

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

October 26, 2016

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for their regularly-scheduled meeting on October 26, 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;

The pledge of allegiance to the flag was followed by self-introductions.

Meeting Minutes: October 12, 2016.

The October 12, 2016 Minutes were deferred to November 9, 2016.

Plan:

SD 2016-02: Wayne T. Eckman, 439 Lori Lane, Lot-line revision with 411 W. Church Rd., 0.932 Acres, R-2.

Present: Wayne T. Eckman, property owner.

Mr. Loeper provided an overview of the inter-family transaction that requests transferring a small triangle from one property's lot-line to the other. It does not create any zoning issues.

Vote:

Vivian Peikin recommended that the Board approves this revision. Todd Brown seconded.

A 5-0 vote, in favor, carried.

Plan:

SD 2016-05: Upper Merion Area School District: Caley Elementary School, 725 Caley Road. Demolition of existing school and construction of replacement school with associated site features, amenities and storm-water facilities, 19.62 acres, R-2A.

Present: John A. Toleno, Ed.D., Superintendent, Upper Merion Area School District.
Alice Budno Hope, Vice-President, Upper Merion Area School District.
Michael P. Keeley, Business Administrator, Upper Merion Area School District.

Michael A. Crain, Project Manager, Reynolds Building Solutions, King of Prussia.
Kenneth A. Bissinger, Civil Engineer, Renew Design Group, Souderton, PA.
David L. Schrader, AIA, Managing Partner, SCHRADERGROUP architecture,
LLC., Philadelphia, PA.

From Mr. Loeper's overview:

Although it poses some challenges, the 73,000 sq. ft. Caley Elementary School will remain operational while the new 84,000 sq. ft. school is being built on the same property. The first engineering review was received. It posed no major issues. We are also awaiting Montgomery County to provide their review.

Mr. Ken Bissinger introduced Dr. John Toleno, and Mr. David Schrader.

Dr. Toleno, who has experience in school construction and served two stints as a Superintendent, acknowledged several studies with regard to the number of students and receipt of an outstanding redistricting study from a member of the Planning Commission.

From their presentations:

The School Board has decided to replace the nearly-50-year-old, 73,000 SF Caley School with a new energy-efficient, two-story, 84,000 SF building. Caley School, which has been tight on space, will be demolished after the new school is occupied.

The timetable for this project begins with bidding in the spring of 2017 and construction from June of 2017 through September of 2018 for both buildings.

The new high school will provide:

- A new parking lot for 65 cars.
- Separate circulation for car and bus traffic. Buses will drop off /pick-up students at the rear of the building.
- Fire stairs at each end for egress and an elevator for ADA access.
- More efficient use of space in corridors and stairways.
- Cubbies in the hallways.
- A media center with outdoor play areas.
- An art room.
- A library.
- A "learning stair" that comes up from the library and can be used as a staircase, seating, or as an indoor amphitheater and media center for up to two classrooms.
- Space for administrative, nurses' office, guidance counselling, and music rooms.
- Auditorium.
- Dining area.

- A two-sided stage that can be used for the auditorium on one side and for the dining area on the other.
- A Kindergarten center with classrooms, a play area and dedicated bathrooms.

The new high school will provide (continued):

- A larger, one and half story gymnasium equipped with team seating. Its size allows for community uses beyond the elementary level.
- A night-time entry area for access to the gym, dining space or the stage.
- Two baseball fields, one soccer and one multi-purpose field.
- Extensive landscaping buffering all around the school.
- Two four-foot-deep basins, lined with river rocks and amended soil for rainwater plantings, designed to not hold standing water but to drain it.
- Fencing at the back of the baseball fields and a six or eight-foot-high vinyl-coated metal fence for the property.
- Above-ground detention facilities and an underground stormwater system. The latter will be located in the front of the site will be installed beneath the new parking lot.
- Building-mounted light fixtures that shine down.
- Outside cameras on the building.

Caley School currently serves K to grade 4. As of 2018 it will provide full-day kindergarten and accommodate a 525 student enrollment.

The applicant's representatives answered questions from the audience pertaining to water infiltration, lighting, and proximity of the fields to the property line.

The applicant will ask for a landscaper waiver for the front of the site.

Mr. Schrader designed the new Phoenixville Elementary Center and three large schools in Bristol Township. He expects that the new Caley School will be here for the next 50 years.

Additional information:

Dr. Toleno is offering two meetings in November at Caley. Letters will be sent to residents residing within 500 feet of the school.

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

Sincerely yours,

MARK MCKEE, SECRETARY