

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

**JUNE 11, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Planning Commission was held on Monday, June 11, 2018, at the Upper Pottsgrove Administrative Office, 1409 Farmington Avenue, with Elwood Taylor, John Bealer, John Ungerman, William Hewitt and Greg Churach present. Also present were Township Manager Carol Lewis, Planning and Zoning Administrator Michelle Reddick and County Planner Lauren VanDyk. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Taylor at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion by J. Bealer, second by G. Churach and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of May 14, 2018, as written.

**908 COMMERCE DRIVE ASSOCIATES – WAIVER FROM LAND DEVELOPMENT** –

Gabe Clark from Catalyst Commercial Development was present to explain their request for a waiver from land development. He explained that when the project first started they had one retail user. He further explained they are now adding a second user and in doing so added additional parking spots. He noted they are requesting a waiver from land development along with additional waivers related to parking space dimensions and landscaping buffers. Mr. Taylor explained the waivers requested are the same waivers which were approved for the original project. He noted the project has been successful, the engineer has confirmed that a waiver from land development is appropriate, and there is sufficient parking spaces to meet our ordinance requirements. He further noted there is one issue concerning septic systems and questioned whether the owner has gotten confirmation from the health department that this issue has been resolved. Gabe Clark explained that it is the same system, but it has just been replaced. He further explained that he needs to confirm how many employees the new tenant will have and then confirm that with the health department. He noted they would do whatever the health department requires them to do with the septic system. In response to a question from G. Churach, Gabe Clark explained there is no public sewer at the site. He further explained that when they purchased the property, the septic system was not functioning properly as there was a small leak in the tank. He noted they replaced the tank and actually installed a bigger tank so he doesn't think there will be any issues. However, he reiterated they will do whatever is required. G. Church suggested following the County's recommendation to provide a screening buffer along the southern border of the property where there are residential homes. County Planner Lauren VanDyk briefly reviewed the comments outlined in her letter. L. VanDyk noted she agrees with the engineer that a waiver from land development is appropriate and agrees with the waiver for parking space dimensions. She further noted she agrees with the waiver for screening as it relates to the boundary along Commerce Drive and the northern boundary of the property. However, she is recommending a screening buffer along the southern border of the property where there is a residential home. Gabe Clark explained there are four (4) abandoned vehicles on the residential property so he would be glad to provide a screening buffer. G. Churach recommended additional trees be planted where it is convenient and most aesthetically pleasing. Gabe Clark noted they already planted 26 arbor vitae trees. However, half of the trees are dead, and they are working on replacing those trees. G. Churach questioned whether the parking amendments the Planning Commission will be reviewing later in the meeting would assist the property owner. E. Taylor explained the applicant already meets the current ordinance requirements for number of parking spaces but has requested a waiver to allow smaller parking spaces. Motion by J. Ungerman, second by J. Bealer and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the waiver from land development and approval of the

waivers from Section 310-20.C(7) to allow smaller parking space dimensions and from Section 310-20.C(8) to not provide screening or landscaping buffers.

**BUILDING STUDY PRESENTATIONS** – E. Taylor explained that members will be hearing from four (4) companies which have submitted proposals for evaluating the adequacy of our existing facilities. He further explained that C. Lewis along with the Board of Commissioners and staff have been looking at this for weeks. C. Lewis explained that she requested proposals and asked for specific criteria which included evaluating and assessing our existing facilities, compiling a list of all repairs and associated costs for the repairs and providing recommendations. E. Taylor noted his main concern is we do not want to throw good money after bad as we have aging infrastructure some of which is insufficient. He explained that he wants to make sure we are doing the right thing before we go spending money. He further explained he is going to be looking at the company's ability to do what we need them to do rather than the price. C. Lewis advised all firms come highly recommended by other municipalities, and their references provided positive comments. She further advised the Board of Commissioners are looking for input and recommendations. Randy Galiotto and Michael Metzger were in attendance to represent Alloy 5 Architecture. Mr. Metzger provided a brief overview of their firm and team members. He noted the firm was founded on three true principles which include healthy design, honest collaboration and hard work. He advised they have over 70 years of experience between all their team members. He noted their staff includes a mechanical, electrical and structural engineer as well as a staff accountant and a fulltime grant coordinator. He further noted they have done large iconic projects to small capital projects. He explained they are capital action planners and will be doing a cost loaded analysis of the project. He further explained they will complete the facility assessment piece, develop a list of deficiencies and improvements, prioritize those items and develop a plan and recommendation based upon those items. In response to a question from J. Bealer, Mr. Metzger advised if they discover anything during their assessment that they believe could be asbestos, they would make recommendations on firms to contact regarding an environmental assessment. In response to questions from G. Churach, Mr. Metzger explained they would ask the township to put together a leadership team and have bi-weekly meetings with the leadership team to discuss progress. He further explained this is not a quick process, and they want to make sure everyone understands what it is they are doing along the way. In response to a question from E. Taylor, Mr. Metzger explained they would look at a land survey and see how the site will handle the infrastructure. C. Lewis explained the request for proposal did not include actual site analysis. Richard Kapusta was in attendance to represent Richard Kapusta and Company. He suggested that members check out their website to find out more about the company and projects they have completed. He explained they would be completing an evaluation of all our existing facilities. He noted we have some interesting facilities and commended the Board of Commissioners and township staff on a job well done on being able to work with our existing facilities over the years. He further explained they would survey each facility relating to the size of spaces and how they are used and the nature and condition of each facility, identify improvements necessary to meet the needs of all the departments as well as provide recommendations and budgets for improving existing facilities or developing partially new or entirely new facilities. E. Taylor questioned what experience they have with municipal projects. Mr. Kapusta outlined some of their projects. In response to a question from J. Bealer, Mr. Kapusta advised they have nine (9) employees which include four (4) architects, two (2) structural engineers, a construction manager, a branch manager and a business manager. In response to a question from G. Churach, Mr. Kapusta

advised that they subcontract for electrical and mechanical engineers. Terry Reed from Spotts, Steven and McCoy introduced Jeff Thomas, senior structural engineer for SSM who would be the project manager for this endeavor, and John Watkins of Watkins Architects who would also be involved with the project as they have municipal building experience. Mr. Reed explained they have been in business since 1932 and have extensive experience in working with existing facilities. He further explained that 40 percent of their business is working with municipalities, and they are appointed engineers in many cities, boroughs and townships. In addition, they work for many water and sewer authorities. Jeff Thomas reiterated that they have extensive experience working with existing facilities which is a vast majority of their work. He noted they have done work which includes inspections, assessments, renovations and additions. He also noted they have done electrical and mechanical engineering work for the North Coventry fire company. He explained that for this project, they would assess the buildings individually. He advised that with their extensive experience, the resources they have at our disposal and the technology, they can develop innovative ways for improvement within a reasonable budget. John Watkins explained their firm has been in business since 1995, and noted they specialize in municipal work. He outlined some of their projects which included converting an old fire company into police headquarters and municipal building, a large emergency services study, and more recently, converting some old elementary schools into police and municipal facilities. Terry Reid noted they understand municipalities and have worked with over 100 municipalities in Pennsylvania from large cities to small townships. In response to a concern expressed by G. Churach regarding labor and industry drawings not being available, Terry Reed advised that they are able to work around that. In response to a question from E. Taylor, Terry Reed advised that there is one fee for the assessment and an additional fee for making recommendations. Ed Mangold of KCBA Architects, Kevin Selger of Gilmore and Associates and Tony Ganguzza of Boyle Construction were in attendance to represent KCBA. Ed Mangold advised that he would be the lead on the project and the person for day-to-day contact. Kevin Selger advised he would be the site/civil project manager. Tony Ganguzza advised he would be the cost estimator for the project. Ed Mangold noted they have been in business since 1972 and have over 40 in house professionals. He advised they are located in Montgomery County which is where they do most of their work. He further advised they have eight (8) currently active local projects and outline some of those projects. He explained their project approach would include an existing conditions analysis, a stakeholder workshop and program development, an existing buildings maintenance program, a project budget/schedule analysis and a final report and presentation. In response to a question from E. Taylor, Ed Mangold advised the cost for their study would be \$9,850.00. In response to a question from G. Churach, Ed Mangold advised they would not charge travel expenses. In response to another question from G. Churach, Ed Mangold advised they could design something that architecturally fits in this area. In response to a question and concern expressed by Commissioner Schreiber, Ed Mangold advised they were part of the Pottsgrove High School renovation project and are currently working to resolve the issues that occurred with the project. Motion by W. Hewitt, second by J. Ungerman and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that they consider Alloy 5 or KCBA for the building assessment project.

**PARKING STANDARDS AMENDMENT** – County Planner Lauren VanDyk provided a memo outlining some suggestions for amending the ordinance as it relates to off-street parking requirements for retail uses. L. VanDyk noted the current ordinance requirement is one (1) parking space per every 200 square feet of gross floor area. She recommended a zoning

ordinance amendment as follows: one (1) parking space per every 200 square foot of gross floor area used or intended to be used for servicing customers but not including corridors, bathrooms or other such accessory rooms. Another alternative recommended would be to increase the square footage required per single parking space. Based upon the findings from the Parking Generation manual, a recommended alternative would be to increase the square footage per single parking space from 200 to 250 or 300. This would help to reduce the number of parking spaces for all retail uses, regardless of the amount of building space dedicated for customer service. J. Bealer suggested increase the square footage per single parking space to 300 square feet. After further discussion, it was agreed to allow L. VanDyk to provide some more examples for further discussion at the next meeting. L. VanDyk noted she would also like to confirm the inventory of retail stores in the area. M. Reddick agreed to provide her with a list of retail stores.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Motion by J. Ungerman, second by W. Hewitt and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Carol R. Lewis  
Township Manager