

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
UPPER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP**

MAY 14, 2018

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Planning Commission was held on Monday, May 14, 2018, at the Upper Pottsgrove Administrative Office, 1409 Farmington Avenue, with Elwood Taylor, John Bealer, William Hewitt and Greg Churach present. Also present were Township Manager Carol Lewis and County Planner Lauren VanDyk. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Taylor at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion by G. Churach, seconded by J. Bealer and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of February 12, 2018, as presented. G. Churach gave kudos to Michelle Reddick for getting all the details in the minutes correct.

LARGE LOT SUBDIVISION DISCUSSION – Mr. Taylor explained the owner of a 20 plus acre parcel on Yarnall Road had a discussion with the Planning Group about a minor subdivision of his property, but our current R-1 zoning regulations make it difficult rather than simple. There is no built in relief in our current ordinance for a simple subdivision. Therefore, we asked the County to explore the existing standards for the subdivision of large lots in the Township, particularly in the R-1 Residential Zoning District. In response to a question from W. Hewitt, E. Taylor explained that zoning regulations are unique to each township and not determined by the County. County Planner Lauren provided a memo outlining three possibilities for amendments to our current to allow for minor subdivision of large lots, and suggested that the second option might be the best. The Planning Commission reviewed the three options presented. In response to a question from W. Hewitt, E. Taylor advised that the second option would fit for the property in question, and noted he was surprised that our current ordinance did not already provide this option. Lauren noted that the second option came out of our ordinances, and noted that the proposal for the property in question would comply with the proposed amendment. In response to another question from W. Hewitt, Lauren advised there is no 2-acre restriction. In response to a question from G. Churach, E. Taylor advised that one or more options could be adopted. In response to another question from W. Hewitt, L. VanDyk advised that sewer services could not be extended to this area as they are not available. L. VanDyk advised that option 2 would be the most applicable, and could be revised according to the Planning Commission's preferences. W. Hewitt agreed but noted that items D and E are cause for concern. E. Taylor noted that item E is to make an exception, and noted that rarely is a development perfect. L. Van Dyk noted that if not done in accordance with the minor subdivision, the applicant could still go for a conditional use. G. Churach noted that this is being proposed to assist a resident. In response to a question from **Diana Updegrove, 1404 Farmington Avenue**, E. Taylor advised that all proposed lots could access streets. He explained that the property had a paper street, but it was ordained and vacated and given back to the property owner. **D. Updegrove** expressed concern that future property owners may do something with the lots at a later time. E. Taylor advised that this is in our ordinances, and we are trying to make it better. A motion by W. Hewitt, seconded by G. Churach and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that they amend our zoning ordinance with the following language: Allow minor subdivisions of large lots by-right in accordance with Section 310-10. The criteria for minor subdivision is: (a) Contains four lots or less (Section 310-10.A.1); (b) Has not been part of a subdivision submitted within the past three years (Section 310-10.A.2); (c) Presently fronts on a physically improved street that is legally open to the public (Section 310.10.A.3); (d) Will not involve the construction of any new street or road, the extension of municipal facilities or the creation of any other public improvements (Section 310-10.A.4); (e) Requires a variance(s) for no more than one of the proposed lots on which new construction will occur or may occur in the future (Section 310-10.A.5); and (f) Is in general conformance with the Township Comprehensive Plan and other plans (Section 310-10.A.6).

FARMINGTON AVENUE SKETCH PLAN – Rich Mingey was present to discuss his sketch plan for development of the property at the corner of Farmington Avenue and Steinmetz Road. The property is 20 acres with a stream through it so each portion is 10 acres. The front portion of the property has access to public water and sewer and is zoned residential and cluster overlay, and the back portion is zoned Limited Industrial. It was noted that the condition of Steinmetz Road would need to be considered, and the developer could be required to rebuild that road. The proposal is for single family homes. In response to questions from E. Taylor, Mr. Mingey noted he is considering the 20 acres to allow for clustering by the R-2 zoning standards. E. Taylor expressed concern that the R-2 lots may not fit into this property with the constraints. G. Churach expressed concern that there was TCE contamination in the wells in this area and there may still be contamination in the soils and even if on the surface, it could preclude building a house on it. Mr. Mingey indicated that a Phase 1 environmental study would be completed and there are options to identify and address if needed. He also indicated that the wetlands were delineated and there will be some pitch. In response to questions from W. Hewitt, Mr. Mingey advised that parking will be on-lot with an overflow parking lot, and the homes will be single family homes on 10,000 square foot lots. J. Bealer noted that it makes sense to keep development in the front of the property to stay away from floodplains. In response to another question from W. Hewitt, Mr. Mingey advised there will be a recharge field and an open meadow. L. VanDyk advised that the plan would not comply and several variances would be required. She agrees with keeping the development away from the stream and floodplains. She also noted that some type of master plan would probably be required and pointed out another ordinance issue. She advised that it needs to be decided if a master plan would be required and what would be required to be provided in that master plan. E. Taylor noted that there seems to be a general consensus that this is a good use of development of this property; however, could not do that density in this area. Therefore, maybe the trade-off could be some type of access to the back portion. L. VanDyk noted that the proposed development would require several variances for lot widths, open space, setbacks, heights, etc. W. Hewitt noted that the market is changing and people want large houses on small lots. R. Mingey noted that he is not sure if cluster overlay gives you more room to move. In response to a question from W. Hewitt, R. Mingey advised that he left the back portion for future development. W. Hewitt advised that he thinks this is a good test for this type of development in our township. R. Mingey advised that he would like to set up a staff meeting to explore options. E. Taylor noted that developing the property as close to ordinance requirements would be easiest.

W. MOYER ROAD & RTE. 100 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – R. Mingey advised that he had a meeting with PennDOT and they were not opposed to the concept (bridge, tunnel and culvert). However, they do not like the aerial bridge, and it appears the culvert option is feasible as it would be 30 percent less than tunnel bore. The biggest obstacle would be the traffic routing. In response to a question from W. Hewitt, R. Mingey advised there will be lighting and would have to meet County requirements for width and length. E. Taylor noted that it is interesting as the County is developing their trail plans, this would be the only “safe” crossing. L. VanDyk noted that the Tri-County trail study looks at that area. R. Mingey advised that he would have traffic planning and design do a feasibility study. In response to a question from G. Churach, R. Mingey advised that he plans to develop the property one way or another whether it would be single family homes or the age restricted overlay.

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G. Churach questioned whether or not members could be notified when meetings such as the one with PennDOT happen so that they have the option to attend. C. Lewis agreed to check with the Solicitor if we are allowed to designate who can be at those meetings.

ADJOURNMENT – Motion by J. Bealer, seconded by G. Churach and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol R. Lewis
Township Manager