

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 1, 2013

The Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission was held on Monday, April 1, 2013 at the Township Hall, 4975 DeMoss Road, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Donald R. Wilson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Donald R. Wilson, Chairman
John W. Bittig, Vice Chairman
Gary L. Shane, Secretary
Glen Powell

ABSENT: Greg T. Unger

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Joe Rogosky, GVC Consulting Engineer
Cheryl Franckowiak, Zoning Officer

ABSENT: Linda Cusimano, Recording Secretary

1. AGENDA

MOTION BY Mr. Shane, seconded by Mr. Powell, to approve the agenda of the April 1, 2013 Planning Commission meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously with a 4:0 vote.

2. FILIPPINI ANNEXATION – SKETCH PLAN OF RECORD - John Hoffert

GVC reviewed the Filippini Annexation Sketch Plan of Record (reference letter dated March 26, 2013).

Mr. Hoffert explained that in Exeter Golf Club Estates some of the neighbors wanted to extend their lots by annexing part of what was residue or open space from the former golf course to enlarge their own lots. Mr. Hoffert stated that he was led to believe that there weren't any covenants or restrictions relative to the annexations, which, we find out there is more to "the story". Mr. Hoffert stated that he would like some guidance as far as how to proceed to see if it was possible to annex these parcels as intended. Mr. Rogosky stated that the original plans were done in 1987 where the open space requirement was 65%, by the time phase 4 (18 hole course reduced to 9); the open space requirement went from 65% to 50%; however we cannot confirm what open space area was recorded, it was probably about 36 acres. Mr. Rogosky further stated the question is: is the plan in conformance with the required open space, if so what is that available open space. We need those answers to determine whether or not this annexation is going to have an impact on what was already previously approved as well as any covenants or deed restrictions; or a homeowners association that dictates that certain people have prescribed rights to the open space. That would need to be addressed prior to moving on with the annexation plan. Mr. Hoffert asked if he could do an overall map of the open space by using other plans of reference. Mr. Hoffert stated since receiving GVC's comments they have copied all of the available records at the court house for the sections of Exeter Golf Club Estates. He further stated that there were a lot of records that were not in a recorded form, so he was asking for some time to come to the Township to go through the records to find missing information. Mr. Hoffert asked if he could put together a composite of surveys done by others to check that the open space requirements have been met. Mr. Rogosky replied that would be a good idea so we would have an idea of what exists. Mr. Wilson stated that we could not make a decision one way or the other until we know what the total open space is and what covenants may be in existence for the open space. Mr. Hoffert asked if his methodology would be acceptable. Mr. Rogosky and the Planning Commission agreed it would.

3. INFORMAL DISCUSSION – FORMER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING – Dr. Gary Wegman

Dr. Wegman stated that he purchased the previous school administration building where he will be opening his dental office and there are other businesses interested in joining him at this location; a restaurant/cafe bistro/bakery; businesses that would function early morning/mid afternoon. Their idea was to do something with local produce and something more whole foods oriented. This particular block is not zoned for that, it is zoned restricted office commercial but other restaurants are located close by. He purchased two lots – the separate lot has the playground on it but is not zoned restricted office commercial. The lot cannot be used except for parking or playground.

Dr. Wegman further stated that he has started a vineyard on his other property in Exeter Township. If Exeter residents want to go to a winery they have to go to the other locations to purchase wine. The Pennsylvania wine and liquor stores do not stock Pennsylvania wine. Each winery license is allowed to have five locations to sell their wine. He has been approached to have a Pennsylvania wine shop in this building. It would be strictly wine tasting and selling of wine. Dr. Wegman has talked to the residents and they would be happy to have these types of businesses that they could walk to. He further stated that the zoning does not allow for these types of businesses in this location and as Exeter wants to be business friendly he was told to come before the Planning Commission to present his ideas for the building. Mrs. Franckowiak stated that Dr. Wegman could not get a variance and she felt that since we were making changes to the ordinances, now would be the time to discuss changes. Ms. Franckowiak further stated that it previously was discussed as possibly being another Penn Ave type of area, plus, his ideas are great. Dr. Wegman stated that he was putting in an elevator to accommodate his patients, so he would be ADA compliant. He would love to have the opportunity to open these businesses there. Ms. Franckowiak asked if the Planning Commission would give consideration to look into ROC zone to making any kinds of changes to allow retail/restaurant use and eliminate the potential for a drive thru as we have done in other zones. She further stated that it would mesh with the office zone, the employees would have a place to walk to for their lunch; this was why she asked him to come before the Planning Commission to present his ideas. Mr. Powell stated that he thought it was a nice idea and he would support looking at the zoning. Mr. Bittig stated that he liked the low impact idea. Mr. Rogosky stated that we could keep it ROC and just add more uses to it. Mr. Wilson stated that he would not have a problem with it. The Planning Commission agreed that Mr. Rogosky should look into changing the language to allow for this and similar uses.

Public Comment

Lisa VanderLaan, 5560 Boyertown Pike, felt that they should be able to do a special exception. Ms. Franckowiak replied that it should be by right. Mr. Bittig stated that the zoning should be changed to accommodate and it should only take 2 months to make the change to the Ordinance. Ms. VanderLaan replied that we have the AP all ready to send along to the Board. Mr. Bittig stated that we could make these changes together and asked Dr. Wegman when he would want to get started. Dr. Wegman replied that his dentist office was already committed, but he would love to be able to start the others before winter comes. Mr. Wilson stated that if Mr. Rogosky comes in with the changes for the next meeting and we approve it we could go to the supervisors the following week then it could go before the BCPC and advertise for the changes to AP and ROC. The Planning Commission agreed to work on it to send before the Board after their May 6th meeting.

5. INVITATION TO ATTEND APRIL EDAC MEETING

Ms. Franckowiak stated that there was an invitation on the workspace for the Planning Commission to attend a joint meeting with the EDAC. Carolyn Brunschwyler (EDAC secretary) stated that the EDAC extended the invitation for the Planning Commission to come and talk about the planner which will be hired by the township and to discuss community vision for the Township through 2030. The EDAC was hoping to have some ideas to start the work with the planner. Mr. Shane asked what the status was with hiring the planner. Ms. Franckowiak replied that we just did the RFQ. Mr. Shane asked what the status was of hiring the planner. Ms. Franckowiak replied that they originally looked at the beginning of May, but Troy probably won't be back until sometime in May so maybe the end of May. Mr. Wilson stated that another meeting of note is the April 22 Board meeting, the regular meeting is scheduled, but PennDOT will be bringing in the 562/Shelbourne intersection to do a presentation for their plans for that intersection. Mr. Wilson stated that he and Jeff Bukowski will both be in Hershey then.

6. AP ZONING

Mr. Bittig stated that he had some changes concerning the building heights in the AP zone. Residential height should be limited to 40 feet – all other buildings and structures would go to 65 feet *. * May be further limited by International building Code, table 503. Ms. VanderLaan stated that homes should be allowed to be taller. Mr. Bittig replied it was in the IBC that way. Ms. VanderLaan replied that people take down old barns and repurpose them elsewhere as a home and they were over 40 feet. Mr. Bittig stated that Mr. Koontz gave him copies from the UCC with definitions. Ms. VanderLaan asked couldn't we just put heavy timber structure for residential to 65 feet. Ms. Franckowiak replied that we just had to look at the zoning aspect. The Planning Commission agreed to adopt the height restriction as presented by Mr. Bittig with the addition of a special exception to allow for repurposed building of an existing AG structure converted to residence.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Powell, to adjourn the April 1, 2013 meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission at 8:25 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gary L. Shane,
Secretary

Irc