

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 21, 2023**

The Springfield Township Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00 P.M., in the Boardroom of the Springfield Township Administration Building, located at 1510 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA 19038. Present at the meeting were Ms. Murray, Ms. Blankin, Mr. Sands, Mr. Devine, Mr. Schaefer, Mr. Quill, Mr. Mascaro and Ms. Helwig. Also in attendance were Commissioner Standish, Anne Nygard, Community Planner from Montgomery County Planning Commission and Mark Penecale, Director of Planning & Zoning.

Approval of the Minutes:

The minutes from the February 7, 2023, and March 7, 2023 Planning Commission meetings were reviewed and approved.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Standish informed the Planning Commission of the time line the Board of Commissioners are working with to fill the vacancy created with the resignation of Mr. Graham.

New Business:

PC1: The Planning Commission reviewed the Land Development application submitted by 1110 Willow Grove Avenue, LLC for the redevelopment of the properties located at 1108 & 1110 Willow Grove Avenue. The project calls for the demolition of the existing structures on the property and the construction of 12 townhouse units fronting on Willow Grove Avenue.

Mr. Overcash, the developer for this project, provided the Planning Commission and the several residents in attendance an overview of the proposed development. He stated that he will be demolishing the existing buildings and building 12 townhouse units on the site. The development will eliminate the existing curb cut on Willow Grove Avenue and relocate the entry drive on Queen Street. The proposed development will include a reduction in the impervious coverage on the site, as well as an on-site stormwater management system. New landscaping will be planted throughout the property.

Mr. Tweedie, the project engineer, reviewed with the Planning Commission the Woodrow & Associates letter, dated February 20, 2023, as well as the review letter from Montgomery County Planning Commission and the Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission comments.

Mr. Tweedie stated that the developer was in agreement with the Staff Comments to amend the soils within the green space on the site and treat those soil to provide a natural PH. In addition, the patios in front of the proposed units would be removed and the walkways from the public

sidewalk to the front stair would be reduced in size from 10 feet in width to no greater than 5 feet in width. He explained that what was noted in the review letter as “Bilco Doors” are egress windows, that are required by the Building Code due to the habitable space within the basement levels of these homes.

Mr. Tweedie stated that the improvements noted within the Review Letter pertaining to public improvements to Willow Grove Avenue will be at the discretion of PennDot and are subject to the PennDot permit they are required to obtain prior to the start of this project. He also confirmed that they are in agreement with the need to obtain permits from DEP, PennDot, Bucks County Water & Sewer, an NPDES approval and approvals from Springfield Township for the internal fire protection, stormwater management plan & maintenance agreement and the formal Land Development Agreement.

Mr. Tweedie reviewed the list of waivers that the applicant has requested and reasons for those requests. They are as follows:

Section 95-10. A: Requiring the applicant to provide a 25-foot-wide right-of-way from the centerline of Queen Street. The applicant has provided a 24-foot-wide right-of-way from the center line of Queen Street.

Section 95-10. A: The requirement to provide a 60-foot right-of-way width for Willow Grove Avenue. This would be a 30-foot-wide right-of-way from the center line of Willow Grove Avenue. Again he reminded the Planning Commission that this is a PennDot right-of-way and this will be a subject of the permit review process.

Section 95-10. A: The requirement to provide 10-foot-wide sidewalks along the Queen Street frontage. He stated that sidewalks are being replaced and relocated along the Queen Street frontage. This is being done to ensure that the existing utility poles along Queen Street are no longer within the sidewalks. He explained that there is also an internal sidewalk with this development and the combination of the two walkways will be a minimum of 9 feet in width.

Section 95-10. A: The requirement to provide 10-foot-wide sidewalks along the Willow Grove Avenue frontage. He stated that sidewalks are being replaced and relocated along the Willow Grove Avenue frontage. This is being done to ensure that the existing utility poles along Willow Grove Avenue are no longer within the sidewalks. He explained that there is also a connective internal sidewalk with this development and the combination of the two walkways will be a minimum of 9 feet in width.

He stated that the applicant is requesting a “Fee In-Lieu” payment for Section 95-11. E.1 Section 95-11. E.2., Section 95-11.E.2.a and Section 95-11.E.8 of the Springfield Township Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance. This will permit the developer to pay a fee in lieu of offering land suitable for park and recreation use within Springfield Township. This fee is based on 36,000 square feet of land.

Section 95-11. I.2.b: This is a requirement that all street trees be planted a minimum of 15 feet from the curb face of both Willow Grove Avenue and Queen Street. Mr. Tweedie stated that the desire here was to ensure uniformity of the trees along Queen Street and that creation of the verge between the curb face and the new sidewalks was not large enough to plant the new street trees. He also has concerns for the overhead power lines and the placement of the street trees.

Section 95-11. I.11.c: The Planning Commission supports the fee in lieu payment for the planting of 32 additional trees on the site as replacement trees for the 16 existing trees, 3 caliber inches or better proposed to be removed from the property. It was explained that the planting of 32 additional trees on the site would have a negative impact to the proposed trees ability to mature.

Mr. Tweedie explained that the balance of the Township Engineer's review letter would be a "Will Comply".

Mr. Tweedie explained the comments contained within the letter from the Shade Tree Commission and their agreement to test and amend the soil to provide the proposed landscaping the best environment to reach full maturity.

Anne Nygard was available to address the comments contained within the MCPC review letter.

Mr. Tweedie explained the proposed on-site stormwater management system and the use of the landscaped areas as filters for the stormwater runoff. He explained the installation of storm drains along the rear of the property and the benefit this will be to the rear property owners.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any questions from the Planning Commission Members.

Mr. Quill asked Mr. Overcash if a projected sales price for these units has been determined. Mr. Overcash explained that project cost has not been finalized, so no projected sales price has been set.

Mr. Schaefer asked if the applicant could provide an amended plan of the front of the proposed units now that the entry sidewalks would be reduced and the front patios are to be removed. Mr. Tweedie stated that could be done and submitted to the Board of Commissioners for their review.

Mr. Devine asked if the internal sidewalks proposed for this development would be connected to the public sidewalks. Mr. Tweedie confirmed that they would be.

Ms. Helwig asked if there was any public comment.

Mrs. Kathy Hodgekiss; owner of 18 Wyndmoor Drive, stated that she is upset that the Township does not notify residents of upcoming applications. She claimed that the only way she knew of this meeting was by the emails she receives from the Township.

Mr. Penecale explained that there is no requirement to notify the surrounding property owners of pending Land Development and/or Subdivision application, however, the Township has a long standing policy that property owners within 500 feet of the site be notified by mail, that notices be posted on utility poles surrounding the site and the entire informational packet, notice, plans and reviews are posted on the Township's webpage for anyone to review.

Ms. Hodgekiss stated that she believes the Township should do more and she would like to see the Township expand the mailing area beyond 500 feet. She when on to state that the water pressure in her home is very low and she hopes this development would not have a negative impact on water pressure in the neighborhood.

Mr. Overcash addressed her concerns by stating that he has spoken with Aqua and this is an issue throughout Wyndmoor and that Aqua claims that the water pressure meets their minimal standard of 37 PSI.

Ms. Hodgekiss went on to state that does not care of the look of the frontage of the building located at 901 Willow Grove Avenue. She likes the mixture of finish materials on the rear of the building. She stated that she is not a big fan of brick exteriors.

Mr. Overcash stated that these building will not have a brick element to their exterior finish.

Mr. Patrick Eddis; owner of 720 Avondale Road called out from the rear of room, without being called on by the Chairperson, that the issue of this property owner not knowing what was going on in the Township is related to fact that she is a resident of Ward #5.

Commissioner Standish took issue with Mr. Eddis's comment and addressed Mr. Eddis directly.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional comments from the Planning Commission Members, the applicant, or the residents. There were none.

Ms. Helwig thank the applicant for his presentation and made note that this plan reduces impervious coverage, provides on-site stormwater management and a well placed landscaped buffer between the proposed development and the existing homes to the rear of the site.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the plan. Ms. Helwig asked Mr. Penecale to read into the list of waivers being requested. As each waiver request was announced, the Planning Commission voted on the request. This included the items listed as "in-lieu-of payments".

The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Land Development Plan, the requested waiver, and the in-lieu-of payments. However, there were several conditions. They are as follows:

1. The Township supply the applicant a letter stating that the refuse from this site will be collected by a private hauler so the refuse tax for these 12 units can be waived.

2. That a note be added to the recorded plan stating that the applicant is required to correct any issues related to on-site lighting on the property once the development has been completed.

3. That the developer supply the Township a revised plan of the front yard areas and public right-of-way since the applicant has agreed to reduce the width of the entry sidewalks and remove the front yard patios.

4. That the applicant adheres to the balance of the comments contained with the Woodrow & Associates Review Letter dated February 20, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Mark A. Penecale
Director of Planning & Zoning