

JUNE 2, 2015

The June 2, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm. Those present were:

John Klein	Secretary
Robert Walker	Member
Ken Weirman	Member
Christopher Carroll	Member
Nicole McCabe	Member
Gilbert Silverman	Member
E. Van Rieker	Zoning Officer & Planning Coordinator
Jim Santi	Township Commissioner

1. Approval of Minutes of May 4, 2015

Mr. Klein asked for any additions or corrections relative to the Minutes of May 4, 2015 which had been circulated by e-mail. Upon hearing no additions or corrections, Mr. Weirman made a motion to approve the Minutes. Mr. Walker seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed to approve the Minutes of May 4, 2015.

2. Report of Commissioners Meetings

Mr. Santi reported on the Commissioners Meetings of May 18, 2015.

The Board of Commissioners approved Ordinance No. 2015-004 amending Chapter 103 dealing with Flood Damage Control. This Ordinance partners with Ordinance No. 2015-002 that adopted the Township's Flood Plain Ordinance in April. Mr. Santi explained that this Ordinance made everything match across the board in regards to the Flood Plain Map.

Mr. Santi reported there was going to be a 20 year celebration for Park Sci Playground on June 6th from 1 pm to 3 pm.

Mr. Santi advised a permit was going to be required for fireworks and advertising was going to take place in order to notify the public.

Mr. Santi stated that the Burning Ordinance was changing to include fire pits and a permit would be required.

3. New Business

A. 624 S. Sumneytown Pike – Robinson Trust PADEP Component 4A Planning Module Municipal Planning Agency Review

Mr. Rieker stated this was a two-page form from DEP that the Planning Commission would need to review

and sign.

Mr. Rieker reported this was needed because it was a new sewer module and anytime a new sewer would be tied in this form would be required to be filled out and filed. Mr. Rieker briefly reviewed the form. Mr. Santi questioned if this was a new form and Mr. Rieker stated the form had been around for years but a lot of municipalities fail to fill them out. Mr. Santi asked if Newbury passes would twenty-three forms need to be filled out and filed and Mr. Rieker explained only one form for the development would need to be filed and it's called Municipal Planning Agency Review.

Mr. Klein asked for any questions or concerns. Upon hearing none Mr. Weirman made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Commissioners that the Municipal Planning Agency Review document be signed by Planning Commission Secretary, John Klein based on previously approved presented plans for the project. Ms. McCabe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. Old Business

A. Samantha Court Update

Mr. Rieker informed that a consolidation plan had been proposed to the Township. He reminded that Samantha Court had been approved a number of years ago but the final record plan had been withheld until their highway occupancy permit work had been completed. Mr. Rieker noted there had been two partners; Lauden and Paone partnership. He explained in order to convey out the lot to a new builder a consolidation plan was required. Mr. Rieker advised a call was placed to the Board of Assessment to see if a subdivision was required as well though there was no change from five years ago. He noted it would be a private road which may be resubmitted for review. Mr. Rieker stated the DEP modules had been approved. He reported if the new builder decided to change anything from the previous plan it would need to come to the Planning Commission for review.

Mr. Klein asked for any questions or concerns. Upon hearing none, Mr. Carroll made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Commissioners to merge the two lots into one as was approved five years ago. Ms. McCabe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. Merck – 500 Dickerson Road Lot #3 Improvements

Nancy Valaika of Merck & Company introduced herself and Dave Froehlich of the Wissahickon Valley Watershed. Ms. Valaika advised that Merck owned property on Dickerson Road near the child learning center. She explained that there was approximately seventeen acres there and recently a subdivision took place where approximately five acres remained with the child learning center, a one acre strip was for utilities which then left the remaining acres on Dickerson Road to be developed into pathways and walkways with the intent of donating it to the Wissahickon Valley Watershed once the improvements are completed for a park. Ms. Valaika showed a conceptual map of how the park would look. She reported that there would be a 1500 foot walking trail, along Dickerson Road the sidewalk, which would be 900 feet, would become a part of the walkway and then lead back to the walking trail. Ms. Valaika advised that there would be an information center. She noted at this time employees used the walking trail at Parkside Place and this would offer them

another option. Ms. Valaika explained at the lower end there would be a small parking area offering ten parking spaces. She stated there would be a vernal pool and most of the improvements and plantings would be completed by the Wissahickon Valley Watershed who was working with a landscaper.

Mr. Froehlich stated that the Wissahickon Creek was at the back of the property and by having this park it would help preserve it. He noted that the Wissahickon Valley Watershed had property across the street next to the child learning center which preserved the Wissahickon Creek. Mr. Froehlich noted that further down the Township had property which also preserved the Wissahickon Creek. He stated the park fits into the larger process to preserve land.

On behalf of the Site Review Committee, Mr. Silverman stated they had visited the site and had some questions. Ms. Valaika stated she had a copy and would go through the questions and address them.

- Ms. Valaika stated the first concern was whether or not there were any environmental issues that had to be addressed. She advised this site was formerly a Leeds and Northrup site where they had their tech center. She did not believe anything was buried but would confirm if any studies had been done.
- Ms. Valaika stated the second concern was the ten parking spaces being adequate enough. She explained it had been discussed with the Township and Board of Commissioners and it was not expected to have more than the employees of Merck walking to the park. Ms. Valaika acknowledged no parking was permitted along Dickerson Road. Mr. Klein expressed concern that if there were an event at one of the other businesses people would park there and cross Dickerson Road. Ms. Valaika advised there would be additional parking at the child learning center and anticipated the child learning center would use the park as an extension of their educational development due to what would be available in the park such as the hawks nest and vernal pool. Mr. Silverman questioned who would maintain the sidewalk especially since it would be used as part of the walking path. Ms. Valaika explained that Merck would maintain the sidewalk and mow it in the warm months and plow when necessary. Mr. Silverman asked Mr. Rieker if the parking would be permitted on Dickerson Road and Mr. Rieker advised that was a question for the Traffic Safety Officer. Ms. Valaika noted they did not want to line the street even though it was wide enough to designate parking. Mr. Silverman expressed concern the residents of the Township may find this park favorable and want to utilize it which would create the need for additional parking. Ms. Valaika reported there was parking in the child learning because the children were normally dropped off and the over flow could possibly utilize that parking area.
- Ms. Valaika advised the third concern was an area which showed as a depression and there was concern it could develop into a marsh which may want to be considered for regrading. Mr. Silverman explained it appeared to be a deep swale and with heavy rains could become a marsh. Ms. Valaika stated it would be looked into and the area was intended to be kept leveled. Mr. Froehlich explained it would need to be determined where the water was running off to but vegetation that likes wetness could be planted.
- Ms. Valaika confirmed the next question that the proposed sidewalk would in fact connect to the existing sidewalk at the adjoining school property.
- Ms. Valaika stated that there was no intent of putting any utilities at the park so there would be no drinking fountains.
- Ms. Valaika reported the park would be maintained by Merck. She noted as previously stated it would be mowed by Merck during the warm seasons and plowed when it snowed. Mr. Carroll questioned if it would remain this way even though it was donated to Wissahickon Valley Watershed

and Ms. Valaika confirmed it would. In response to Mr. Carroll's question regarding the paths inside the park, Ms. Valaika explained when it snowed they would not be plowed and the paths would be chained off. She noted that the park was being modeled off of Parkside Place. Mr. Silverman asked about a bituminous area and Mr. Froehlich stated it would be removed. Mr. Froehlich reported Merck would maintain the mowing and plowing and Wissahickon Valley Watershed would maintain everything else. Mr. Weirman questioned how things, such as the hawk's nest, were maintained. Mr. Froehlich explained the Wissahickon Valley Watershed has a staff and a group of volunteers that go out on a regular basis and report back what would need to be done to maintain their area. Mr. Froehlich confirmed this park would be maintained as the other properties that Wissahickon Valley Watershed takes care of. Ms. Valaika pointed out there would be a boardwalk added in an area that would prevent people from getting their feet wet.

- Ms. Valaika responded to the next question as to whether a zoning change to IN-Institutional was required stating there was no intention of changing the zoning. Mr. Rieker did not believe it was an issue for the applicants. He stated it would be something for the Township and the Board of Commissioners to decide. Mr. Rieker explained zoning maps have a lot of purpose with one of them being information and this could be something to show more accurately but should not be considered an issue. Mr. Froehlich advised there was no issue with what the Township would want to zone the area as long as it was consistent with the park. Ms. Valaika reminded the intent was to keep it open space and would do what it would take to keep it that way.

Ms. Valaika noted this would be a half mile walking trail. Mr. Rieker stated it was a conservatory space serving both passive and environmental.

Mr. Klein asked for any further questions or comments. Upon hearing none, Mr. Weirman made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Commissioners of the plan as stated. Ms. McCabe seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. Public Comments

There were no Public Comments

6. Adjournment

Mr. Klein asked for any further questions or comments. Upon hearing none a motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John Klein
Secretary