

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 7, 2009

The Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, April 7, 2009 at the Township Hall, 4975 DeMoss Road, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Donald R. Wilson, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Donald R. Wilson, Chairman
Paul L. Schwartz, Vice Chairman
Richard Littlehales
Gary L. Shane
Greg T. Unger

ABSENT: John W. Bittig, Secretary

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Craig Peifer, GVC Consulting Engineer
Linda Cusimano, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Cheryl Franckowiak, Zoning Officer

1. MINUTES

MOTION BY Mr. Unger, seconded by Mr. Schwartz, to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting with the change of Scott Anderson being listed as GVC Consulting Engineer. The motion carried unanimously.

2. AGENDA

MOTION BY Mr. Unger, seconded by Mr. Littlehales, to approve the agenda of the April 7, 2009 Planning Commission meeting with the removal of Historical Area Controls. The motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVE APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

A. EXETER SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNEXATION – SKETCH PLAN FOR RECORD; EXETER TOWNSHIP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – PRELIMINARY PLAN: MOTION BY Mr. Unger, seconded by Mr. Littlehales to accept the preceding plans for review. The motion carried unanimously.

The following business was discussed:

4. EXETER SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNEXATION – SKETCH PLAN FOR RECORD

- Grant Smith
- Ken Smith
- Robert Quinter

GVC reviewed the Exeter Township Elementary School minor subdivision sketch plan of record (reference letter dated April 2, 2009).

Mr. Grant explained that the purpose of the plan was to annex 16.693 acres to a lot owned by Berks Homes located in Pathfinder Meadows Section 2 and that the annexation parcel was to be noted as a conservation easement on the plan.

It was determined that they should show the lot it was to be annexed to on the plan and that would address all of the outstanding issues in the review letter.

Public Comment

Jordan Bausher, 391 Ritters Road, stated that the Township should consider providing a foot path from the Reading Country Club to Pennsylvania Ave out to Schoffers Road and then on to the school property. He envisioned a connection/bike/walkway to the school property.

Robert Nye, University Rifle Club, stated that the rifle club was located at 590 Schoffers road and has been there in excess of 50 years and would share a property line with the School District property. They operated an active shooting facility. Previously the Amber Hill plan contained a note; number 50, that they wanted to be sure was included on the Exeter Elementary School Plan. He read a letter from Mr. Hoffert, Esq. to the Township stating that the note should be included on all deeds and plans for developments taking place next to the University Rifle Club. He also read from Senate Bill No. 56 concerning the rights of the rifle club.

Mr. Smith stated that the School Board was well aware of the fact that the University Rifle Club was located there. Mr. Grant assured Mr. Nye that the note would be placed on the plan. Mr. Unger asked what were the chances that ammunition would leave the rifle club property onto the school property. Mr. Quinter replied that having experience with ammunition, the potential for stray rounds coming from the rifle club in to the populated section of the school property would be remote.

Glenn Hose, stated that he was speaking on behalf of the University Rifle Club. When they joined the lot to lot #18 it stated that it was a conservation easement. Would that mean that it would not be a buildable lot in the future? Mr. Wilson replied that the lower section of #18 would be the buildable portion of the lot; the upper section would be a conservation easement where they would not be able to build anything there.

Mr. Hose stated that the Club has no problem with Exeter School District building there, but the Rifle Club was concerned with how the School would respond to their rights and that was the reason he attended the meeting.

5. EXETER TOWNSHIP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – PRELIMINARY PLAN - Grant Smith
- Gary Bannon - John Wichner

GVC reviewed the Exeter Township Elementary School Preliminary Plan (reference letter dated April 3, 2009) and the Traffic Impact Study for Exeter Elementary School (reference letter dated march 3, 2009).

Mr. Smith stated that the plan was to build a 107,000sf Elementary School for 500 and potentially be expanded to 700 students. They were planning on a Geo Thermal System for heating and cooling and were looking to receive a Silver Level LEED Certification. There were no plans to light the sports fields. They were contemplating putting fence up around the pond. In the GVC review letter they will comply with #4 for landscaping. Mr. Peifer stated that they needed to provide an aerial of the property with their next submission.

Public Comment

Joe Gumeniski, 130 Fairview Chapel Road, asked about the school footprint, why would they not want to build a three story school? Mr. Bannon replied that for this age level school and the grade configurations that were there, stacking up five grades, three stories wasn't the most beneficial for the organization of the building. The cost difference between three stories versus two stories was a wash. For this particular site and age group there was no benefit to go three stories.

Jordan Bausher, 391 Ritters Road, stated that he was concerned with a drainage problem already existing along Boyertown Pike near the area where the School would be placing their access. Mr. Wichner replied that they would be widening that area and they would be required to control the runoff into swales.

Exeter Elementary School continued

The following items were discussed:

- In order to demonstrate compliance with Section 608 Environmental Performance Standards the School District would submit the report provided to the Zoning Hearing Board.
- The School District showed more parking than required to provide enough parking for events.
- The School District will comply with the Steep Slope Controls.
- The School District will provide a letter from Walter Greth showing that he had released documents for the School Districts use and they will change the Tree Inventory report to show the trees that will be impacted and what trees species would be used for replacement.
- The Engineer will remove the minor subdivision lot from this plan as requested by GVC.
- The Engineer met with the Utility Companies and will clear up any conflicts on the plan.
- The Engineer will show the increased right-of-way on the Land Development plan due to the widening of SR0562.
- The School District will provide a Phase 1 Site Assessment as required.
- The Planning Commission determined that 2002 PHMC letter would be acceptable and an updated letter will not be needed.
- The Planning Commission determined that a written Water Resource Study waiver request should be submitted.
- The Planning Commission determined that a written Curb & Sidewalk waiver request should be submitted and that the School District should check into placing a trail system on the school site.
- The School District will provide elevations of the school building for the next meeting.

Traffic Impact Study was discussed:

- The School District will widen SR0562 adding additional lanes for dedicated turn lanes for the school and the church driveways.
- The HOP application has been submitted to PennDOT for review.
- The Planning Commission was concerned about the intermingling of bus and passenger car traffic. Mr. Wichner explained that busses will enter the main drive and then proceed onto drive A – passenger cars will enter the main drive and proceed onto drive B. The Engineer will label the parking on the next submission and also look at adding stop signs and the School District will look at having a dedicated person directing traffic at dismissal as they did not want to add more impervious surface.
- The Planning Commission was concerned about having only one access to the site. Mr. Wichner replied that if they have two points of access it would not warrant having a traffic signal which was needed and would be used for both the school and church sites.
- The fire lane access to the school building will be made of pervious material.
- The Traffic Impact Study included eight off site intersections and improvements to correct existing and future deficiencies. The School District was concerned with the responsibility for the Shelbourne/SR0562 intersection improvements as they will be adding improvements along SR0562 at the school site which would be at considerable expense to the School District. If PennDOT did not require improvements at the Shelbourne/SR0562 intersection they hoped that the Township would not require them to do the improvements. The question was raised if the Exeter Township School District would be required to do improvements at the Ritter Road and Boyertown Pike intersection as it was a requirement for the Central Catholic High School plan. Mr. Wilson felt it was not their responsibility and stated that previously Mike O’Pake promised to provide funds for the Shelbourne/SR0562 intersection improvements and he suggested that they talk to Senator O’Pake for help.
- The School District will comply with all other comments in the review letter

Exeter Elementary School continued

Mr. Smith stated that they had not received the Stormwater Review letter and asked if there could be some leeway on the submission date deadline in order to move forward with the plan. Mr. Peifer replied that we could offer leeway for the submission date.

6. RITE AID VARIANCE REQUEST - Mike Swider

The Rite Aid Variance request was discussed and the Planning Commission determined that they did not have enough information to pass along a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board. They will discuss it again at the May Planning Commission and make a recommendation at that time.

7. FARMERS MARKET DEFINITION

MOTION BY Mr. Unger, seconded by Mr. Shane, to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the definition of Farmers Market to be included in the Zoning Ordinance. The motion carried unanimously.

9. SMALL WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS ORDINANCE

Small Wind Energy Systems Ordinance was discussed and corrections were made.

MOTION BY Mr. Littlehales, seconded by Mr. Schwartz, to recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the Small Wind Energy Systems Ordinance as corrected. The motion carried unanimously.

10. GENERAL DISCUSSION

MOTION BY Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mr. Unger to recommend the Board of Supervisors reject the Commonwealth New Homes/Weiler Tract Subdivision Preliminary Plan unless a time extension was provided. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mr. Shane, to adjourn the April 7, 2009 meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission at 9:30pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Cusimano
Planning Commission Recording Secretary

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Correspondence to:

BOS: Farmers Market Definition
BOS: Small Wind Energy Systems Ordinance
BOS: Commonwealth New Homes/Weiler rejection