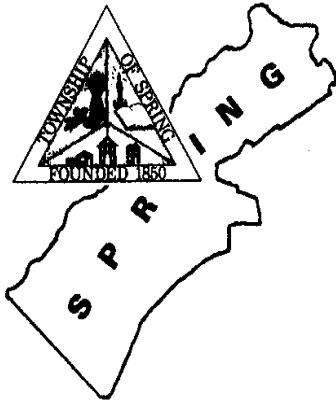


PLANNING COMMISSION



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MEETING MINUTES

June 4, 2009

Chairman Oswald called the public meeting of the Planning Commission to order on Thursday, June 4, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the Township of Spring Municipal Building, 2800 Shillington Road, Cornwall Terrace, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

The following Planning Commission members were in attendance: James Oswald, Stephen Gibbs, John Dallas, Ronald Keating, Sarah Ehrlich, and Barry Ulrich. Mr. Bliudzius did not attend. Also in attendance were: James Lillis, Esquire, Solicitor; James Moll, Director of Engineering and Planning, Tasha Amato, Administrative Assistant, Michael Hartman, McCarthy Engineering, Inc., John Murphy, Alpha Consulting Engineers, Inc., Robert and Judy Englebach, Steve Banre and Greg Ganikon.

MINUTES: A motion was made by Mr. Dallas, second by Mr. Ulrich, approving the Minutes of May 7, 2009. Upon roll call, all members present voted affirmatively.

NEW SUBMITTALS:

Monarch Properties – Assisted Living Facility – Sketch Plan: (John Murphy) (EPS review letter dated June 2, 2009, attached.) Mr. Moll stated this project is a proposed nursing/convalescent home to be located on a 6.68-acre parcel within the area of West Wyomissing, adjacent to the Borough of Wyomissing. The applicant has submitted a sketch plan which proposes combining numerous existing “strip” lots, shown on the original subdivision plan for West Wyomissing, into a single lot. The plan indicates that the proposed facility would contain 20 Alzheimer units and 64 assisted living units. The subject property is located within the Urban (U) District, where a nursing home is a Special Exception Use, requiring the approval of the Zoning Hearing Board. The Sketch Plan submittal does not include an application for Special Exception approval, **Section 311(C) (9)**.

On behalf of the applicant, Mr. John Murphy, of Alpha Consulting, presented an overview of the proposed sketch plan for an Assisted Living Facility. Mr. Murphy indicated there are two main concerns with such proposal: (1) the issue of abandonment of the paper streets located in the West Wyomissing subdivision; and (2) the parking requirements listed on the plan would need a parking variance. Mr. Lillis stated his understanding of paper streets is that they exist in terms of private rights forever. The applicant would need to obtain releases from all residents in the West Wyomissing subdivision. Mr. Lillis reiterated that the assisted living facility use is considered a “Special Exception.” Therefore, the applicant would need to demonstrate such requirements being met in the ordinance and would, also, need to apply for a parking variance. Planning Commission members indicated that the proposed sketch plan only shows a single access onto Reading Boulevard, consisting of a 24-foot access drive, and they recommended a secondary access be added to the proposed plan.

Mr. Englebach, resident of 1873 Lincoln Avenue, Wyomissing, gave information pertaining to the subdivision lots in question regarding a possible secondary access. The lot in question is under PennDOT ownership, which applicant might consider purchasing from PennDOT, if need be, to meet parking requirements and for a secondary access.

At this point, Planning Commission Members suggested that the consultant discuss main issues with the sketch plan with the applicant in order to continue moving forward. Main issues are as follows:

- Legality of abandonment of paper streets.
- Recommendation of secondary access.
- Parking Requirement (Variance).
- Special Exception approval for said “USE” from Zoning Hearing Board.

First Church of Christ, Scientist – Special Exception & Variance: (EPS review letter dated June 2, 2009, attached.)

Mr. Moll stated the applicant has requested that the Zoning Hearing Board grant a special exception and a variance to permit the existing structure, at 201 West Wyomissing Boulevard, to be converted into a place of worship. The 0.35-acre property, currently owned by Berks Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, contains an existing 2,400-square foot structure and a 14-space parking lot. The applicant has submitted a sketch of the building showing certain internal modifications, but appearing to indicate that no external site alterations are proposed. The sketch indicates that the assembly room is proposed to have 45 seats. It is unclear if 45 is the maximum number of seats that could be accommodated in the assembly room, or if the applicant is merely proposing 45 seats at this time. Based upon the information provided, the existing 14-space parking lot would appear to be undersized. **Section 701 (A)** requires that a place of worship provide one (1) parking space per each three (3) seats plus one (1) employee; however, the applicant has not requested relief from the parking requirements of **Section 701 (A)**. Mr. Moll stated that the applicant will need to provide information regarding the number of employees and whether activities would take place concurrently with the services, which would increase the parking demands on the property.

Special Exception approval is required in Urban (U) District for a place of worship. **Section 321 (B) (64)** requires that a place of worship be located on a lot having a minimum of three (3) acres. The applicant has requested a variance from this requirement.

A motion was made by Mr. Keating, second by Mr. Ulrich, recommending: (1) that if the Zoning Hearing Board approves the Special Exception, consideration be taken that all assurances must be given that adequate parking be provided, (2) that the Zoning Hearing Board **deny** the variance from the lot size requirement, unless the applicant demonstrates the ability to provide adequate off-street parking, despite the undersized lot area, and (3) that any approval be conditioned upon a verifiable limitation upon seating capacity proportionate to availability of parking as required by the Zoning Ordinance. Upon roll call, all members present voted affirmatively.

Greystone Business Center – Lot 3- Accessory Building- Waiver of Land Development: (EPS review letter dated June 3, 2009, attached.) Mr. Moll stated the applicant has requested a waiver of the land development process in order to erect an accessory structure and construct a paved walkway on their property at Lot No. 3 of the Greystone Business Centre. The proposed 1,800-square foot (30’ by 60’) accessory building is intended to be located to the rear of the Stackhouse Bensinger office for the purpose of record storage for the engineering business conducted in the principal structure.

Section 316(E) (2) (1) of the Zoning Ordinance permits “accessory uses and structures which are clearly customary and incidental to the principal use” within the Planned Office Business (POB) District.

A motion was made by Mr. Gibbs, second by Mr. Keating, recommending to the Board of Supervisors that the waiver of

land development process be granted. Upon roll call, all members present voted affirmatively.

Spring Ridge West, Lot #5 – Annexation & Land Development Final Plans: (Michael Hartman) (EPS review letter dated June 3, 2009, attached.) As explained by Mr. Moll, the purpose of the final plan for the lot containing three (3) office buildings, located along the cul-de-sac turnaround on Century Boulevard, is the annexation of a 0.209-acre parcel from Lot #2 onto Lot #5 of the Spring Ridge West Development to allow the construction of 37 additional parking spaces along the existing access drive on Lot #5. Mr. Moll stated that all comments raised in his review letter, dated September 30, 2008, have been adequately addressed and, since there are no modifications to the public improvements, the only recommended condition would be that any outstanding Township invoices be paid.

A motion was made by Mr. Ulrich, second by Mrs. Ehrlich, recommending that the Board of Supervisors approve the Spring Ridge West, Lot#5 – Annexation and Land Development final plans. Upon roll call, all members present voted affirmatively.

PENDING/NO NEW PLANS SUBMITTED:

Craigg Manufacturing Corp. – Time Extension: A motion was made by Mr. Gibbs second by Mr. Ulrich recommending that the Board of Supervisors grant a time extension for the Craigg Manufacturing Corp. preliminary land development plans through October 31, 2009. Upon roll call, all members present voted affirmatively.

There being no further business, Chairman Oswald adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Ronald J. Keating, Secretary