

LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION

May 09, 2007

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Fredrick Lighty  
Ernest Gingrich  
Dennis Guise  
Roy Newsome  
Richard Beverly  
Betsy Sibert  
William Neff

**ALSO PRESENT**

Jim Snyder, HRG  
Chip Millard, Dauphin County  
Dianne Moran, Planning & Zoning Officer  
Lori Wissler, Planning & Zoning Officer

**Call to Order**

Mr. Lighty called the regular meeting of the Lower Paxton Township Planning Commission to order at 6:58 pm, on May 9, 2007 in Room 171 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

Mr. Neff led the recitation of the Pledge.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Newsome made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2007 meeting, Mr. Gingrich seconded the motion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Rezoning Request**

**John Null**

Ms. Wissler stated that at the April meeting, the Commission reviewed an application for John Null to rezone the property at 5817 & 5819 Linglestown Road from R-1, Low Density Residential District to CG, Commercial General District. The request was denied and it was recommended that the applicant amend his application and request the CN, Commercial Neighborhood District. The Township Solicitor informed Ms. Wissler that the applicant would have to amend the application, be heard by the Planning Commission again then be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors to be procedurally correct.

The applicant has proposed an amendment to the Township's Zoning Map for a 0.363-acre parcel located south of Linglestown Road and east of Ranger Road. The applicant proposes to rezone this tract from R-1, Low Density Residential District to CN, Commercial Neighborhood District.

Prior to amending the Zoning Map in July 2006, the property was zoned C-1, General Commercial District, and contains two commercial properties.

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors have discussed this property and are in agreement to change the zoning of this property to the CN, Commercial Neighborhood District.

Another courtesy mailing has been sent to the neighbors indicating that the Commission will review the application at this meeting.

The following were staff's review comments:

1. As with all rezoning, it is important to review the surrounding zoning of the area to ensure compatibility of land uses. The property is abutted to the north and east by the CN, Commercial Neighborhood District, and to the south and west by the R-1 District.
2. The 2004 Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map shows the area to be Low Density Residential.
3. Staff recommends that the request to rezone the property to CN be approved.

Mr. John Null, owner of the property, was present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Newsome asked if the only change was the requested zoning. Ms. Wissler stated that is correct.

Mr. Chip Millard, Dauphin County, stated the County supports the request.

There was no comment from the audience.

Mr. Newsome made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request for 5817 & 5819 Linglestown Road from R-1 to CN. Ms. Sibert seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan #07-08** **Community General Osteopathic Hospital - MRI Center**

Ms. Wissler stated that the purpose of this plan is for the construction of a 5,470 square foot one-story expansion for an MRI Center with required parking.

The property is located north of Londonderry Road and east of South Arlington Avenue and is zoned Institutional District. This tract of land possesses 28.237 (exclusive of CNCO Leasehold) and is served by public water and public sewer systems.

The applicant has requested a waiver of the preliminary plan requirement.

Mr. Steve Quigley, H. Edward Black and Associates, was present on behalf of Pinnacle Health and Community General Osteopathic Hospital (CGOH). There is presently an MRI facility off of

Arlington Avenue, but that is not part of the Hospital site. That facility will close and the new expansion will replace that.

Mr. Quigley stated he has received comments from County, HRG and Staff and does not have a problem with any of them. He noted that with regard to Staff comments, the applicant will have Grove Miller Traffic Engineers generate a letter to show there will be considerably less than the 100 peak trips, it should be approximately 10-15 trips. Half of the use will be outpatient, and the other half will be inpatient.

Mr. Quigley stated the E&S plan has been approved and was submitted to the Township.

Mr. Quigley noted that with regard to HRG comment #2, he will provide information as to the calculations. With regard to the concrete on the slope in the parking lot, Mr. Quigley stated it is a very narrow 3:1 slope and would be difficult to grow and maintain grass or ground cover so they will install stamped concrete or some pattern, so that it is nice to look at, but will not be walkable.

Mr. Newsome asked if the existing MRI center is operated by the Hospital. Mr. Quigley stated it is private, and it will be vacated. It will most likely be leased to a doctor's office. Mr. Newsome asked if there will be a competing MRI center. Mr. Quigley answered no.

Mr. Neff asked if the existing MRI facility will be moved into the new facility. Mr. Quigley answered that it will be a new MRI.

Mr. Lighty asked if this plan fits into the master plan for the Hospital as shown to the Planning Commission some time ago. Mr. Quigley answered that it does.

Mr. Millard stated that he had no significant comments to discuss.

There was no comment from the audience.

Mr. Neff made a motion to recommend approval of the plan subject to compliance with the comments generated. Mr. Gingrich seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

**Final Subdivision Plan #07-06**  
**Stray Winds Farm, Phase I**

Ms. Moran stated that phase I involves 30.84 acres of land south of McIntosh Road and east of Crums Mill Road. The tract is zoned R-C, Residential Cluster. This phase proposes 90 dwellings units: 32 single family detached (lots #47-53, #58-75 and #87-92), 47 single family detached condominiums and 11 single family attached (townhouses). The lots will be served by public sewer and public water.

The following waivers were requested with the preliminary plan:

1. Waiver of the requirement to provide sidewalk and curbing and road widening along existing streets.

2. Waiver of the requirement to provide vertical curb (slant curb is proposed).
3. Waiver of the requirement with regard to the method of calculating stormwater management runoff in watershed analysis.
4. Waiver of the requirement to provide low flow channels and underdrain.
5. Waiver of the requirement to provide Type C inlet hood of 10" in height.
6. Waiver of planting islands within a cul-de-sac turnaround.
7. Waiver of the requirement to provide typical street cross section design.
8. Waiver of the street grade requirement.
9. Waiver of the minimum distance between street intersections.
10. Waiver of the requirement to provide base flood elevations.
11. Waiver of the 200' minimum sight distance requirement in sag vertical curves along private access drives (Secretariat Street).

Mr. Lighty asked if there is any significant changes from the preliminary plan and the final plan. Ms. Moran stated that the preliminary plan is scheduled to be heard by the Board of Supervisors on May 14, 2007. Ms. Moran stated that Staff and HRG support waivers #2-11, but remain neutral on waiver #1, to allow the Board to make the decision.

Mr. Lighty asked the status of the variance appeal.

Mr. Bob Fisher, R. J. Fisher & Associates, was present on behalf of the plan. Mr. Fisher stated that he has received the comments from Staff and HRG and does not have any problems with them. With regard to County's comments, Mr. Fisher will contact them to work them out. With regard to the County comment about the streams, the tributaries may be perennial, but are not identified on the USGS quad, and the ordinance specifically says they have to be both.

Mr. Guise asked if Phase 1 is entirely in Lower Paxton Township. Mr. Fisher answered yes, noting that Phase 1 was drawn to avoid DEP wetland permitting areas to allow sufficient time to proceed with Phase 1 construction while simultaneously working on the DEP permits.

Mr. Guise asked if the variance appeal will affect Phase 1. Mr. Fisher stated that the appeal is still pending. Mr. Pete Leone, Triple Crown Corporation, stated that the case is in Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas. Mr. Lighty suggested that if the Commission decides to recommend approval of this plan, the motion should include a condition based on the successful resolution of the variance appeal.

Mr. Fisher noted that if the variance appeal was in favor of the appellant, the developer would have to remove units from another phase to come to the density allowed.

Mr. Neff asked what off tract improvements will be completed with Phase 1. Mr. Fisher stated the intersection of Crums Mill Road and McIntosh Road, which includes realignment and regarding. The permits have been submitted to PennDOT for the intersection of McIntosh Road and Colonial Road, and that may be a lengthy process, and speculated that it will take place in Phase 2. There is an agreement between Triple Crown Corporation and the Township that outlines the improvements.

Mr. Snyder thought that Colonial Road and McIntosh Road were to be done in Phase 1, per that agreement.

Mr. Leone stated that the timing of the permits will coincide with Phase 2. Mr. Fisher noted that PennDOT is proposing a lot of work on the interstates, including the bridges over the interstates. PennDOT is trying to coordinate the work to be done on the bridge where Colonial Road goes over I-81 and the intersection work.

Mr. Fisher noted that because they are off-site improvements, they are not shown on these plans. They are being done according to the agreement, and there is a separate set of plans for those improvements.

Mr. Neff asked about the curbing. Mr. Fisher stated that the development will include vertical curbing at the intersections, with the exception of accessible ramps, and slant curbs throughout the rest of the development.

Mr. Newsome stated he felt strongly that intersections be tied down with vertical curbs, and noted that if there are sidewalks, then ramps are appropriate.

There were no further comments from the County.

Mr. Guise made a motion to recommend approval of the plan subject to the comments presented, and subject to the resolution of the variance appeal in favor of the developer, and subject to the Board of Supervisors' approval of the preliminary plan. The motion included recommending approval of the waivers, subject to the Board of Supervisors' approval of the waivers with the preliminary plan. Mr. Gingrich seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

**Special Exception #07-02**  
**Christina Kepp, 1154 Loop Drive**

Mr. Lighty stated that the Planning Commission is asked to make a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board with regard to special exception applications. He noted that the Zoning Hearing Board is not bound by the recommendation of the Commission.

The Commission agreed that a special exception discussion should follow the same protocol as the subdivision and land development plans, including the standard introduction.

Mr. Guise noted that he did not see a sketch plan with the information submitted. Ms. Moran presented photographs of Ms. Kepp's current home with a beauty shop, and of the house on Loop Drive.

Ms. Wissler noted that the applicant does not own the house on Loop Drive, and is only interested in buying it if she can put a beauty shop in it.

Commissioners agreed that a plot plan showing proposed changes and entrance areas would be helpful in reviewing special exceptions. The sketch plan does not have to be engineered, but should

include square footage, parking, et cetera. Mr. Newsome noted that if that is not required by ordinance, it should be added to the ordinances. They also agreed that, although attendance is not mandatory, the applicant should be invited to the Planning Commission meeting.

Ms. Moran noted that since Ms. Kepp does not own the property, she must show an equitable interest in the property.

Mr. Guise asked if notices are sent to neighbors with regard to special exceptions. Ms. Moran stated the property will be posted (one on-site and six nearby) and a notice will be published twice in the Paxton Herald, two weeks prior to the hearing.

Mr. Guise made a motion to advise the Zoning Hearing Board that the concept does not appear objectionable, and asked that the Zoning Hearing Board thoroughly reviews the site plan and additional information. Ms. Sibert seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

Mr. Neff questioned the difference between a minor and a major home occupation. Ms. Wissler stated that a minor home occupation does not have customers coming to the house, does not have employees coming to the house, and does not have deliveries more than once a week.

### **Walnut Street Corridor Discussion**

Ms. Wissler asked if any Commissioners prepared comments with regard to the Walnut Street Corridor Study. Mr. Guise asked what the Board of Supervisors had to say about the Study. Ms. Wissler will include a copy of their letter in the next packet.

Mr. Newsome stated he continues to be concerned about pedestrian crossings on Route 22. There needs to be some ideas on how to handle this and identify places that pedestrians can be encouraged to use to cross, and then discourage crossings at other areas through design. The pedestrian movement is going from residential areas to shopping areas.

### **Business Improvement District Discussion**

Mr. Lighty apologized that the guest speaker was not able to attend the meeting, but hoped to be able to get him to attend a meeting in the near future, perhaps a special meeting if not on the regular meeting night.

Mr. Lighty noted that the two big issues that have to be addressed are location of improvement districts, and goals.

Mr. Neff suggested inviting business owners to a meeting to gather their input. Mr. Lighty agreed noting that they have to select an area first, then invite that group of people in. After talking to them, the Township can draw up a formal plan that will be presented to those business owners for a vote.

Mr. Lighty suggested starting with the Route 22 corridor. Mr. Lighty noted that Route 22 is not pedestrian friendly. Mr. Newsome agreed, but stated there is pedestrian activity there.

Mr. Lighty suggested a traffic network operation to improve traffic.

Mr. Neff suggested making the retail areas more user friendly. One example is trying to get to Costco, which has horrible ingress. He suggested a perimeter road to move around the retail centers better, and asked if the corridor improvements could be ancillary, not necessarily directly on Route 22. Mr. Lighty agreed there could be something ancillary, but cautioned that it depends on those being assessed. He envisioned showing the people being assessed a pie chart to show a certain amount of dollars going to each thing, to be able to show where the money is going. Mr. Lighty thought that building a road might cost significantly more than what will be raised.

After looking at the area on the aerial photograph and seeing so much paved parking, Mr. Newsome suggested decked parking with passageways over Route 22 between the two large shopping centers. There are towns with less population than Lower Paxton Township that are doing this. This would be a way to tie the four shopping centers together and make it a regional shopping facility.

Ms. Sibert suggested some kind of pedestrian connection between Paxton Towne Centre and Colonial Commons, noting that people cross that section of road more frequently than they realize.

Mr. Millard noted that Brian Luetchford is working with the Greenway Committee, focusing on the southern end of the Township. The plan looks pretty good. It connects schools and parks, but should possibly consider connecting retail. Retail is certainly a destination for pedestrian traffic. Mr. Newsome agreed, noting that his neighborhood has bus riders, and they have to go through Oak Park Circle, Oak Park Drive, and across Route 22 just to get the in-bound bus. That is something that does not have enough attention paid to it.

Mr. Lighty noted that a business improvement district is to benefit businesses, and the businesses are the reason our taxes have not been raised in 25 years. Other communities are not building business areas that are competition to our retail areas.

Mr. Guise suggested identifying a portion of Route 22 to work on at first. Mr. Guise asked if there can be neighborhood improvement districts. Mr. Lighty answered yes, that they are generically called neighborhood improvement districts, and there are sub categories below that. Mr. Guise felt the Township should focus on the businesses, and pedestrian access ties directly into that. He felt that it would be beneficial to get a briefing on how improvement districts work and work on concepts.

Mr. Lighty suggested there may need to be a cost benefit analysis done. Too small of an area will not raise enough money to do anything significant. If the goal is to make Route 22 our main street, it can't take 20 years to materialize. At the end of five years the Township will have to be able to determine the economics, to make sure the area isn't too small that the assessment per parcel becomes too high. Yet we have to raise enough money that there is something to show for it and those that paid the assessment see that it was worth it. Mr. Guise noted it will have to be small enough to show the results. Mr. Guise noted that it will be difficult to make people pay for something that will not benefit them directly.

Mr. Neff asked if the two shopping centers are owned by the same entity. Mr. Lighty answered no, that Colonial Commons is under common ownership, and Paxton Towne Centre is all separately owned lots. Mr. Neff suggested there could be underground parking with pedestrian access between the two centers. Based on the value of land, decked parking is not much more expensive than traditional parking lots. Mr. Newsome commented that the amount of asphalt shown in that area is jarring.

Mr. Lighty asked if Mr. Newsome felt it was appropriate to use the assessment to build a parking deck. Mr. Newsome answered that it might be. Mr. Lighty asked how the diner at the other end of Route 22 will benefit from the deck connecting the two malls. Mr. Newsome stated that any improvements made to any commercial area will be a financial benefit to the entire corridor.

Mr. Newsome stated there might be different improvement areas with different goals and different budgets.

Mr. Neff stated there is a potential for the north side of Route 22 to begin recycling and redeveloping. Mr. Lighty noted that redevelopment is very important and there could be a redevelopment authority, but that is not the same as an improvement district. He thought that from a planning perspective, they should think about redevelopment, but not until when the area gets to the point that there is no more new development.

Mr. Beverly felt it would be best to start in a retail area, and possibly expand from there. As neighboring businesses begin to see the changes being made, they would also want to become involved. Mr. Lighty stated that the Township has to select an area, then that area gets to vote on a very specific plan. Starting small might work well for Linglestown or Paxtonia, but not for Route 22. If the area of Route 22 is too small, it will not raise enough money to do anything significant. Mr. Beverly suggested starting small, and then expanding out with the growth.

Mr. Beverly felt that traffic was the biggest problem. Mr. Lighty agreed and wondered what it would cost to establish a network operations center. The example of one that Mr. Lighty saw was operated by a traffic cop, and under certain parameters that person could alter the length of the green or red lights. Mr. Lighty asked how the cost for that would be figured out. Mr. Snyder stated that in Lower Paxton Township the lights are already interconnected. The interconnection comes back to the Township to a computer, and that computer can control and monitor from one source. Mr. Snyder stated that is how it already is to some degree. Mr. Lighty stated that the operations center he saw had cameras on the intersection, and the operator could see the parameters needed to be changed and would adjust the length of the light, then the computer would adjust the other lights in sync with the first one.

Mr. Millard stated that PennDOT has initiatives in District 6 in the Philadelphia area that run an operations center 24/7. That area is focused on expressways and limited access highways as opposed to commercial corridors.

Mr. Millard noted that Route 22 is a parallel corridor to Interstate 81, and PennDOT may be interested in improving the operations in the area. There is a big push right now in the state in general to run regional operations centers. There is a pseudo-operations center already, but it has a very

limited scope. That is focused on I-81 and the Capital Beltway. There have been discussions about parallel routes mainly for emergencies.

Mr. Millard stated that on a corridor parallel to the Schuylkill Expressway, District 6 has developed a system where, in emergency situations, PennDOT can actually take over and control the signals.

Mr. Millard speculated that PennDOT might be interested in participating in this.

Mr. Lighty noted that it will be self-serving to Lower Paxton Township by saying shop here and not there, but the other municipalities might then want to do the same kind of thing.

Mr. Millard suggested the focal point be the Colonial Park Mall area, because there is a national trend to get away from enclosed shopping malls and go more towards strip malls. Mr. Lighty noted that the Camp Hill Mall was a perfect example of that. The Colonial Park Mall may need some assistance to remain competitive and attractive.

Mr. Lighty asked Mr. Millard to help by looking into network operations centers and see if there is one the Commission could take a field trip to that ours could be modeled after. Mr. Millard agreed to look into it, and noted that on the state level, District 8 is looked to as one of the key centers.

Mr. Lighty will look into getting some more information prior to the next meeting, and possibly holding a special meeting to discuss this issue.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no further public comment at this time.

#### **Adjournment**

The next regular Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2007 at 7:00pm at the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, Room 171.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner  
Recording Secretary