

The stated meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington was held on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA.

**CALL TO ORDER:** 7:31 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: SPEARMAN, COOPER, GAUTHIER, STRACKHOUSE, WEGGEL, ROSEN, RUSSELL, ROBINSON (7:35 p.m.)

Also Present: Director of Code Enforcement MATTEO  
Planning & Zoning Official PENECALE  
County Planner NARCOWICH

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Director of Code Enforcement, Larry Matteo opened nominations for Chairperson of the Planning Commission for 2016.

Mr. Rosen nominated Ms. Lucy Strackhouse as Chairperson of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington for 2016, seconded by Mr. Spearman.

By a unanimous vote, Ms. Lucy Strackhouse was appointed as Chairperson of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington on this 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2016.

Director of Code Enforcement, Larry Matteo opened nominations for Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission for 2016.

Mr. Rosen nominated Mr. Ashley Spearman as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington for 2016, seconded by Mr. Weggel.

By a unanimous vote, Mr. Ashley Spearman was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington on this 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2016.

Agenda Item PC1 – Review, Comment and Recommendation for the revised floodplain regulations known as Ordinance No. 2102:

Ms. Strackhouse said Planning & Zoning Officer requests review, comment and recommendation for the grammatical corrections to the revised floodplain regulations known as Ordinance No. 2102.

Mr. Penecale said after review, Drew Shaw, Environmental Planner of the MCPC (Montgomery County Planning Commission) on behalf of officials of DEP and FEMA requested that revisions be made to the draft floodplain ordinance.

There were minor revisions and the draft ordinance states in several sections that construction is permitted within the defined limits of the 100-year floodplain, providing that base flood elevation is not increased by either one or two feet. DEP recommended that we pick one number. This was a non-issue since the ordinance has the requirement that all setbacks are to be measured from the floodplain and not the property line. Therefore, no construction is permitted with the floodplain, and to satisfy the MCPC and DEP, the ordinance has been revised to state that a maximum of one foot of elevation change in the base flood elevation. Also, Mr. Weggel and Ms. Gauthier's comments were included in revised ordinance.

Also, the other issue was the numbering of the sections in the ordinance, which has been revised as well. Other than those revisions, the ordinance is identical from what was previously reviewed by members of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Weggel made a MOTION, seconded by Mr. Rosen to recommend approval of revised Floodplain Ordinance No. 2102.

MOTION was ADOPTED 8-0.

Agenda Item PC2- Application of Priceless Homes, LLC, owner of property located at 130 Fisher Road, Jenkintown, PA

Patrick J. Deacon, Popper & Deacon, Inc. 2840 Limekiln Pike, Glenside, PA, said we are subdividing one lot from existing parcel and both lots conform to regulations of the Township's zoning ordinance and no variances will be needed. A single-family residential colonial dwelling will be constructed that will be in-keeping with surrounding neighborhood. Also, the plan reflects all stormwater calculations that have been reviewed.

Mr. Rosen asked about waivers requested by the applicant.

Mr. Penecale noted that this application has been on the Township's EDU waiting list for four to five years as directional flows from this property will flow through Cheltenham Township. Late last year, the Township was granted 150 EDU's and then we notified the applicants who were on the waiting list informing them that the EDU's were now available. This application also includes a recommendation on their Act 537 Exemption Application that needs to be signed by the applicant and officials of Cheltenham Township.

Waivers requested by the applicant are as follows:

- Section 146.A – Property Identification Plan
- Section 146-11.B – Existing Features Plan
- Section 146-11.C – Proposed Layout Plan
- Section 146.11 – I – Phasing Plan
- Section 146-11.L – Architectural Plan
- Section 146-24.D – Right-of-Way Width

Ms. Gauthier suggested the plan show driveways across the street as well as neighboring properties.

Ms. Strackhouse added that it would be helpful to see the streetscape and see what the surrounding buildings look like. She questioned whether the Planning Commission will see conceptual designs for propose home in the future.

Mr. Penecale replied no. One of the waivers is for an architectural plan that this Board will need to consider.

Mr. Rosen asked if we do not grant that waiver could we request that the applicant bring it back at a later date.

Mr. Penecale replied this Board can request it, but the applicant is not obligated to bring it back. This Board can approve the application and not grant the waiver for an architectural plan or deny the application based on seeing an architectural print. However, he cautioned the Board that to deny a by-right subdivision plan that meets all requirements of the zoning ordinance in the zoning district in which it is located, could be “tricky.”

Ms. Gauthier recommended not granting the waiver for an architectural plan.

Ms. Strackhouse commented that she prefers that as well. This is something we see a lot of in Abington because most of the building is infill property, so it is an important topic for discussion and very important for each neighborhood as well as for each property that is built. She asked about architectural details of proposed home.

Mr. Deacon replied primarily he is an infill builder, so it has to fit in. Three sides of the home will be Double 4 Dutch-lap siding and part of the front façade will have a stone veneer and siding will be vinyl, and the roofline will be an A-pitched roof. Proposed home will have curb-appeal and the plan will be reviewed during building permit stage.

Ms. Gauthier referred to the conceptual driveway for proposed home; would the lights from the vehicles coming out of the new home reflect on the house across the street?

Mr. Deacon replied certainly not any more than the other driveways in the neighborhood. Also, the driveway will not align with another driveway. We picked this location because it is conducive to the shape of the lot.

Mr. Weggel questioned whether there will be a retaining wall on the side of the driveway as it is a steep area.

Mr. Deacon replied the plan shows a retaining wall on the right side of the driveway.

Mr. Weggel commented that the plan does not show concrete survey monuments.

Mr. Deacon replied we will comply.

Mr. Russell commented that this property is in his neighborhood and proposed home will be the only one with vinyl siding; however, he feels it is a good plan and he does not have any issue with it.

Mr. Spearman asked for input from staff on the waiver for architectural prints.

Mr. Penecale replied architectural prints with elevations provide the Board a better understanding of scale, and proposed plan is for a two-story center hall colonial. Architectural prints are required per the ordinance, but can be waived and he understands why the Board would like to see them.

Mr. Rosen commented that it would make it a lot easier for the Board to make an intelligent decision when we have a photo of existing neighborhood of adjacent properties and an architectural plan.

Ms. Gauthier commented that the County planner mentioned additional street trees and she questioned whether there will be tree protection fences.

Mr. Narcowich replied he recommended one or two additional shade trees should be planted; existing vegetation that will be removed should be shown on the plan; as well as steep slopes as there will be a grade change.

Mr. Deacon replied the plan depicts the grading fairly well as well as the sheet flow from runoff that will be collected by downspouts. The plan also shows the canopies of existing trees. This lot has quite a bit of vegetation and we will not be removing anything that is unnecessary.

Mr. Narcowich continued that since proposed new infill home would be located in the middle of a few homes, we recommend that architectural plans be consistent with homes in the neighborhood. He questioned whether the garage will be part of the main structure.

Mr. Deacon replied yes, it will be part of it, but the plan depicts a side entry garage and he feels that looks better from the street for curb-appeal.

Mr. Penecale expressed concern about the onsite detention system proposed to be located in the rear yard, and he asked the applicant prior to building permit stage, to look at it from a topography standpoint and put it in the front yard.

Mr. Deacon replied we did give some consideration to that, but the engineer's point of view was that the lot falls to the back and so would the sheet flow and also on the front left hand side of the property is a very steep and we do not want to disturb the steep slope. Also, on the right side by the driveway is where all of the utilities are located.

Regarding the two street trees; he feels there is no place for them because of the amount of trees that will remain, which are more than any homes in Abington Township.

Ms. Strackhouse asked for any public comments. There were none.

Mr. Rosen commented that our greatest concern is whether there is enough information that the house that will be built will be consistent with the architecture of the surrounding community. Contrary to that, if the subdivision plan complies with Township's regulations, it should not be held up.

He would suggest approving the application, but before the plan is submitted to the Board of Commissioners, an architectural plan is submitted by the applicant.

Mr. Deacon agreed.

James Zaspel, Priceless Homes, LLC, PO Box 505, Fort Washington, PA, 19034, owner of the property, said he would like the timeline to remain as is for this project.

Mr. Rosen made a MOTION, seconded by Mr. Spearman to approve the application of Priceless Homes, LLC subdivision plan for property located at 130 Fisher Road and to defer review of the architectural plan until a future date. Also, approval is subject to comments listed in Township staff review letter dated, December 23, 2015; to approve waivers requested by the applicant with the exception of waiver from Section 146-11.L – Architectural Plan.

MOTION was ADOPTED 8-0.

Ms. Gauthier made a MOTION, seconded by Mr. Rosen to approve an Act 537 Exemption Application be submitted by the applicant prior to the building permit application. Act 437 Exemption Application must be signed by the applicant as well as officials of Cheltenham and Abington Townships.

MOTION was ADOPTED 8-0.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary