

The stated meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., and called to order by Director of Code Enforcement, Mr. Larry Matteo.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: DiCELLO, COOPER, SPEARMAN, ROBINSON, WEGGEL, ROSEN, RUSSELL, GAUTHIER, STRACKHOUSE

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

Mr. Matteo announced that the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington reappointed Lucy Strackhouse, Ronald Rosen, Esq. and Glenn Cooper to an additional four-year term of Abington Township's Planning Commission on Thursday, January 12, 2017.

Mr. Matteo called for nominations for Chairperson of the Planning Commission for 2017.

Mr. Spearman nominated Ms. Lucy Strackhouse as Chairperson of the Planning Commission for 2017, seconded by Mr. Rosen.

By unanimous vote, Ms. Lucy Strackhouse was appointed Chairperson of Abington Township Planning Commission on this 24th day of January, 2017.

Ms. Strackhouse called for nominations for Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission for 2017.

Mr. Weggel nominated Mr. Spearman as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission for 2017, seconded by Mr. DiCello.

By unanimous vote, Mr. Ashley Spearman was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Abington Township Planning Commission on this 24th day of January, 2017.

Mr. Matteo thanked all members of the Planning Commission for their service. Also, this will be his last year with Abington Township and he would like to get the rewriting of the zoning ordinance completed before he retires as well as begin working on updating the SALDO. His goals going forward are to volunteer on the Economic Development Committee as well as continue working on the Vacancy Board.

Mr. Spearman suggested inviting Commissioner Kline to the next Planning Commission meeting to discuss updating the Comprehensive Plan as well as the SALDO.

Mr. Penecale noted there will be an upcoming presentation before the Planning Commission on the zoning ordinance rewrite.

Ms. Strackhouse noted there were emails sent to members of the Planning Commission regarding courses offered and she has taken them previously and found them to be very helpful.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Agenda Item PC1 – Application of Patrick J. Deacon, for the property located at 2823 Old Welsh Road, Willow Grove, PA:

Ms. Strackhouse read agenda item PC1 into the record, and asked the applicant to present their plan.

Patrick Deacon, Popper & Deacon, Inc. 659 Roberts Avenue, Glenside, PA., 19038, representing Joseph and Jeanette Stewart, owner of property located at 2823 Old Welsh Road, Willow Grove, PA., presented the plan to the Board.

There is a large tract of ground proposed to be subdivided and the owner will continue to reside in the existing home and also we received a dimensional variance from the Zoning Hearing Board. The applicant will comply with requirements of rear, front and side yard setbacks and the plan shows where the driveway will be located and we will provide stormwater management; however, we are not sure what exactly will be built yet as that will be up to the buyer.

He and his partner have done a lot of building in Abington Township over the last 20 years, and whatever will be built will be in-keeping with the surrounding homes in the neighborhood.

Ms. Strackhouse questioned whether a rendering of design is required with this application.

Mr. Deacon replied this is merely a depiction and we have not selected the exact home to be built for this property.

Ms. Strackhouse requested that the proposed house be appropriate with the landscape in the current neighborhood as well as the age and size of the homes that are in that area.

Ms. Gauthier noted that Waiver from Section 146.11.L – Architectural Plan listed in staff review letter dated, November 28, 2016 - Architectural Plan says, “an architectural plan is required to be submitted with this subdivision plan. A rendering of the proposed single family dwelling has been submitted in-lieu of a complete set of architectural plans.” Is that not the case?

Mr. Penecale replied there was a rendering submitted with the ZHB application of a home that Mr. Deacon built on Hillcrest Avenue, but the difference was that there were two different facades one with a side-entry garage and one with a front-entry garage, and with the narrowness of this lot a side-entry garage is not an option.

Mr. Rosen commented that the Planning Commission members have expressed that we would like to see whatever will be built will be in-keeping with the community.

Mr. Deacon showed a picture from his phone of what the proposed home will look like noting that it will be a two-story, Colonial-style home with a garage. Partial vinyl siding and partial stone veneer and it will have three or four bedrooms. Similar to the many of the homes he has built in Abington.

Mr. Penecale noted that an Act 537 Exemption mailer was submitted with this application as the sanitary sewer flow from this development is treated by the Fitzwatertown Road facility in Abington Township and Mr. Wrigley, Director of Wastewater Treatment Plant, indicated there is capacity for one additional EDU. However, the Planning Commission is required to weigh-in on that Act 537 Exemption mailer prior to Township Manager’s signature.

Mr. Russell noted that the condition of approval by Zoning Hearing Board was that the house on the new lot shall be no closer than 13 feet from the common property line, and the plan, Sheet 1 of 4, shows 10 feet and that needs to be changed.

Mr. Deacon replied he will comply and that note will be placed on the final plan.

Mr. Matteo clarified that is for the new lot. Is that correct?

Mr. Deacon replied that is correct.

Ms. Gauthier questioned whether the applicant has met with reps of PennDOT regarding access driveway in terms of sight distance.

Mr. Deacon replied no, but it will require a permit, and he will comply with sight distance regulations. Also, the plan shows the size of the driveway and stormwater calculations.

Mr. Spearman clarified that there is a 10-foot difference between the garage elevation and the first floor. Is that correct?

Mr. Deacon replied by bringing the driveway in more gradually would lessen the tips of the retaining wall helping with sight distance and there would not be as much of a difference between the garage floor and first floor elevation, and he will conform with Township's steep slope ordinance.

Mr. Spearman agreed that less retaining wall and more slope up to the maximum will lessen elevation between the garage and first floor elevation, which would not be a full 10-feet.

Mr. Weggel asked was this particular square foot area used for stormwater runoff calculations.

Mr. Deacon replied yes.

Ms. Gauthier asked is the 20-foot front yard setback measured from legal right-of-way or ultimate right-of-way?

Mr. Penecale replied it was measured from the front property line, and in this case, from the established right-of-way width.

Also, on Sheet 3 of 4 proposed house scales at 14 feet from property line, which addresses the ZHB requirement that the applicant increase the minimum distance between the two homes of at least 20 feet.

There is a list of waivers requested by the applicant as noted in staff review letter dated, November 28, 2016.

Ms. Gauthier questioned waiver from Section 146-39 – that says, “At least two shade trees will need to be planted on Lot #1.”

Mr. Penecale replied there are two existing trees of 48 caliper inches, which satisfies requirement for Lot #2, and he spoke with Mr. Deacon about the need for an additional tree for the other lot. The applicant is not asking for a waiver to plant trees, but a waiver to allow the trees within the front yard setback area instead of within the five (5) feet of the front property line.

Mr. Rosen made a MOTION, seconded by Ms. Robinson to recommend approval of this application and to approve waivers requested by the applicant as listed in staff review letter, dated November 28, 2016 including specifications of waiver from Section 146-39 – Shade Trees. Also to approve Act 537 Exemption mailer and that the plan be amended to include an adjustment to the eastern property line for the house on the new lot shall be no closer than 13 feet from the common property line.

MOTION was ADOPTED 9-0.

Ms. Strackhouse referring to the Multimodal Transportation project at Old York and Susquehanna Roads; she requested that the consultant, Simone Collins make a presentation to the Planning Commission so that we can help plan and provide input.

Ms. Gauthier said the Township’s Master Bike Plan was approved to design the bike route and Simone Collins was also involved with that and she would be interested in knowing where that bike route is being proposed.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary