

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
August 11, 2010

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on August 11, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia, PA.

PRESENT: Robert Krutsick, Chairman; Ken Forman, Vice-Chairman; Secretary Mark McKee*; Steve Elgart; William Jenaway, Liaison for the Board of Supervisors; Robert Loeper, Township Planner; Scott Greenly, Associate Planner; and Maudy Hedlund, Recording Secretary. Absent: James Shelton. *Mr. McKee arrived late.

Mr. Krutsick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A pledge of allegiance and introduction of members followed.

Meeting Minutes: July 14, 2010.

Mr. Elgart motioned to accept the Minutes. Mr. Forman seconded and a 3-0 vote carried.

Mr. Krutsick introduced and welcomed Scott Greenly, the new Associate Planner, to provide a brief background. Scott received a Bachelor's of Arts in Geography from Millersville and a Master's degree in Public Administration from West Chester. Prior to coming here Scott was employed by the Greater Valley Forge Transportation Association (TMA). He also served as an Intern at the Township for one year.

Mr. Loeper expressed his appreciation for the extensive GIS contributions Scott made to the Planning Department during his internship.

Scott, who will be handling the Economic and Community Development tasks that Brody Bovero handled, is very interested in working with Code-related planning applications.

Workshop: Non-Residential Parking & Loading

Mr. Loeper started the workshop by providing parking ratios that are employed by neighboring townships. A group discussion addressed issues relevant to what members received in their packets:

On item 2. Offices / Banks (d. Medical / Dental Office):

Mr. Elgart questioned the determination for staffing of medical offices and drug stores. He commented that:

- The delivery of medical care is changing rapidly. Part of that change is the decentralization of medical care.
- A growing trend in drug stores is to provide medical care via nurse practitioners.
- Drug stores will provide more types of testing.
- There are more categories of non-medical providers in medical offices today.
- We need to add a comment that reflects parking needs for a "blended" use.

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Mr. Loeper stated that drug stores are considered a retail use. Currently, each practitioner is afforded seven parking spaces. We can clarify the definition of what a practitioner is.

On the parking table:

Mr. Loeper stated that some local communities have lowered general parking standards for retail commercial sales to one space per 300 feet of gross area.

A parking demand study done by WilburSmith Associates for cities in California indicated that retail, office and professional services rates were significantly lower than were required.

Group discussion about current and proposed parking requirements at the Valley Forge Shopping Center generated the following comments:

- Given that the highest peak number in the shopping center during the holidays was 3.9, Mr. Elgart suggested giving consideration to a ratio of 3.8.
- Mr. Elgart also recommended listening to the parking needs of the retail owner. Mr. McKee agreed, commenting that if you don't need it, don't build it.
- Mr. Loeper stated that the Target Corporation would be comfortable with a ratio of 4.

Mr. Jenaway asked if we have locations that have "5" spots or "3" spots that would come to us wanting a variance.

- Mr. McKee shared Jenaway's concern. He referred to the regional shopping center, created for the Mall's expansion, and its ratios of 5.5 for the first million, 4.5 for the second million, and four for anything over that. In response, Mr. Loeper stated that the Mall, identified as a regional shopping center, has its own requirements.

On §165-191.B: "Services" and "Institutional / Assembly":

Mr. McKee asked for review of the ratio of one space per room for hotels and motels with meeting and convention facilities and the ratio of one space per room, plus one space per 300 gross feet of assembly area, for hotels / motels with meeting / convention facilities. Mr. Loeper offered to look into the parcels. He suggested adding a category.

Workshop: Recreation Park & Open Space District (RPO).

The following sites would be classified as the RPO:

- Land that is dedicated, or used for park, or recreational facilities, or open space.
- Cemeteries.
- The Farm.
- The Gulph School.
- Martin's Dam.
- McKaig Nature Center.
- All of our parkland.

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Two residential pieces, located on the northern end of the township, will be retained as non-conforming RPO pieces.

Group discussion led to:

- A consensus that the Valley Forge Golf course be designated as a district.
- Removal of the Cluster Development Overlay from the RPO.

Adjournment: There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

MARK MCKEE, SECRETARY

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