

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
March 24, 2010

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting on March 24, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia, PA.

PRESENT: Robert Krutsick, Chairman; Secretary Mark McKee; James Shelton; Robert Loeper, Township Planner, and Maudy Hedlund, Recording Secretary. Absent: Messrs. Forman, Elgart, and Jenaway.

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

Meeting Minutes: March 10, 2010

Mr. Shelton motioned and Mr. McKee seconded to approve the Minutes of March 10, 2010. A 3-0 vote carried.

New Plan:

YSC Real Estate, LP

DP 2010-04

224 County Line Road.

Demolition/renovation & expansion of existing indoor sports facility.

Existing: 26,853 sq. ft. New construction: 59,846 sq. ft. Total: 81,861 sq. ft.

AG – Agricultural District, 7.47 acres.

Plan expiration: June 8, 2010.

Present: Mike Rufo, YSC, R.E., 441 E. Hector Street, Conshohocken, PA.
Greg Okupniarek, YSC, Real Estate.
Robert J. Kerns, Esq., Kerns, Pearlstine, Onorato & Fath, Lansdale, PA.
Michael J. Bowker, PE, Momenee and Associates, Exton, PA.
Joseph K. Rejent, Esq., Kerns, Pearlstine, Onorato & Fath, LLP.
Joseph E. Orsatti, Jr., RLA, Orsatti & Associates, Inc., King of Prussia.
Josh Kanaplue, Orsatti & Associates.

Mr. Krutsick introduced the members of the Commission and turned the meeting over to Mr. Loeper, who provided a brief overview.

The property is under new ownership. The site has been cleaned and is undergoing changes and improvements. The swimming pool and tennis courts have been removed. The applicant proposes to demolish, renovate and expand the existing building by 60,000 sq. ft. to create a youth soccer club.

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Mr. Loeper introduced Counsel Robert Kerns.

From Counsel Kerns' presentation, the applicant:

- Intends to turn this site into a first-class soccer club.
- Has done a good job cleaning up some of the issues raised by the residents of Colonial Village and the Board of Supervisors.
- Obtained relief from the Zoning Hearing Board for building coverage.
- Installed three light standards on one field that shine in an internal direction.
- Has met with neighbors to discuss what is proposed.
- Instructed Musko Lighting to tweak the lighting so it will have the least affect on the neighbors.

From Mr. Mike Bowker's presentation:

- The cleaned-up site and new building will result in a more uniformed parking area.
- Current parking patterns will remain. The site will have a one-way egress.
- Parallel parking will be provided on County Line Road.
- The plan provides 128 parking spaces, five more than required.
- Storm water management will be provided by two, lined sub-surface systems; one located beneath an existing berm, the other under an area of the parking lot.
- The site will drain to the rear and out to County Line Road.

Mr. Kerns explained the basis for one of the waivers (SLDO SECTION 145-24.A.(1)). The Chester Valley Trail system is interested in acquiring a piece of the applicant's front property. In order to accommodate this, the applicant requests a waiver to reduce the depth of all parking stalls to 17.5' ft.

Mr. Loeper noted that, although the Township requires a 19-foot stall depth, it has allowed a reduction to 17.5 ft. for stalls that have an overhang. Stalls located in the center of the site's parking lot that do not have an overhang would not be eligible for the depth reduction.

The group discussed parking lot requirements, parking demands, and the building's proposed use.

Mr. McKee referred to the ample parking space that The Woods, an office complex located across the street, could provide. Mr. Kerns stated that Mr. Rick Graham, principal of YSC, discussed and reached a working arrangement with an owner of The Woods to make use of their parking lot during tournaments. YSC is not currently using this site.

In response to Mr. Shelton's question about parking demands, Mr. Bowker explained that the new building would cover the existing field; however, not being a full field it would not require more parking spaces. The new building can handle the same number of players as the existing field can.

Mr. Kerns distributed a list of the requested waivers. They are as follows:

- SLDO SECTION 145-24.1.E. From providing the required street trees.
- SLDO SECTION 145-24.1.G. (1)(a) From providing the required buffers and screens.
- SLDO SECTION 145-24.1.G. (3)(d) To allow parking within the required 15' Buffer area.

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SLDO SECTION 145-24.1.H.	From providing the required building plantings.
SLDO SECTION 145-24.1.H.1.(c)	To not provide a planting area adjacent to the buildings a minimum of 10 feet in width.
SLDO SECTION 140-8.B.(2)	To allow grading and construction activities within 5 feet of the property boundary.
SLDO SECTION 145-24.A.(1)	To reduce parking stall length to 17.5'.

Mr. Joseph Orsatti, the landscape architect, described physical restrictions that prompted the following waivers:

- Mature vegetation exists directly east and south of the site's boundary.
- A fifty foot line of mature deciduous trees flanks the railroad tracks.
- Insufficient space around the proposed building's footprint for landscaping purposes.
- A pipeline, located at the southern property line, runs to the edge of the road.
- On the north side: obstacles including a major gas line right-of-way, and the future County Trail.
- On the west side: improvements along County Line Road and Devon Park Drive and parking.

Gathered from group discussion with the applicant's representatives:

- To handle overhang illumination, the applicant evaluated where trees could be planted internally.
- The applicant met with and reached an agreement with area residents to plant 25 to 30 trees on properties located on the other side of the railroad tracks.
- The applicant will fully comply with the residents' needs.

Mr. Krutsick asked members for questions and comments.

Mr. McKee:

- Noted no major problems with the requested waivers or the reduction in parking depth for a portion of the parking lot.
- Recommended continuing the work begun with representatives of The Woods.
- Expressed his concern for motorists who, coming down Devon Park Boulevard, or Ramp L or Route 202, can see the source of the distracting light.

Mr. Kerns stated that Musko Lighting, who did a complete review, will tweak the lights as best as possible to internalize them. He'll have Musko check into spillover lighting.

Mr. Loeper commented that field lighting cannot have a "full cut off."

A member of the audience commented that the field lights can be seen from Route 202 and that the field lights are turned off by 11:00 p.m.

Mr. McKee asked if there were any conditions the applicant offered or the Zoning Hearing Board attached to the relief it granted.

- The applicant said that the conditions YSC offered (regarding lighting, landscaping and hours of operation), and attached by the Zoning Hearing Board to the relief it granted, were to be contained in a written agreement between YSC and the neighbors and approved by the Township.
- Mr. Krutsick favored the Board of Supervisors to make a recommendation to that effect.

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Mr. Krutsick opened the meeting up to questions from the audience.

- Mr. James Dunlop of Lafayette Road is in favor of making use of available parking at The Woods for weekend tournaments.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

MARK MCKEE, SECRETARY

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