

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 5, 2024**

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. Helwig, Mr. Mascaro, Ms. Murray, Ms. Blankin, Mr. Sands, Mr. Devine, Mr. Schaefer, and Mr. Quill. Also in attendance were Mr. Narcowich and Margo Petruska from Montgomery County Planning Commission, Commissioner Peter Wilson and Mark Penecale, Director of Planning & Zoning.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes:

The Planning Commission approved the minutes from their meeting held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Wilson deferred his report until the next Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, 2024. Commissioner Wilson did announce that there is Commissioner's Workshop Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 11, 2024, and the Commissioner's will hold their monthly Business Meeting on Wednesday, March 13, 2024

New Business:

Ms. Helwig opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance, the applicant and the applicant's design team. She provided a brief overview of how the meeting would be conducted and assured the residents in attendance that their questions would be addressed, and comments noted.

Mr. Christopher Canavan, of W. B. Homes, Inc. and Blecker Acquisitions, LP was in attendance to present the application to the Planning Commission and the residents. He explained that Blecker Acquisitions, LP was the equitable owner of the property and subject to the settlement agreement reached between the current ownership group and Springfield Township. Blecker Acquisitions, LP will be the developer of the 16 townhomes, and will be installing the improvements shown on the plans. Most of the improvements are within the 1.94-acre development, with a walking trail and several parking stalls within the open space area. Springfield Township will be obtaining 2.75 acres of the property and maintaining that area as passive open space. Mr. Canavan reviewed the development plan, vehicle circulation, on-site parking, landscaping, tree removal, lighting, tree protection and on-site storm water management. The townhouse units will be three stories in height, will contain three or four

bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, have two car attach garages and a driveway for two vehicles. Each townhouse unit will be between 2,300 and 2,400 square feet. The units will be offered at a starting price of \$650,000.00. There will be four building of four townhouse units each. Access to the on-site parking will be by way of an alley way that runs behind the units. Bollard's will installed to limit access from the development to the parking area within the open space and the access drive to the open space. Mr. Canavan discussed the utility installation and the repairs required within Haws Lane.

Mr. Mascaro asked if Haws Lane would be patched or overlaid. Mr. Canavan's response was that portions of Haws Lane would be overlaid and one trench in the area of Wedgewood Road would be patched. All of this is subject to the approval of the Township.

Mr. Mascaro asked if this development was proposed to be constructed in phases. Mr. Canavan stated that no, what is proposed is a 12-to-14-month buildout. He informed everyone that he hopes to start the project in the fall of 2024.

Mr. Narcowich asked if there was any discussion about increasing the width of trail to match the standards proposed for the Cresheim Valley Trail. The answer to the question was no, considering that parts of this trail will include the existing sidewalks on Haws Lane and adjoining street and the sidewalks throughout the proposed development.

Ms. Helwig expressed her concern with limiting the impervious coverage as much as possible.

Mr. Mascaro asked if the proposed buildings would include any 5-Star sustainable design elements. The answer was no.

Mr. Quill asked if there are elevation of the proposed buildings available for review. The response was not at this time. However, Mr. Canavan committed to provide the Planning Commission elevations when they are available. He believes that elevational sketches will be available in eight weeks.

A question was raised concerning the on-site stormwater management system. Mr. Canavan stated that the current design is an open-air detention basin that has been oversized due to the settlement agreement. He stated that the capacity of the basin is 30% larger than required. He informed everyone that the basin would be planted with a series of grasses and plant materials approved by the Township Engineer.

Ms. Helwig asked how the trash would be addressed for this development. Mr. Canavan stated that no decision has been made concerning trash removal, but it would be addressed by the Homeowner's Association. He informed everyone that dumpsters would not be used, and that each unit would be provided with trash cans that would be required to be stored within the garages of the home.

Mr. Sands asked about on-site parking for the townhouse units. Mr. Canavan stated that each unit would have a two-car garage and two exterior parking stalls. The owners would be required to park one vehicle within the garage.

Mr. Devine asked the applicant to review what is proposed to be installed for exterior lighting. Mr. Canavan stated that there would be exterior residential lighting installed on all the townhomes and two streetlights installed. One would be at the main entrance of the development and the second would be in the area of the interior alleyway.

Mr. Quill asked about the projected traffic flows from the development. Mr. Canavan stated that the traffic study projected that traffic flows would be 8 vehicles during the peak hour.

Ms. Helwig asked about the use of the trail by the public. Mr. Canavan stated that the trail would be open to the public and that a blanket easement would be provided and recorded with the approved plan to protect that agreement.

Ms. Helwig asked why there were no directional arrows provided at the driveway to the open space. Mr. Canavan stated that directional arrows could be added at this location.

Ms. Moses, owner of 1209 Greenhill Road, had several questions for the applicant. She asked why the entrance to the open space area was located directly across from Greenhill Road. She asked if the Township had reviewed the stormwater plan and the traffic conditions. She asked how stormwater from the upper area of the development would be controlled. She also was concerned with the lighting on the development.

Mr. Canavan explained that the Township has reviewed and approved the stormwater management plan. Stormwater from the upper end of the development will be picked up by inlets and piped underground to the basin. The traffic increase from this development is 8 vehicles per hour during the peak hours. The upper driveway was placed directly across from Greenhill Road to make this a four-way intersection, which is preferred by PennDOT. Mr. Canavan stated that there was not a need to install additional streetlights other than what is proposed on-site.

Ms. Klinger, owner of 7811 Elm Avenue stated that she is concerned with ground water pollution, the loss of valuable open space, the number of trees being removed, the location of the parking spaces within the open space area, endangered species that live in these woods, and the fact that she has not had the opportunity to review the tree protection plan.

Mr. Canavan stated that the location of the 6 parking spaces can be reviewed in the field once the access road is laid out. As for the number of trees, Mr. Canavan stated that two trees needed to be removed for the 6 parking stalls, not the 5 referred to by Ms. Klinger. He stated that the site is not large enough to be subject habitat protection and that tree protection plan was submitted to the Township as part of the Land Development Submission and is available for review.

Ms. Feliciani, owner of 1211 Greenhill Road stated that she would like to see more meadow plants and trees. She does not want dumpsters to be used in this development and she would like to see the 6-car parking lot for the open space be removed from the plan.

Mr. Canavan stated that the parking spaces are required by the Zoning Ordinance, dumpsters will not be used in this development and the planting around the detention basin generally do not include meadow plantings.

Ms. Feliciani asked how long the project would take from start to finish. The answer was 12 to 14 months depending on the weather.

Ms. Petrenchak, owner of 1001 Fraser Road asked if the overflow parking is really needed to be installed or if the Township could waive the requirement. In addition, she asked if the parking spaces could be installed in pervious materials.

Mr. Penecale stated that the parking stalls for the open space are required by the Zoning Ordinance and the Township would need a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board if the parking stalls were eliminated.

Mr. Gutowski, owner of 115 Erdenheim Road expressed his gratitude to the Township for obtaining the 2.75 acres of open space. He asked about the lighting on the property, access to the open space by the general public, if there would be a blanket access easement, the location and need of the overflow parking stalls within the development and if there is any consideration being given to pervious paving.

Mr. Canavan stated the site lighting would all be a residential style. Outdoor fixtures mounted by the doors of the townhomes and the two streetlights installed within the development. Yes, an easement will be granted to the Township that allows access through the development to the open space. This language will also be included in the HOA agreement. The overflow parking stalls were identified on the plan. The answer to pervious paving was no, it has not been considered and considering the short life span of the wearing course will most likely be used.

Mr. Canavan also stated that the tree protection and the spacing stalls for the open space can be determined in the field and if those items have to be relocated, they will be.

Mr. Gutowski asked if the arborist will be used to determine what trees need to be removed and what trees will remain. Mr. Canavan stated that a full tree inventory has been taken on the site by an arborist and those trees will be marked and inspected prior to removal.

Ms. Bear, owner of 1209 Greenhill Road asked what the trail would be made of and if anyone knew the height of the trees proposed to be installed. Mr. Canavan stated that in most cases the surface of the trail would be blacktop and that the height of the trees would vary due to the type of tree. Most trees are 3-to-3.5-inch caliper at the time of planting.

Ms. Diegel, owner of 410 Suffolk Road asked the width of the trail to be installed and if the sidewalk along Haws Lane would be included in this trail. Mr. Canavan stated the trails within the open space is shown as 6 feet in width and yes, the public sidewalk on Haws Lane is included in the Cresheim Valley Trail System.

Ms. Gresham, owner of 8400 Hull Drive would like to see the parking lot for the open space re-designed.

Mr. Eddis, owner of 720 Avondale Road asked Mr. Canavan who his contact at the Township is and who he has been meeting with in the submission of this plan. Mr. Canavan stated that he has met with Mr. Woodrow and Mr. Penecale. Mr. Eddis did not like or believe this answer and asked the question several more times, getting louder each time he asked the question. Mr. Mascaro addressed Mr. Eddis and reminded him that he needed to address the Planning Commission and not badger the applicant. Mr. Mascaro shut down the verbal attack on the applicant.

Ms. Carruthers, owner of 1203 Greenhill Road asked if the trail within the open space would remain open for the children to access the school. Mr. Canavan's response was yes.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional questions for the applicant. Seeing none, she asked if there was any discussion of the application.

A motion was made to recommend approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The applicant receives approval from Springfield Township for the overlay of the Haws Lane roadway that will be disturbed.
2. The applicant must comply with the requirements of the Settlement Agreement.
3. The final review and approval of the Township Engineer on the placement of the tree protection, overflow parking areas, and the trees proposed to be removed.
4. The applicant must obtain all the required permits and approvals from Springfield Township, Montgomery County, and the State of Pennsylvania.
5. A condition should be added to the plan that states that the tree protection should be determined by an ISA Arborist in conjunction with the Township.
6. The Township should consider alternative locations and splitting the 6 parking stalls for the open space. In addition, a pervious surface should be considered as a topcoat.
7. That the landscape plan be revised to improve the look of the entrance to the community park.
8. The HOA documents clearly allow public access to the community trail, including the connective trail to the school grounds.

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the waiver requested from Section 95-10. A to allow for the cartway width of less than 30 feet to remain as currently configured on Haws Lane.

The motion was seconded and approved by a vote a of 8 in favor and none in opposition.

Planning Commission was briefed on current applications that are pending and the possible dates those applications may be placed on the Planning Commission agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Mark A. Penecale
Director of Planning & Zoning