. Some of those have been resolved this evening. Has enough of these issues been resolved to move to approving this plan.

Mr. Housley said we have an HQ stream which takes 6 months to a year for a permit.

Mr. Sheffler said we submitted this permit, we have had pre-application meetings, we have followed the due diligence of those meetings, held back the required buffers, we are administratively complete with DEP and it is out for other agency reviews (both fish & wildlife) and we would expect comments in May and once we receive these technical comments, if the comments are insignificant and we feel they will be, we don't feel the HQ permit will have the timeline that everyone feels it will have.

Mr. Shuster said every time I come in here it is always recommended by Andy Blenko to table my plan. I have followed through in this community and I have never let anything go; I even went back to Lincoln Hills and spent \$70,000 to fix the road three years after they were dedicated. These are minor issues on this plan. I am asking that you would approve this with the contingencies. These will all be done. For some reason, maybe Mr. Blenko thinks I am doing something wrong, but every one of my plans he recommends not approving but to table them. It just delays us.

Ms. Stump said she thinks he does that because the Board of Commissioners do not want a long list of conditions.

Mr. Shuster asked why he doesn't do it to other people. He does it to me personally.

Mr. Kerber asked if the contingencies are that important that they can't be resolved.

Mr. Housley said other than the variances and the modifications that need granted that we discussed, I think we fairly well resolved most of the other outstanding issues. I do not see anything else major.

Mr. Kerber said that is how he is feeling. He agreed.

Mr. Housley listed the modifications:

- 1) The length of the cul-de-sac street going from 700' to 960'.
- 2) There are 3 vertical curves that would be needed, modifications granted, to allow for the length of the vertical curves to change. I don't see any of them as major changes to the township's codes. In this particular case, due to the

May 1, 2017

steep slopes, to force the developer to use the longer curves would force them to put in steeper streets, which I would be opposed to.

Mr. Sheffler said it would further impact the set-backs we are trying to stay out of on the environmental aspects of the site. Another reason for the vertical curves is trying to make the development work without additional fill in those areas that we are staying out of.

Mr. Kerber asked how long this would take – when the zoning hearing board will meet. Do you think all of the modifications can be met by that meeting?

Mrs. Bolden said the zoning hearing board will meet Tuesday, June 6, 2017.

Mr. Shuster said when it goes before the zoning hearing board, I am hoping that they will approve it but if they don't then we will move the lot lines to 30' on the drawings and hope that I can sale those lots.

Mr. Housley continued:

- 3) The other modifications are the sidewalks, street lights (agreed to), monument markers (agreed to), lot corner pins (agreed to), plastic pipe under the cart-way (it was stated tonight that it has been permitted for some time and I am not aware of this and will step aside from this issue).

Ms. Stump said she would still like to see sidewalks, at least on one side of the street where the lots are longer.

Mr. Chapman and Mr. Cross feel that a subdivision of this size doesn't need sidewalks.

Motion: Mr. Kerber **Motioned to recommend plan for approval with the conditions that were discussed.**

Second: Mr. Cross **Motion Carried: 5 ~ 0**

S-09-2017: Stratton Plan - Proposed subdivision on Guffey Rillton Road.

Mr. Fonzi read his memo: "this is a minor subdivision along Guffey-Rillton Road. The subject lot is 1.19 acres in size, contains two dwellings and is jointly owned by two parties. Mr. Stratton, who lives at 11380 Guffey-Rillton Road and his neighbor, Mrs. Moss, who lives on the same property at 11400 Guffey-Rillton Road would like to divide the properties so each home is on a separate lot. After the subdivision, the Stratton lot will be 0.4846 acres and the

May 1, 2017

X

Planning Commission Chairman

X

Planning Commission Secretary