

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

June 22, 2016

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for their regularly-scheduled meeting on June 22, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia, PA.

Present: Jaque Camp, Chairperson; Matthew Popek, Vice-Chairperson; Mark McKee, Secretary; Vivian Peikin, Member; Todd Brown, Member; Robert Loeper, Township Planner; Kyle Brown, Associate Township Planner; Maudy Hedlund, Recording Secretary.

Absent: William Jenaway, Liaison to the Board of Supervisors.

Meeting Minutes: June 8, 2016.

Jaque Camp asked for a motion to approve the amended June 08, 2016 Minutes. Vivian Peikin motioned for their approval. Todd Brown seconded. A 5-0 vote, in favor, carried.

Plan: SD 2016-01: Losty Subdivision, 231 Matsonford Road. Residential subdivision: 7 lots, 6 new dwellings, 3.26 acres of open space, 10.35 acres, R-1A District.

Present:

Jim and Carolyn Losty, homeowners.
Art Boesler, Engineer, Czop/Specter, Inc., Norristown, PA.
Stephen H. Kalis, area resident.
Kevin Seaman, area resident.

From Rob Loeper's presentation:

The neighbors' concerns, which arose after the applicant's first meeting in January, were addressed and resulted in a revised plan that can resolve stormwater management issues and will provide adequate buffering and landscaping. The back of the property will remain as is.

The County's Review Letter of February 18 supported the plan and provided some basic comments regarding the basin, the buffers, sidewalks, water and waste water. Per an existing agreement, Lower Merion does serve the area and takes wastewater from certain properties on Matsonford Road, including the Losty's.

Rob Loeper stated that the Board of Supervisors cannot approve the plan until it has received and approved the Conditional Use, which has not yet been filed. Mr. Loeper shared Mr. Losty's concern that he does not want to move forward on certain engineering and other types of expenses without having some understanding that he has an approvable plan.

From Art Boesler, Engineer:

Art Boesler has been working with PennDOT to get a location for the cul-de-sac that provided sufficient sight distance. A revised stormwater management plan was submitted to

Remington for review. It employed Best Management Practices to bring a ten-year post-development down to a two-year pre-development level. Without any discharge point, discharge will sheet flow into a double basin. The wetlands will be retained as two raingardens. A designated place between the two rain gardens will serve as a drainage access and easement for snow. Art Boesler noted that a waiver from Remington will not be needed, but that waivers for sidewalks are needed.

The applicant plans to dedicate the 100-foot- diameter-wide, 250-foot-long cul-de-sac. The houses will be sprinklered and fire hydrants will be installed, as needed, closer to or on Matsonford Rd.

Mr. Loeper stated that the applicant is requesting partial waivers for not installing sidewalks on the back of what will remain as the Losty property; for installing a sidewalk and curbs on only one side of the cul-de-sac; and for not installing sidewalks and curbs on the Matsonford Rd. frontage. The Board will make their decision on the requested waivers. Mr. Losty would be submitting his Conditional Use plan for the Board's approval.

Comments from the public:

Neighbor, Kevin Seaman, voiced his concern about the cluster development's impact on his side yard. Mr. Loeper responded that regulations under the cluster differ from the standard R1A. Art Boesler clarified that the rear-yard setbacks were not set in stone.

Neighbor Kevin Seaman, stated that there are no sidewalks on Matsonford.

Neighbor Stephen Kalis, stated that not one neighbor is in favor of sidewalks on this busy, rural road and that not one person utilizes the High-Speed line.

Mr. Loeper shared the applicant's interest in asking the Planning Commissions for its opinions on sidewalks.

Jaque Camp had no problem with only coming down one side of the cul-de-sac with the sidewalk, given the configuration of the subdivision; however, the waiver not to provide the sidewalks on Matsonford misses an opportunity to start creating pedestrian access to the transit amenity that is available less than 1/10th of a mile away. She added that we shouldn't be passing on the opportunities, when we are doing redevelopment, to start filling in gaps in our pedestrian connections to our transit facilities, adding that we do, in the near future, have more options for places we can get to from that station.

Jaque Camp clarified that it would not be necessary today for this to extend across the portion of the property that's remaining in its current state. The only place that our subdivision and land development ordinance would require a sidewalk to go in is the portion of the improved property that fronts on Matsonford Rd. (Lot #1).

Mark McKee was not in favor of a sidewalk on Matsonford Rd. that leads to nowhere.

Matt Popek was willing to respect the opinions of the development and neighbors who do not want sidewalks on Matsonford and wanted to think of a creative solution.

Todd Brown, who had walked the property, did not feel safe on this busy road even if a sidewalk existed. He did not think that a sidewalk would be of particular value to the Township in this location.

Jaque Camp concluded that this was too complicated a situation; that there was an opportunity here that is being passed on. For various reasons, including the fact that the road is not level, Art Boesler was opposed to sidewalks on Matsonford.

The applicant asked the Planning Commission for a recommendation on the subdivision, including the waivers. Mr. Loeper commented that the Board of Supervisors would make a decision on the waivers.

Mark McKee asked if a designated place for snow had been designated on this private road. Mr. Boesler confirmed and pointed to a drainage area between the two rain gardens.

Jaque Camp asked if members were prepared to make a recommendation. Mark McKee suggested that the Board of Supervisors recommend approval of the cluster development plan with the partial waiver requested for the cul-de-sac to have sidewalks and curbs only on the side with the houses and to waive the sidewalk and curbs requirement along Matsonford Road to the extent that the Township thinks it would otherwise be required. Matt Popek seconded, as amended. A 5-0 vote, in favor, carried.

In response to Mark McKee's inquiry, Matt Popek added that the Planning Commission also recommends to the Board of Supervisors approval of the forthcoming Conditional Use application for the cluster. Mark McKee seconded. A 5-0 vote, in favor, carried.

Mr. Loeper gave an overview of the upcoming meetings.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Sincerely yours,

MARK MCKEE, SECRETARY