

LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

February 11, 2009

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Fredrick Lighty
Roy Newsome
Dennis Guise
Ernest Gingrich
Richard Beverly
Douglas Grove
Robin Lindsey

ALSO PRESENT

Dianne Moran, Planning & Zoning Officer
Steve Fleming, HRG
Jessica Kurtz, Community Development Intern
Omar Syed, Dauphin County Planning Commission

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lighty called the regular meeting of the Lower Paxton Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm, on January 14, 2009 in Room 171 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Mr. Gingrich led the recitation of the Pledge.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Newsome made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2009 Reorganization and regular meetings. Mr. Beverly seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

OLD BUSINESS

Preliminary/Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan 08-20
Allentown Boulevard Hotel
(Holiday Inn Express)

Mr. Lighty stated the Commission has received a letter from the applicant requesting the plan be tabled.

Mr. Lighty called for comments from the audience. There were none.

Mr. Newsome made a motion to table the plan. Mr. Grove seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

NEW BUSINESS

Preliminary Land Development Plan 09-03
Devonshire Memorial Church of the United Brethren in Christ
(Additions and Renovations)

Mr. Lighty stated the Commission has received a request from the applicant that the plan be tabled.

Mr. Lighty called for comments from the audience. There were none.

Mr. Grove made a motion to table the plan. Mr. Gingrich seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan 09-02
Bishop McDevitt High School

Ms. Moran stated that the purpose of the plan is to construct a new high school which will accommodate 900 plus students as well as associated site improvements and athletic facilities. The tract is located west of Page Road and north and south of Spring Creek Road. The property is zoned RC, Residential Cluster and FP, Flood Plain District. The tract consists of 86.45 acres and will be served by public sewer and public water. The applicant has requested a waiver of the preliminary plan requirement, and a waiver of the requirement to install sidewalks along the western portion of Spring Creek Road.

Justin Kuhn of Kurowski & Wilson Engineers, and Mike O'Rourke from KCBA Architects, as well as John DiSanto was present on behalf of the plan.

Mr. Kuhn presented color renderings of the site layout for the school. He explained that the proposed school will be built for 900 students, and the current enrollment is 750 students. The design includes tennis courts, synthetic football fields, baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, and field hockey and lacrosse practice fields. Between the school and the stadium there is a practice football field that will serve as overflow parking.

Mr. Kuhn explained that the plan calls for a vacation of Spring Creek Road from Lower Paxton Township. Traveling east from Page Road onto Spring Creek Road, the roadway would end at a cul-de-sac at the entrance to the school. The first loop is the bus drop-off loop. That loop contains staff parking on the inside of the loop. Above that is visitor parking, then student parking. Beyond that is a loop for parent drop-offs. To the rear of the school there is a separate area for deliveries and trash facilities next to the additional lot for staff parking. There is a mechanical room access driveway that also comes around to the front to service the mechanical area beneath the educational wing. That driveway would serve as access for emergency vehicles for that side of the building. Regarding emergency vehicle access, they can still use the center vacated portion of Spring Creek Road. They would use some kind of electronic gate system to allow easy access for emergency vehicles. The loop

around the football field contains parking for the athletic fields. The cul-de-sac at the end of the football field loop will remain gated. The applicant wants all traffic to enter and exit the site from the signalized intersection on Page Road. The cul-de-sac at the end of the football field loop may be opened to allow football traffic to exit the site and travel west on Spring Creek Road.

Mr. Kuhn stated that the intersection of Page Road and Spring Creek Road would be fully signalized. That would include improvements to Chatham Glen Way which is currently a right-in/right-out. It would then have a left turn lane where the concrete island currently exists, providing the opportunity to turn right, left or go straight out of Chatham Glen. Northbound Page Road will have a left turn lane to get to Spring Creek Road. Southbound Page Road would have a left turn lane for Chatham Glen as well as a right turn lane to get into Spring Creek Road. They will also widen Spring Creek Road from its current 21 feet up to about 30 feet. The busses and students would all enter through the signalized intersection, for safety. The public water will be run from Chatham Glen, and the public sewer will be extended from the western property owned by Mr. Herbert, via an easement. There are three stormwater basins shown on the plan in accordance with the Act 167 Plan and the NPDES permit.

Mr. Newsome asked about traffic studies. Mr. Kuhn stated that they did a traffic impact study last year and it has been through several revisions, and has been submitted back to the Township on October 10, 2008 addressing the last five comments. They are awaiting a Township response.

Mr. Newsome asked about the opening of the gates during special events. Mr. Kuhn stated that if they open the center cul-de-sac, it would be intended for traffic going westbound on Spring Creek Road. If the vehicle needed to get to Page Road, they would have to go around the school and out the normal entrance.

Mr. Guise asked who would be responsible for Spring Creek Road, if it were vacated. Mr. Kuhn stated the Diocese would maintain it after the vacation. Mr. John DiSanto stated that issue was discussed at the Public Safety meeting, and the applicant agreed to plow the snow at the same time they do the school so that it would always be passable if needed. Mr. Gingrich asked about Spring Creek Road on the east side of the cul-de-sac, and if that would remain a Township Road. Mr. DiSanto thought that it would, and after discussing it with the Public Safety Committee, it was agreed that the Township would plow up to the school entrance. The Diocese would handle the section of roadway between the two cul-de-sacs.

Mr. Newsome asked the existing average daily traffic on Spring Creek Road. Mr. Kuhn stated that the total number of trips on January 21, 2008, the day it was counted, was 824.

Mr. Lighty understood the request, but was uncomfortable with the idea of closing the road. He liked that provisions were made for emergency vehicles, but was unsure of how it would be implemented so that every single vehicle that may need access would be properly equipped to open the gates. Mr. DiSanto assumed that all vehicles have the same device allowing them to get through the traffic signals. Mr. Lighty stated they rely on emergency interrupt. That is on the signal itself, and picks up the frequency given off by the emergency lights. He did not know how that would translate to

opening a gate. Mr. Kuhn stated they would like to make it so that the gate responds to the preemption equipment the vehicles already have.

Mr. Newsome asked about opening the gates for something other than an emergency vehicle to pass through. Mr. DiSanto stated it would be primarily for sporting events, probably about 10 times a year. There will be an impact, just like there is at Central Dauphin when they have a home football game.

Mr. DiSanto noted that the idea of the closure originated from the Township. He noted there are some concerns about the narrowness and the turns associated with the roadway. Mr. Lighty questioned the comment that the idea came from the Township Staff. Mr. DiSanto stated he wasn't sure if it was from Staff, Management, or some other entity, but it was floating around before he became involved. The closure has been discussed at Workshop meetings.

Mr. DiSanto asked if the Township has received any other written public input. Ms. Moran stated that Swatara Township and Lawnton Fire Company were the only two she was aware of, and those letters were provided to the Commission.

Mr. Lighty asked if the traffic study indicates where the 824 vehicles that currently use Spring Creek Road will go when it is closed. Mr. Kuhn stated the study does address redistributing the traffic. He showed the Commission the chart.

Mr. Guise asked about the ability to address the comments. Mr. DiSanto stated that many of the comments call for technical corrections or additional details. He addressed the comments as follows:

Staff Comments dated February 6, 2009:

1. Waivers are supported, there is no issue there.

Staff Site Specific Comments:

1-7. Agree

8. Will discuss with Staff, but seems minor and will address it.

9-17. Agree

18. Lighting Plan: they are working on that with the architectural plans for the building.

Mr. Grove asked if the architect has been in contact with the PA Outdoor Lighting Council with regard to good lighting. Mr. O'Rourke stated they have not specifically talked to them, but plan on using cut off lighting as they recommend. Mr. DiSanto stated the building will not be certifiably "green", but they are still trying to use as many components as possible. He has been in contact with the PA Sustainable Energy Fund because LED site lighting is now becoming available. There may be grant money available to the church in this aspect of the plan.

19. Agree

20. Mr. DiSanto stated he didn't think a special exception was required for the overflow parking since it is permitted under Recreational Parking, which says that 50% of recreational parking can be on grass surfaces. Mr. DiSanto, Ms. Moran, Mr. Syed and Mr. Fleming discussed parking while the Commissioners and Mr. Kuhn discussed traffic redistribution.

- With regard to the parking requirements in Section 603.E.2.a., Ms. Moran stated that Mr. DiSanto was citing outdoor recreation other than those uses specifically listed in the table are permitted to have 50% on a grass overflow area, however, a school is a primary use and is specifically called out in the ordinance, so the special exception is required. Mr. Kuhn felt the parking was for the athletic field use not for the school use. Mr. Lighty stated that the athletic field is the school. Mr. Kuhn thought the field was an accessory use to the school. Mr. DiSanto stated they can look at this again and apply for a special exception if it is required. Mr. Guise agreed it will be required.
21. Mr. DiSanto questioned the need for a planting strip. Mr. Kuhn stated the parking is at least 200 feet from the street right-of-way line, and asked if more buffer is required in addition to the 200 feet of grass area; there will be no parking along the right-of-way. Ms. Moran agreed that more buffer would not be needed. Mr. Fleming asked if that would be different if the road is not vacated.
 22. & 24. Landscaping is required around the stormwater basin, and a 30 foot wide buffer strip is required along the northern boundary. The applicant will submit a request for a variance for both requirements. Mr. DiSanto explained that along the northern boundary, they are cutting the bank about 20 feet, so when you are on the property to the north, you will practically look over the building. The top of the bank will be about 10 feet to the property line. Putting trees in that space will serve no purpose. The western property line already has a substantial tree line. Mr. Gingrich stated that there is almost no cut in the area of the football field. Mr. DiSanto stated that it is heavily wooded in that area. Dr. Herbert has requested a 6 foot vinyl fence along the property line as part of his negotiations over sewer easements. Mr. Newsome questioned the fence. Mr. DiSanto stated that it will not be visible from the roadway, and it would primarily serve to keep balls and things from the field from ending up on his property.
 23. Agree, but have to check the tree type.

General Conditions 1-7: Agree.

Staff Comments 1-5: Agree.

Mr. Guise asked the height of the building. Mr. O'Rourke stated that it will be about 35 feet. The twin bell towers will be taller, but are exempt under the ordinance.

HRG Memo to Ms. Wissler dated 2/5/09:

- 1-2. Agree
3. Mr. DiSanto stated they are not showing sidewalk along Page Road on the plan. Mr. Kuhn stated they do not have frontage along Page Road, and asked why it would be required. Mr. Fleming stated that improvements are proposed to the Page Road right-of-way, so it is up to the Township if they desire pedestrian access within that right-of-way while the improvements are being made. Mr. Kuhn stated that they are running sidewalks along the north side of Spring Creek Road out to Page Road tying into a crosswalk across Page Road into Chatham Glen's sidewalk. Mr. DiSanto felt that nobody should be walking along that portion of Page Road. If they did run sidewalks up

- the road, the pedestrian would be dumped out into the street when the sidewalk ends and there is very little shoulder-the bank goes right down to the lane of traffic.
- Mr. Fleming asked about the discussions with PennDOT. Mr. Kuhn stated they wanted the Township's input first. The preliminary meeting will be soon, and both Lower Paxton Township and Swatara Township will be invited.
4. Mr. DiSanto stated they have submitted all their replies to the comments raised with regard to the traffic study on October 10, 2008, but haven't gotten a response to that yet.
- 5-8. Agree
- 9 & 10. Mr. Kuhn stated that if the maximum average slope in the building area is less than 20% then comment #10 goes away. Mr. DiSanto stated they are not exceeding 20%. Mr. Kuhn stated it will be about 9%, and that information will be provided on the next submission. Mr. Fleming agreed that if it doesn't exceed 20% it is fine.
- 11-13. Agree
14. Mr. Kuhn thought the ordinance section is referring to parking that is not on-site or on an abutting lot. Ms. Moran read the ordinance aloud. Mr. Fleming felt they need to meet the measurement if the parking spaces on the loop are being counted to meet the parking requirements for the school. Mr. Kuhn stated that the building has adequate parking in the lots adjacent to the building so the spaces on the loop are really intended for athletic events. Mr. Fleming asked if there is an enclosure for the football stadium and how close the entrance is to the parking. Mr. Kuhn stated they do not have a design for the stadium, but speculate that there will be at least an entrance on the east and west sides. He felt the criteria doesn't apply if the parking is on the same lot or an abutting lot. He asked for clarification on the interpretation. Mr. DiSanto noted they can look at this and measure it if needed.
- 15-18. Agree
- 19-20. A variance will be applied for.
- 21-32. Agree
33. Mr. DiSanto stated they talked to the Public Safety Committee at length about this issue, and they did not feel a need for a stabilized parking in this area for equipment because the road will not have traffic. He will get verification on their point of view.
- 34-41. Agree.

Dauphin County's comments are addressed above. With regard to comment #20, Mr. Kuhn explained that the parent drop-off will come around and enter from the north. It will begin where the sidewalk begins and comes down through that area. It is designed for one-way traffic, but is paved to the width of two-way traffic, to allow for the parents to stop along the sidewalk and for vehicles to drive around the stopped vehicles. Mr. Syed asked why it looks like there are two drop-off locations and questioned the location of the island. Mr. Kuhn explained it is on the plan to provide for some separation, and vehicles that are ready to exit the site can use that area without driving the full drop-off loop. Mr. DiSanto suggested the island could be eliminated. Mr. Syed suggested adding an additional island and creating a lane for the exiting traffic. Mr. DiSanto agreed to look into the suggestion.

Mr. Syed asked about the impact of closing Spring Creek Road on existing users. Mr. DiSanto stated he would like to address the questions raised tonight in detail for the Township. Mr. Guise stated

that while there are many issues to work on, the main issue is the closure of the roadway. He felt that issue needs more information and a better justification. He asked for alternatives, and pros/cons of each.

Mr. Lighty called for comments from the audience. There was none.

Mr. Lighty wanted to see additional information before moving the plan forward. Mr. Grove agreed, especially with regard to the closure of the roadway. Mr. DiSanto agreed to provide some clear answers and explanations together to allow the Commission to make an informed decision.

Mr. Guise made a motion to table the plan, to give the applicant the opportunity to address the comments, make corrections and clarifications, and provide additional information regarding the vacation of the roadway. Mr. Grove seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

Special Exception #09-01
Triple Crown Corporation
Carwash at 1282 North Mountain Road

Ms. Moran stated that Triple Crown Corporation has submitted an application for a Special Exception to locate a carwash at 1282 North Mountain Road. The property is zoned CN, Neighborhood Commercial District, which allows carwashes as a Special Exception.

Ms. Moran advised that the application is being brought before the Planning Commission so that they may make a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board, who will conduct a hearing on February 26, 2009.

Mr. Mark Coakley and Mr. John DiSanto, Triple Crown Corporation; and Mr. Mark Tyndale, Carwash Systems, were present on behalf of the special exception application.

Ms. Moran stated that a land development plan will have to be submitted if the special exception is granted by the Zoning Hearing Board. The Planning Commission has this opportunity to provide the Zoning Hearing Board with comments prior to their hearing which will take place later this month.

Mr. Coakley distributed three drawings: the elevation/façade facing Mountain Road (east), the existing conditions plan, and the proposed site plan. He explained that the special exception procedure has to do with the use, and all of the specifics will be dealt with during the land development process. Mr. Coakley stated the façade will have a split face, stone on the lower portion of the wall, then high grade architectural block, then architectural shingles on the roof.

Ms. Lindsey asked about closing the carwash for the night, and if it is done automatically or manually by an employee. Mr. Tyndale stated closing the carwash for the night can take place more than one way. The entrance and exit can be barricaded. The money accepters and other operations, except lights, can be put on timers. The lights have to remain on for security. Mr. DiSanto did not foresee barricading the site, but rather turning off the equipment and posting the hours of operation will

suffice. Mr. Guise stated that if the hours are posted, it should be clear to a customer when the carwash is open or closed.

Mr. Lighty stated he tried to use the carwash at Sheetz but it was closed. When he inquired as to why, he was told that the water recycling doesn't have the ability to keep up with the cars using the carwash; it literally runs out of water and has to be shut down for a few hours.

Mr. DiSanto stated this facility, as well as the facility on Union Deposit Road, will be clearly different than Sheetz. The existing carwash on Union Deposit Road has no problem handling the demands, and this site will be capable of keeping up with its customers. Mr. DiSanto stated he had a similar experience at Sheetz and received the same explanation, which prompted specific discussions with Mr. Tyndale. Sheetz is to Carwash Systems, as Chevy is to Mercedes.

Mr. Guise asked about the ice that can accumulate outside a carwash in the winter. Mr. Tyndale stated that the floors are pitched and the exit pads are heated. There will be some run-off and tire tracks that may ice up, but the owner or operator will be responsible for salting that area as part of normal maintenance. Mr. DiSanto stated the first 20 feet out of the tunnel is heated and will not ice. That is where the majority of the water will come off the vehicles. He noted that he has frequented the carwash on Union Deposit Road and there is a little bit of ice beyond the 20-foot heated area, but is not like the older carwashes where there is a sheet of ice immediately outside the carwash. Mr. Tyndale stated that they have added trench drains under the drying area and the doors to keep the water in. They do not want the water to escape the building.

Mr. Syed asked about payment at the carwash. Mr. Tyndale stated there is a pay-point prior to the entrance. It is automated self-service, there is no person. You can pay with a credit card or cash.

Mr. Syed asked about the employees. Mr. DiSanto explained there would be someone there about two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon, to do things such as tend to the trash cans et cetera.

Mr. Guise made a motion to advise the Zoning Hearing Board that the Planning Commission has reviewed the special exception request and find it to be unobjectionable. Ms. Lindsey seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no further public comment.

COMMISSIONER & STAFF COMMENT

There was no additional comment from the Commission or Staff.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for *Thursday, March 12, 2009* at 7:00 pm at the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, Room 171.

There is a Business Improvement District workshop meeting scheduled for February 23, 2009, at 5:00 pm, in Room 174.

Being no further business, Mr. Beverly made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Grove seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner
Recording Secretary