TOWNSHIP OF INDIANA

PLANNING COMMISSION

OCTOBER 23, 2024

The regular meeting of the Indiana Township Planning Commission was called to order at 6:24 p.m. by Chairman Daniel Taylor with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was recorded on audio cassette.

The roll was called and Planning Commission Members present were Kevin McKeegan, Preston Moore, and Daniel Taylor. Peter Blume and Michael Calandra did not attend. Also in attendance were Code Enforcement Officer Jeffrey S. Curti, Recording Secretary Jacquelyn Rouggie, Township Engineer Daniel Slagle from Nichols & Slagle Engineering, and Solicitor Christopher Weis, Esq. from Tucker Arensberg Attorneys.

APPROVED

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

Mr. Taylor said on Page 3, in the first Paragraph, the word "noted" needed to be deleted and the word "being" needed to changed to "be" in the 5th sentence from the bottom. He also said in the 6th sentence from the bottom, the sentence stating "..a that.." needed corrected to be "that a", which was simply a transposition of the two words.

Mr. McKeegan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to approve the September 25, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

STIVERS - LOT LINE REVISION

Commission Members were presented with an application to revise the lot lines on three properties located on Veranda Lane; no new lots are being created. The parcels are located about 1/4 of mile southwest of the intersection of Saxonburg Blvd. and State Route 910. The properties are zoned "VR" Village Residential. The Applicant, Roger Stivers, was present.

Mr. Stivers said he and his wife live and own 101 Veranda Lane (#953-S-112), and they also own 100 Veranda Lane (#953-S-140), which is used as a rental property. He said the third lot, at 103 Veranda Lane (#953-S-203), is owned by his daughter Sandra Simpson and son-in-law Shawn Simpson, who reside there. Mr. Stivers said he wishes to adjust the lot lines to make the lot he lives in larger, and to decrease the acreage of land for the rental lot.

Mr. Slagle said that Mr. Stivers submitted his Application for this Lot Line revision on September 23, 2024. Mr. Slagle said he spoke with Mr. Stivers' Surveyor to discuss the application. Mr. Slagle said revised plans were then resubmitted,

addressing most of his concerns. Mr. Slagle reviewed his letter dated October 3, 2024. Mr. McKeegan asked if the lot shown along Saxonburg Blvd. is part of this lot line revision; Mr. Slagle said it is not. Mr. Slagle requested some additional clarification of the bearings, distances, and lot areas from the Applicant's Surveyor. Mr. Slagle said all three lots are accessed by Veranda Lane, which is privately owned. Mr. Slagle asked who maintains this private roadway; Mr. Stivers said he does. Mr. Slagle requested a "Private Road Maintenance Agreement" between the Landowners accessing Veranda Lane and that a copy be submitted to the Township. Mr. Moore said he feels this is a good idea; he said a lot of times people living on private roadways cannot get a mortgage when purchasing a home if a formal "Agreement" is not in place. Mr. Slagle then requested a digital copy of the final plan in AutoCAD format.

Mr. McKeegan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, recommending APPROVAL of the "STIVERS - LOT LINE REVISION", based upon the outstanding items in the Engineer's review letter dated October 3, 2024 being addressed. These items include:

1. ***Additional clarification of the bearings, distances, and lot areas from the Applicant's Surveyor.***
2. ***Provide a copy of a "Private Road Maintenance Agreement" between the Landowners accessing Veranda Lane (private drive).***
3. ***Provide a digital copy of the final plan in AutoCAD format.***

Motion carried unanimously.

SAXONBURG BLVD SCHOOL - SUBDIVISION

Commission Members were presented with an application to subdivide a parcel consisting of 2.0005 acres, known as Tax Parcel #834-D-313, into two lots. The parcel is located along Saxonburg Blvd. about ½ mile south of the intersection of Route 910 and Saxonburg Blvd. The property is zoned "VR" Village Residential. The Applicant, Robert Bartolacci, owner of "3735 Saxonburg Blvd School, LLC", was present.

Mr. McKeegan said due to a business conflict of interest with the Applicant, he would like to recuse himself from voting on any motions made on this application.

Mr. Bartolacci said he also owns a commercial property across the street from this site. He said he feels the newly created rear parcel would be a great lot for someone to build a new residential home.

Mr. Slagle said years ago, this property came through as a Site Plan known as the "Old Saxonburg School" to rehabilitate an old, existing building into newly renovated commercial rental spaces.

Mr. Slagle said this Subdivision Application was originally scheduled to be heard by the Planning Commission at last month's meeting, but the Applicant's representative, Project Manager Robyn Brady from Hampton Technical Associates,

APPROVED

Inc., requested that the Plan be TABLED until this month's Planning Commission meeting, so they could adequately address the issues in Mr. Slagle's initial review letter dated August 2, 2024.

Mr. Slagle said since that time, new plans were submitted and an updated review letter, dated October 22, 2024, was prepared. He said most of his concerns have been addressed. Mr. Slagle said he still has concerns regarding the emergency spillway that runs across the newly created lot. He requested that an easement be shown for the emergency spillway or that the emergency spillway flow be redirected to Keck Drive. Mr. Bartolacci said he agreed that they could re-channel the water to prevent the possibility of any future issues. Mr. Curti said it is impossible to predict what could happen in the event of an intense storm. Mr. Moore said there was a Detention Basin that was required to be built on the property as part of the original Site Plan.

Mr. Taylor made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, recommending APPROVAL of the "SAXONBURG BLVD SCHOOL - SUBDIVISION", based upon the outstanding items in the Engineer's review letter dated October 22, 2024 being addressed. These items include:

1. ***Confirm that an easement be shown for the emergency spillway or that the emergency spillway flow be redirected to Keck Drive. The Engineer requested a letter from the Applicant excluding the Township from any liability that could occur resulting in damages.***
2. ***Provide a digital copy of the final plan in AutoCAD format.***

Motion carried, with Mr. McKeegan abstaining.

FREDERICK FARMS PRD (PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT) - Tentative Approval

Commission Members were once again presented with a plan consisting of combining two parcels (22.45 acres total) and re-subdividing them into a Development consisting of 32 single-family houses. The parcels are located north of Saxonburg Boulevard and east of Harts Run Road, near the intersection with Mallard Drive. The properties are zoned "LDR" Low Density Residential. Alberto Jarquin and Pat Cooper from Gateway Engineers were present to represent the Applicant, Maronda Homes LLC.

Mr. Cooper said they asked to be tabled at last month's Planning Commission meeting to give them time to put together a more thorough presentation of the Development for the Planning Commission and to meet with the Township Engineer.

Mr. Curti said a copy of the Application was submitted by his office to the Allegheny County Conservation District on September 16, 2024, as required, but no response has been received from them yet.

APPROVED

Mr. Cooper said they put together two drawings of the plan: one as a “straight” Subdivision and one as a Planned Residential Development (PRD) to be used as a comparison to show the differences between the two different types of Developments.

Mr. Taylor asked if an area was being given for the Rachel Carson Trail to go through the Plan; Mr. Cooper said yes. Mr. Taylor said Lot #112 appears to encroach into the 25' buffer zone; Mr. Cooper said it will. Mr. McKeegan said it appears that two lots at the entrance to the plan would also be in the buffer area and would need to be moved. Mr. Slagle said Lots #101, #112, and #132 would all encroach into the buffer zone. Mr. Cooper said they are asking for *a slight modification waiver* for these three lots. Mr. Cooper said this could be noted on the “Recorded Plan”, as well as on the individual surveys for each of these lots. Mr. McKeegan said the only way to control no building in the buffer areas is by putting it in the covenants of the Plan.

Mr. McKeegan asked about the trees at the entrance of the plan. Mr. Slagle said a “Landscaping Plan” will need to be submitted during the “Final Approval” process. They will also address replacement trees at that time.

Mr. McKeegan thanked the Applicants for submitting examples of the Plan as both a “straight” Subdivision vs. a PRD. Mr. Slagle said if a “straight” Subdivision would be done, the lots would take up all of the open space and not provide for any buffer areas. He also said a considerable amount of Grading would need to occur. He said any Open Space would be taken up by the lots and wetlands would also end up being on private lots. He said by submitting the Plan as a PRD, a lot of the environment will be preserved and green space areas can remain. He also said the lot sizes in a PRD would be considerably smaller. Mr. Cooper said by submitting it as a PRD, they are able to provide an Open Space Area of about 40%-50% of the Development. Mr. Curti said he likes the idea of Open Space being provided. Mr. Taylor said there are streams in the area that would also be left undisturbed. Mr. McKeegan asked about Fire Protection; he was told this will be addressed during “Final Approval”.

Mr. Slagle said his review letter dated October 22, 2024 includes items that are addressed during both the “Tentative” and “Final Approval” process, not just items needed for “Tentative Approval”. Mr. Slagle said he feels the Plan will be a nice fit for the Township. Mr. Slagle asked if any “Pittsburgh” Red Clay Beds were found. Mr. Cooper said no. Mr. Slagle said fencing is now being put outside of the Detention Basin area, which makes it more secure. The wetland areas were discussed. Mr. Slagle said all sidewalk intersections ***must*** meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He asked if any street lighting is being proposed; Mr. Cooper said no. Mr. Slagle said his letter addresses the Impact Studies and Fees, which will all be part of the “Final Approval” process, as will the Developer’s Agreement and Bonding requirements.

APPROVED

Mr. McKeegan said he had questions regarding Section 500.06 regarding the Protection of Trees and Woodlands. Mr. Jarquin said a preliminary "Tree Survey" was done. Mr. Slagle said the Township will also perform its own "Independent Tree Survey" to confirm the count. Mr. Taylor said the HOA should be proof read. Mr. Slagle asked what the "Peak Trip Hours" were; Mr. Cooper said during "rush hour", 26 in the AM and 34 in the PM. Mr. Slagle said a formal Traffic Study would be needed if the Peak Trip Hours were more that 100.

Mr. McKeegan said if a Public Hearing is held, would it be for "Tentative Approval" only. Mr. Curti said yes. Then, if "Tentative Approval" is given by the Board of Supervisors, the Applicant would then submit an Application for "Final Approval".

Peter Nigra of 3430 Saxonburg Blvd., read Sections from Township Ordinance about prohibiting activities within the Buffer Areas, like Lots #132, #101, and #112 would do. He suggested modifications NOT be granted, and that Lot #132 and Lot #101 be removed completely from the plan. He said this way the Ordinance requirements will be met.

Chris Capone of 3606 Windsor Court, said he liked how the Applicant showed the "straight" Subdivision vs. a PRD, and how the buffer areas are preserved. However he said he disagreed with Mr. Slagle regarding the assessment and percentage calculations of the slope areas.

Nettie Owens, said when comparing a Subdivision vs. a PRD, if anything located in the Green Areas shown will be disturbed. She asked that the two plans be put up once again for comparison.

Mr. McKeegan wanted to discuss the "buffer" encroachment of the three lots. They talked about different ways to approach prohibiting development within the buffer areas. Mr. Cooper said he knows that the "bump out" area at the entrance to the Plan is important, and the Developer would not want to lose two lots to meet the requirements. Mr. Cooper pointed out this is the ONLY modification the Developer is asking for. A discussion was held about this. Mr. Nigra said he feels the Developer must abide by what the Ordinance states. The setbacks and house sizes were also discussed. There were discussions held about landscaping, shrubs, etc. Mr. Cooper said any modifications that are granted would need to be put in the Deeds to each of the Lots. Mr. Cooper said they are running into problems with giving PennDOT a certain amount of land to be kept for Saxonburg Boulevard's right-of-way. Mr. Curti said he thinks this should not be a concern to the Township; the Township should only be concerned with roads they own, not State and County owned roadways.

Mr. McKeegan asked if they would be willing to adjust the lot lines for Lot #101. Mr. Nigra said he feels the Development should abide by the Ordinance. Mr. McKeegan said modifications can be granted, and then controlled by verbiage in the Deeds. He said the waiver the Developer is asking for is very minor. Mr. Taylor said they could grant waivers for two of the Lots, and still meet the buffer requirements.

APPROVED

Mr. McKeegan made a motion to recommend "Tentative Approval" of the "FREDERICK FARMS - PRD", with the condition that the outstanding items in the Engineer's review letter dated October 22, 2024 are addressed. Additional conditions include a modification request by the Applicant to allow two (2) of the lots to encroach into the buffer area (Lots #132 & #112), as well as having the proposed landscaping to be added to the plan as per the request of the Township's Engineer.

Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Slagle said the Planning Commission also requests that the Board of Supervisors approve advertising for a Public Hearing to be held for this Plan, in accordance with the Township's Zoning Ordinance for PRD's.

OLD BUSINESS

REVISIONS TO THE PRD SECTION OF THE TOWNSHIP'S ZONING ORDINANCE #368

Mr. Taylor said he had some grammatical and typographical changes that need to be addressed. Commission Members reviewed the most current "draft" of the new Zoning Ordinance one page at a time. Table IV-A: Permitted Densities was discussed, and they talked about the possibility of giving "bonus" units, the numbers of structures permitted to be built, etc. that could be given as a "trade off" for other items. Table IV-B: Bulk and Area Requirements was also discussed, including side yard setbacks and modifications.

There was a discussion about whether the minimum tree size should be 8" in diameter. Mr. Slagle explained the theory about how Developers could come in and "clear cut" property under a Timbering Ordinance, and then wait five years to submit for a Subdivision of a parcel. A discussion was held about Preserving Areas, and buffer zones. It was agreed the changes that have been made will fix any issues with this in the current Ordinances. A discussion was also had about Commission Members getting copies of all the Studies that are done. Mr. Curti said the Studies are all kept on file for their review at the Township Building, if they choose. They can become quite large.

Mr. Taylor said he wondered if it was time to present the current "draft" to the Board of Supervisors as it stands. Mr. Curti suggested they wait until they have a full quorum of Members to put in any more input before passing the "draft" on to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. McKeegan said once again, he would like to share a "draft" of the Ordinance with the Public as soon as possible. Mr. Curti said according to the Township Solicitor, this cannot be done until it is at the Public Hearing phase. Mr. McKeegan said he feels having early input from the Public would help. Mr. Taylor said he felt the same way in the past, but understands how different copies of the "draft" could be misleading and lead to confusion.

APPROVED

Alissa Weiss said she had questions about the Frederick Farms PRD that was presented tonight. She asked about the Site Distances at the entrance; Mr. Taylor said Saxonburg Boulevard is a State road and that all PennDOT Site Distances must be met. Mr. Curti said PennDOT's Title 67 ensures speed limits, distances, etc. are met. It was noted that a Highway Occupancy Permit from the State must be obtained by the Applicant.

Further discussion of the changes to the Ordinance were concluded for the evening.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. McKeegan, to adjourn the October 23, 2024, Planning Commission Regular Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Jacquelyn A. Rouggie
Recording Secretary

APPROVED