

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 2, 2006

The Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, May 2, 2006 at the Township Hall, 4975 DeMoss Road, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Donald R. Wilson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Donald R. Wilson, Chairman
John W. Bittig, Vice Chairman
John F. Ruff, Secretary
Richard Littlehales
Dottie Geiger

ABSENT: Paul L. Schwartz
Gary L. Shane

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Craig Peifer, GVC Consulting Engineer
Cheryl Franckowiak, Zoning Officer
Linda Cusimano, Recording Secretary
Eric Gardecki, GIS Administrator

1. MINUTES

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Ruff, to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2006 Planning Commission Meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

2. AGENDA

MOTION BY Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mr. Littlehales, to approve the agenda of the May 2, 2006 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVE APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

- A. **AMBER HILL – REVISED FINAL PLAN; RESIDUE OF ROYAL VIEW ESTATES – PRELIMINARY PLAN; WAL-MART LOT CONSOLIDATION – SKETCH PLAN OF RECORD; WAL-MART SUPERCENTER #1777 – PRELIMINARY PLAN: MOTION BY** Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Ruff to accept the preceding plans for review. The motion carried unanimously.

The following business was discussed:

4. **RIETHMULLER REZONING** – Molly Starr
- Lon Seitz

Mrs. Starr stated that they had one correction to their letter to the Planning Commission dated March 29, 2006. They had indicated that the Borough of St. Lawrence rezoned the parcel in November, when it was actually rezoned in March 2006. Mrs. Starr stated that they had an unsigned copy of the Ordinance. Mr. Bittig stated that we had a signed copy and offered a copy to Mrs. Starr. Mrs. Starr stated that the bulk of the property located in Exeter Township was currently zoned Highway Commercial and recently the Borough of St. Lawrence had rezoned their portion of the property to R-4, which allowed for single-family homes. They were requesting that the Planning Commission support a change in zoning on the remainder of the lot in Exeter to be in conformance with the St. Lawrence portion. Mr. Seitz stated that the tract of ground was 7.2 acres and had the frontage on Parkview Road in St. Lawrence. The property located in Exeter was shown with a portion zoned SR-1 and the remaining portion zoned Highway Commercial, they were asking that the SR-1 Zone be extended to include the entire property. The tract had only an 18-foot wide strip that connected to 422. The St. Lawrence portion was re-zoned R-4, with a minimum lot size of 7,000 s.f. The minimum lot size of the SR-1 District in Exeter was 9,000 s.f. Mr. Bittig stated that was changed to 12,000 s.f. and the entire portion of the tract in Exeter was Zoned Highway Commercial. Mr. Seitz showed a concept plan for the entire tract with 14 single-family homes with a minimum lot size of 12,200-sf. up to 30,000sf. Mr. Seitz stated that they did a loop system instead of a cul-de-sac and that it was just a conceptual plan. Mr. Bittig asked if the request was to change the current Zoning of Highway Commercial to SR-1? Mr. Seitz replied yes, it did not seem proper to remain Commercial as it was surrounded by residential. Mr. Ruff asked how many houses were allowed to be built in St. Lawrence alone? Mr. Seitz replied around 10. Mr. Ruff stated that the change would not result in that many more houses being built. He then stated that there had been a lot of talk between the Township Planning Commission and the School Board about the increase of residential units on various properties and we want to limit the increase in the residential units to limit the impact on the Schools. The zoning change that they were proposing would not significantly increase the number of residential units impacting the schools as St. Lawrence attended Exeter Schools. The zoning change would create a better development and not impact the schools. The Planning Commission then offered advice about the concept plan and Mr. Seitz responded that would be addressed during the Subdivision process.

MOTION BY Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mr. Littlehales, to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the Zoning change from Highway Commercial to SR-1 as the change would not make a substantial increase in the amount of houses that could be built on the property. The motion carried with Mr. Ruff, Mr. Littlehales, Mr. Bittig, Mrs. Geiger voting in favor and Mr. Wilson voting opposed.

5. **DEMOSS STREET HEALTH CLUB** – Pat Dolan
- Bruce Rader

GVC reviewed the DeMoss Street Health Club Final Land Development Plan (reference letter dated April 28, 2006).

Mr. Dolan stated that they had corrected the lighting plan to match the Ordinance. He then stated that they had originally requested a waiver for replacing the trees on site. They had done a tree survey and there were 39 trees that need to be replaced and they increased the count to 39 so they were in conformance with the Ordinance. Mr. Rader gave copies of the tree survey to the Planning Commission. Mr. Dolan stated that

DeMoss Street Health Club continued

they received the approval letter from DEP. Mr. Bittig asked if they obtained the easements? Mr. Dolan replied that they had and they were submitted. Mr. Peifer stated that we had not received a copy for the easement with K & P Real Estate. Mr. Dolan replied that they had one with them and gave the Planning Commission a copy. Mr. Bittig stated that we had not addressed the waiver for the flat bottom pond.

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Ruff to recommend the Board of Supervisors grant the waiver of Stormwater Act 167 Ordinance, Section 610.B.7 to allow the DeMoss Street Health Club to construct flat bottom detention ponds to promote groundwater percolation of surface runoff. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dolan then asked for Conditional Final approval.

MOTION BY Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mr. Bittig to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the DeMoss Street Health Club Final Land Development Plan subject to clean up of items listed in the April 28th GVC review letter. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson stated that he was not against the plan, but he still felt that the building would detract from the area.

6. AMBER HILL - REVISED FINAL PLAN – Stephen Bensinger
- Matt Davenport
- Walter Greth

GVC reviewed the Amber Hill revised Final Plan (reference letter dated April 28, 2006).

Mr. Bensinger stated that item #3 concerned lot #21, which was the estate lot and was 15.6 acres. There would be a Homeowners Association and the deed would contain restrictions about that lot. There was a note on the plan that stated that the estate lot could not be further subdivided. The question was should the developer delineate a Conservation Easement on that lot? Previously they were planning on putting the house on the back portion of the lot, but they had since moved it to the front. They would like to reserve the right to build the house at the back and then they would come back to have the stormwater reviewed by the Township Engineer. They would not want to put a conservation easement there until such time it was decided where the home would be built. Mr. Bittig stated that they should place a note on the plan that the location of the one-acre building area could be relocated from that which was shown on the plan to another portion of the lot with Township approval. Mrs. Geiger asked how many lots there were? Mr. Bensinger replied that there were 66. Mr. Davenport stated that for landscaping and buffering, the southern side was wooded. They would provide buffer along Boyertown Pike and along the Sherker property. It would be a mix of evergreen and deciduous ornamentals and evergreen deciduous shrubs. Mr. Bittig stated that the replacement trees could be a part of the buffer. Mr. Greth stated that they would also be placing replacement trees in the open space area behind the lots. Mr. Davenport stated that they had identified and inventoried 100 trees that would be replaced. Mr. Bittig asked if they provided the inventory to the Township? Mr. Davenport replied that they would do that with the next submission. Mr. Bensinger stated that the previous plan showed three streetlights and now that the new lighting Ordinance was in effect they would check into that. He then stated that when they submitted the plan they did not show any amenities, but

Amber Hill continued

Mr. Greth was considering a walking path as shown on the original sketch plan. Mr. Greth stated that it would be along the Boyertown Pike and around the back of the development. Mr. Bensinger stated that the next bolded item was just a statement that no fee in-lieu-of land was due because of the open space.

Mr. Bittig asked Mrs. Franckowiak about recreational fees? Mrs. Franckowiak replied that those fees were due at time of building permit application. Mr. Bensinger stated that the E & S plans were submitted to the County. Item #18 concerned the stormwater management system and that the Township maintained all stormwater systems that were in the street right-of-ways and their question was if the Township would maintain all of the systems for the development. Mrs. Franckowiak stated that we would check with Clarence Hamm, but if it were not in the street it would probably not happen. Mr. Bensinger replied that then the Homeowners Association would maintain it. He then asked for Conditional Final Plan approval. Mr. Bittig replied that we would like to see all the items discussed shown on the plan before giving approval. Mr. Ruff replied that he would like to see the plan reflect the new lighting ordinance before granting approval. Mr. Wilson stated that he was concerned with the amount of traffic that would be generated by the schools and the development.

**7. RESIDUE OF ROYAL VIEW ESTATES – Brian Boyer
- Charles Leazier**

GVC reviewed the Residue of Royal View Estates (reference letter dated April 28, 2006).

Mr. Boyer stated that they would make application for Conditional Use for the development. They would make changes to lot #3 to address the comments in the letter. He then stated that they were providing calculations for woodland extraction and that was shown on the grading plan. Lot #5 would have 20%, the remaining lots would have between 10 to 20%, and they were in compliance. They previously took a walk on the property with some Planning Commission members to look at the trees during Sketch Plan process. They have identified the trees and located driveways. Did they need to do a detailed study or would what was previously done be sufficient? Mr. Boyer then stated that they have gone through fairly heavy level of effort to get where they were. Mr. Peifer stated that the scope they have looked at were the areas that would be impacted. Mr. Boyer stated that they have done the woodland extractions as to what was coming off of each lot. They would just need to calculate what would be extracted for the street. Mr. Bittig stated that would satisfy the intent along with showing where they would put in the replacement trees. Mr. Boyer stated that the one infiltration trench was partially in the steep slope area; they had done the testing before they finished the shading for the steep slopes. They could move the trench over a little. He then asked if they would need to do an Environmental Hazard report? Mr. Peifer asked if, when they did the first subdivision, they did the entire tract in the report? Mr. Leazier replied the whole 40-acres. Mr. Bittig stated that there was an area that contained trash. Mr. Leazier replied that it was on lot # 6 and that had been cleaned up. Mr. Bittig asked how many lots were on this site? Mr. Leazier replied 5. Mr. Bittig then asked how many lots were on the previous subdivision? Mr. Leazier replied 5. Mr. Boyer stated that there was a Historical review done for the previous subdivision, would that be sufficient? Mr. Peifer replied yes. Mr. Boyer stated that with the total of 10 lots then they would not need a Water Resource Study. Mr. Wilson replied that was what the Ordinance stated. Mr. Boyer stated that they were not planning on-street parking. They would have 15-ft wide driveways 150' long. Mr. Bittig asked what the width of the street would be? Mr. Boyer replied 24-ft cartway with swales. Mr. Ruff stated that he could not see any reason to have on-street parking. Mr. Peifer stated that they were not required to have on-street parking because they were considered low density. It was noted that, under the new Zoning Ordinance, this development must provide curbs and sidewalks since it was not designed for open space/conservation.

Residue of Royal View Estates continued

Mr. Ruff stated that they might get a different direction from the Board of Supervisors during the Conditional Use. Mr. Boyer stated that item #16 concerned the widening of Hartman Road. With the rest of the development the Township had required 2-ft shoulders. Mr. Bittig asked if that could be checked out with Mr. Hamm to see if that was adequate. Mr. Boyer stated that they were looking for width to depth ratio waiver for lot #1.

MOTION BY Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mr. Bittig to recommend the Board of Supervisors waive the requirement of SALDO Section 5.514 lot depth to width ratio for lot #1 based on the low density and the large lot size. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Boyer asked about the water testing comment? Mr. Peifer stated that they could provide a water test from one of the previous lots, flow rates and the test results. Mr. Boyer stated that they would be back with a Conditional Use application.

8. WAL-MART LOT CONSOLIDATION PLAN – SKETCH PLAN OF RECORD – Todd Steiger

GVC reviewed the Wal-Mart Lot Consolidation Sketch Plan of Record (reference letter dated April 28, 2006).

Mr. Steiger stated that they were just removing lot lines and consolidating the existing Weis store and Wal-Mart into one. He then asked if Sketch Plan of Record was considered a Final Plan? Mr. Peifer replied that would be one and the same.

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Ruff to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the Wal-Mart Lot Consolidation Plan Sketch Plan of Record, subject to closing out the bookkeeping items listed in the GVC review letter. The motion carried unanimously.

**9. WAL-MART SUPERCENTER #1777 – PRELIMINARY PLAN – Todd Steiger
- Eric Ostimchuck**

GVC reviewed the Wal-Mart Super Center #1777 Preliminary Plan (reference letter dated April 28, 2006).

Mr. Steiger stated that they previously were in with a Sketch Plan which showed a gas station, and they had removed that. They have added an overflow aisle in front of the store. Mr. Littlehales suggested they emphasize the second entrance to be used instead of the Lincoln Road entrance. Mr. Steiger stated that would be a part of the traffic study remediation. Mr. Wilson stated that no matter what signs would state, people would use the entrances as they wanted to. Mr. Steiger stated that since it was an expansion project, they did not submit an Environmental Performance Standards Report, would that be needed? Mr. Bittig stated that they could do that with a couple of pages. Mr. Steiger replied that they would do that. He then stated that items #2, 3 and 4 under lighting would be addressed. Mr. Ostimchuck stated that they had done a Traffic Impact Study and they focused on the area around the Wal-Mart. They have been working with PennDOT for the 422 corridor. They recommended the following improvements; increase the left turn stacking distance on westbound 422 and increased radius throughout the site. Items #8 & 9 concerned the configuration of a multi-stop control at the intersection of Lincoln and the site driveway with a stop except

Wal-Mart continued

right turn at the driveway. It would help southbound left turn movement to flow freely. They were looking for the Board's feelings about that. Mr. Bittig stated that the extended left turn lane would be a plus, but was it feasible? Mr. Ostimchuck replied that they had frontage where they could widen the road onto their property and that would also straighten the road out. Mr. Wilson stated that his concern with placing stop signs on Lincoln Road was that the road was heavily traveled by tractor-trailer trucks for the Lincoln Corporate Center. Mr. Littlehales stated that traffic conditions would be horrendous at that intersection. Mr. Ruff stated that he did not feel they should put in the stop signs, as they would be turning Lincoln Road into a driveway for Wal-Mart. Mr. Steiger stated that there was an existing condition of traffic backup on Lincoln Road and they felt that by placing stop signs it would help alleviate that and not back up onto 422. Mr. Peifer asked if it would meet warrants for a signal? Mr. Steiger stated that they would check with PennDOT. Mr. Peifer stated that they should talk to Tony Maize. Mr. Steiger replied that they had just left a message for Tony and would talk to him this week. Mrs. Geiger asked why they could not put another entrance towards the rear of the Wal-Mart? Mr. Steiger replied that the grade would not work to do that. Mr. Bittig asked if there was an approved study area for traffic? Mr. Peifer replied, not that we were aware of. Mr. Steiger replied that they were a bit confused and thought that when they met with the staff the area was approved. It was approved by PennDOT. Mr. Bittig stated that it usually starts with a letter from GVC, then to the Planning Commission and then onto the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Ostimchuck asked how they could rectify that; they felt that the scope of the traffic study included what was needed. Mr. Steiger stated that they wanted to spend the money to improve the intersections. Mr. Peifer asked if the study dealt with existing driveways from the other commercial users in the area? Mr. Steiger replied no, but they could get those counts. The Planning Commission all agreed that they did not think the stop signs were a good idea. Mr. Ostimchuck stated that they would talk to Tony Maize about that. Mr. Steiger asked if they should "do nothing" instead of the stop signs? Mr. Bittig replied that the reconfiguration of the entranceway might mitigate some of the problems. Mr. Wilson stated that they should be sure that nothing blocks the line of site of the drive. Mr. Wilson stated that the drawings of the Wal-Mart were nice, but he was disappointed with them. He was hoping for something nicer as it was the entranceway into our Township. Mr. Littlehales stated that it still looked like a box. Mr. Steiger stated that the renderings did not do it justice and it was not like the old stores. Mr. Wilson stated that it was not as nice as the one in Ambler. Mr. Bittig asked what they were doing about the Fire Marshal's comments? Mr. Steiger replied that they have talked to the Fire Marshal and he was looking for two additional fire hydrants. Mr. Ruff asked if they had seen the comments from the EAC? The EAC questioned the options for a "green building". Mr. Steiger replied that he would have to get a response from the architect. Mr. Steiger then asked for Preliminary Plan approval. Mr. Peifer stated that we should wait until the traffic issues were resolved. The Planning Commission agreed.

10. EAST GATE – INFORMAL DISCUSSION - Joel Carroll

Mr. Carroll stated that that previously they were in with East Gate Subdivision and the Planning Commission made the recommendation that they should combine East Gate with the Deer Run Subdivision. They have since named Deer Run as East Gate 2. The parking lane on the south side of East Gate has been removed. They have marked the centerline of the road off of Gibraltar so the Planning Commission could go out to look at it if they liked. There were not many trees located there. The Deer Run access under the railroad bridge on Old Gibraltar Road has been eliminated. They removed the odd shaped cul-de-sac. They also provided a stub street into the Houston property. Mrs. Geiger asked how many homes would be located there? Mr. Carroll replied that East Gate had 4 lots and East Gate 2 had 49 lots. Mr. Peifer asked how many homes were located in Deer Run previously? Mr. Carroll replied that he was unsure. He then stated that the Homeowners Association would maintain all of the detention basins.

East Gate continued

The Planning Commission agreed that the plan looked much better. Mr. Peifer asked what they were doing with the land on the south side of the train tracks? Mr. Carroll replied that it would be open space maintained by the Homeowners Association. Mr. Wilson asked if the Township had wanted that? Mr. Peifer stated that they only wanted a portion of it, about three acres. Mr. Wilson asked if they would provide access to the open space through the railroad bridge? Mr. Carroll replied that they would probably provide some walking trails. He then asked for any other comments so they could proceed with a formal submission. Mr. Ruff stated that according to Mr. Peifer, the Deer Run plan was active and was under the old ordinance so they would not have to worry about the cluster provision of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Bittig replied that was correct, and the east portion was only 4 lots so they would be ok. Mr. Wilson asked if we did not vote the Deer Run Plan down, and had they gotten time extensions? Mr. Bittig replied yes, they had gotten time extensions. Mr. Wilson asked if they received Preliminary Plan approval on Deer Run? Mr. Bittig replied no, they did not. Mr. Peifer stated that it was still active and “on the books” Preliminary Plan. Mr. Wilson felt that it was no longer Deer Run, it was a new plan and we could vote to reject the old Deer Run plan and have them come in with a new one. Mr. Carroll stated that East Gate came in after Deer Run and they were trying to accommodate the suggestions of the Planning Commission to merge the two separate subdivision plans. They were two separate plans with two separate owners. Mr. Bittig asked how it was two separate owners? Mr. Carroll replied that the father owned one and the son owned the other. Mr. Littlehales asked if they should be kicked back to square one? Mr. Bittig replied that East Gate was fairly new, Deer Run has been hanging around for nearly two years and connecting the two resolves the access issue. Mr. Littlehales stated that they had a very narrow entrance. Mr. Carroll stated they would need to put in a new bridge over the stream. The street was 40-ft wide to 32-ft to 24-ft. Mr. Peifer asked what the width was for the portion over the stream? Mr. Carroll replied 24-ft. Mr. Bittig stated that they would need to address that with the Board of Supervisors. He then asked Mrs. Franckowiak how she thought the Board would feel about the street starting at 40-ft. and going down to 24-ft? Mrs. Franckowiak replied that she did not think the Board would like that. That would have to be run by Clarence Hamm and the Fire Marshal. Mr. Ruff stated that he could see 40-ft to 32-ft where the houses were on one side, all the way out to Gibraltar Road. Parking was then discussed and the Planning Commission agreed that parking on the north side of the street made more sense and was more convenient for the homeowners. Mr. Ruff asked if we should get an opinion from the Solicitor as to whether this would be considered a revision to Deer Run, or would it be considered a new plan? Mr. Bittig noted that the Solicitor’s decision for Pathfinder was that it was a revision, but that we should check with the Solicitor.

MOTION BY Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Littlehales to recommend the Board of Supervisors reject the Deer Run Subdivision plan because of the inability to satisfy the crossing under the railroad bridge and the other issues that were never resolved and the new plan was a major change to the previous plan. The motion carried unanimously.

11. 301 WEGMAN ROAD – Thomas Ludgate

GVC reviewed the 301 Wegman Road Sketch Plan of Record (reference letter dated April 28, 2006).

Mr. Ludgate stated that the Board of Supervisors granted the waiver for the lot depth to width ratio. The Fire Marshal has agreed to a 15-ft wide stone driveway, which was on the plan. They had the clean PNDI letter and they showed the 8-inch trees that would be removed for the driveway.

301 Wegman Road continued

MOTION BY Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mr. Bittig to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the 301 Wegman Road Sketch Plan of Record conditioned upon fulfilling all the outstanding issues in the GVC April 28, 2006 review letter. The motion carried unanimously.

12. SCOPE OF TRAFFIC STUDY – CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Littlehales to recommend the Board of Supervisors, in addition to the recommended areas listed in the GVC letter, to include the following intersections: Farming Ridge Blvd. and Ritters Road; Farming Ridge Blvd. and S.R. 562. The motion carried unanimously.

13. GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Planning Commission agreed to meet on Thursday, May 25th for a workshop unless the Exeter Township School District Conditional Use proceedings were scheduled for that day. If that were scheduled for the 25th then the Planning Commission would look at meeting another day. Ms. Cusimano stated that she had not yet received a time extension for Zach's Auto Sales.

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Ruff to recommend the Board of Supervisors reject the Zach's Auto Sales Land Development plan due to issues listed in the GVC review letter, unless a time extension was received. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Ruff, to adjourn the May 2, 2006 meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission at 9:45 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

John F. Ruff, Jr., PE
Planning Commission Secretary

lrc

Correspondence to:

- BOS: Scope of Traffic Study for Central Catholic High School
- BOS: DeMoss Street Health Club waiver request and plan approval
- BOS: Riethmuller rezoning
- BOS: Residue of Royal View Estates waiver request
- BOS: Wal-Mart Lot Consolidation Sketch Plan of Record approval
- BOS: 301 Wegman Road Final Plan approval