

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2009**

*A meeting of the East Norriton Township Planning Commission was held at the East Norriton Township Building, 2501 Stanbridge Street in East Norriton, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, April 15, 2009. Chairman Keith Tornetta called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. Attending were Township Planning Commission members Keith Tornetta, Joseph Gavanus, William Griffin, Colleen Henderson, Joan Morello, Robert Schottmiller, Kristl Wiernicki, Derek Bell and Kevin McDevitt. Zoning Officer, Bryan Bortnichak and Township Planner, E. Van Rieker were also in attendance.*

**1. Approve Minutes of the March 18, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting:**

Chairman Tornetta called for a motion to approve the March 18, 2009, meeting minutes. Mrs. Morello made a motion to approve the minutes. Mrs. Henderson seconded the motion and the motion passed 9-0.

**2. Review of Proposed Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment creating the Age-Targeted Residential zoning district:**

Present:        Marc Salamone, Applicant  
                    Jim Garrity, Attorney  
                    Del Markward, Owner of Village of Caralea property

Mr. Garrity introduced the ordinance and map amendment noting that the two properties that would be affected by the map amendment are the Williamstadt property at DeKalb Pike and Johnson Highway and the Caralea property at Germantown Pike and Potshop Road.

Mr. Garrity explained that the proposed ordinance would create a new zoning district titled Age-Targeted Residential and that it would provide for a minimum of 2.2 parking spaces per unit excluding the garages. He noted that a provision allowing for units with up to three bedrooms was included to accommodate the Village of Caralea development. Mr. Garrity explained that the number of residents per dwelling in units with two or three bedrooms is similar. When four or more bedrooms are provided, the number of residents per dwelling unit increases significantly.

Mrs. Henderson asked how they were able to satisfy the parking requirements on the Williamstadt plan. In response, Mr. Garrity explained that they have added more parking spaces and noted that the ordinance would permit up to .2 parking spaces per dwelling unit to be held in reserve. Mr. Garrity noted the developer's willingness to place some of this parking in reserve. Mrs. Henderson also asked how the amount of green space on the plan was affected. Mr. Garrity explained that it had decreased and again reiterated the

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desire to place some parking in reserve. Mr. Garrity also noted that the association would require that the garages remain available for parking and that effectively 3.2 parking spaces per unit would be provided.

Referring to the Village of Caralea development, Mr. McDevitt asked if the units would be spec homes or if they would be built for individual owners. Mr. Markward responded that they would be constructed as spec homes and that the Village of Caralea development would provide almost 4.5 parking spaces per unit. Chairman Tornetta asked if the Caralea development would provide 2 car garages. Mr. Markward confirmed that they would each have two garage parking spaces.

Mr. Van Rieker noted that the only two Residential Retirement zoned properties which have not been constructed are the Williamstadt and Caralea properties and that the amendment is appropriate for both. He added that numerous municipalities are considering a similar change due to market conditions. Mr. Van Rieker confirmed that statistics show that there are a limited number of school-aged children in units with two and three bedrooms, but that when there are four or more there is an increase.

Mr. Garrity added that market forces dictate the age and number of residents of the units. While there will be no requirement for an age restriction, the Williamstadt units will be designed to be attractive to older residents because they will have features such as direct access from the garage into the unit, exterior maintenance provided for by the association, a limited number of bedrooms and a prohibition on the placement of sheds or play equipment in the yards. Mr. Garrity concluded that these restrictions would result in buyers without children.

In response to a question from Mrs. Wiernicki about the proposed district being a trend and if other municipalities are adopting similar standards, Mr. Van Rieker noted that developers are seeking relief from the age-restricted developments which have been approved and noted that two or three municipalities are looking to adopt age-targeted requirements in lieu of age-restricted requirements. Mrs. Wiernicki remarked that the age-targeted approach seems proactive and that the change may make East Norriton Township more competitive. Mr. Van Rieker added that a developer in Montgomery Township is asking for the age restriction to be lifted on half of a development.

Mr. McDevitt asked if there are any legal concerns with the term "targeted". Mr. Garrity stated that there are not and reiterated that the units will appeal to a certain market because of the direct garage access, association maintenance, the number of bedrooms and the type of units offered.

Mrs. Henderson asked how buyers are informed of the restrictions on swing sets, garage parking, etc. Mr. Garrity explained that potential buyers will be provided with a copy of the association documents and that they will be bound by them. Mrs. Henderson also noted that demographics change over time and asked where residents will park if parking is in greater demand in the future. Mr. Garrity explained that the Township or the association could call for the installation of reserve parking. Mr. Bortnichak added that

the installation of all or a portion of the .2 parking spaces per unit which may be held in reserve could be triggered at any time into the future.

Connie Bennett of 2910 Whitehall Road commented about age targeted vs. age restricted development and added that there has been no discussion about demographics of minority groups and members of one family living together despite the price point. She asked how greater parking demands and greater demand on the school district in the future. Mr. Garrity noted that the ordinance can't predict future demographics, that it is not designed to be anti-children and that it cannot address family issues. He stated that what is proposed is a middle ground between an age restriction and no restriction at all and reminded Planning Commission members that market forces will help to drive the demographics. Mrs. Bennett asked why this should be the Township's problem and stated that it is not the Township's problem and that we should be looking out for Township residents. In response, Chairman Tornetta noted that there are benefits to development including increased income for the Township.

Mrs. Wiernicki added that she believes that the proposed district will enrich the fabric of the community and made a motion to recommend approval of the text and map amendment to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Bortnichak asked if the Planning Commission wanted the ordinance to reflect a recommendation that the language regarding garage parking from E. Van Rieker's memo of April 9, 2009 be included. Mrs. Wiernicki amended her motion to include the revised language. The motion was seconded by Joan Morello and passed 9-0.

**3. Review of ZHB Case #2009-5, 2994 Green Ridge Road:**

Present: Susan & Kevin McClure, Applicant

Mrs. McClure explained that they have an existing driveway that they want to cover with a carport and provided copies of letters from neighbors regarding the variance request.

Chairman Tornetta asked if the existing driveway is 29' x 18' and if it is 10' off the property line as depicted on the site plan. Mrs. McClure confirmed that it is. Chairman Tornetta reviewed the six letters and noted that no letter has been obtained from the owner at 2992 Green Ridge Road who would be most impacted by the carport and reduced side yard setback. Mr. Tornetta suggested that the McClure's obtain a letter from this neighbor.

Mrs. McClure added that the carport roof would follow the roofline of the existing structure so that it would look like on structure. Mr. Bortnichak asked if the carport would remain open on three sides. Mrs. McClure confirmed that it would remain open. Mrs. Henderson asked if the area to be enclosed by the carport is used as parking now. Mrs. McClure advised that is now used as parking.

Chairman Tornetta made a motion to recommend approval of the variance request with the condition that the neighbor at 2992 Green Ridge Road provide a letter in support. Chairman Tornetta advised that he is otherwise opposed to making a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Henderson and passed 9-0.

**4. Review of ZHB Case #2009-6, Shamokin Avenue, Block 030, Units 137 & 138:**

Present: Michael Organski, Applicant

Mr. Organski reviewed his request for variances for a lack of frontage along a public street, reduced lot size and a reduced front yard setback noting that his proposal is to construct a new single family home on the lot.

In response to a question from Mrs. Henderson regarding sidewalks, Mr. Bortnichak explained that there are no sidewalks along any of the streets north or south of Rahway Avenue and added that there is only about 18" of right of way behind the curb line. As a result, there is nowhere to install sidewalks without acquiring pedestrian easements from each of the property owners along the streets.

Mr. Van Rieker inquired about an illegal shed on the property. Mr. Organski explained that it is owned by an adjacent neighbor on Rahway Avenue. Mr. Van Riker brought up the issue of adverse possession and added that Mr. Organski should contact the owner to see if the shed was placed with the owner's permission.

Mr. Van Rieker spoke about the recent interest in development in the Rahway Avenue area of the Township and noted that continued infill should be encouraged. A discussion ensued about the location of the flood plain and the inability to build upon lots in the flood plain.

Connie Bennett of 2910 Whitehall Road asked if the Township could require that sidewalks be installed. Mr. Bortnichak explained that if the applicant submits a building permit, then sidewalks cannot be required, but if the applicant files for a subdivision or lot line exchange, the requirements of the subdivision and development ordinance would require sidewalks.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to recommend approval of the variances. Mrs. Morello seconded the motion and the motion passed 9-0.

**5. Review of ZHB Case #2009-7, Hazelton Street, Block 030, Units 154 & 158:**

Present: Michael Organski, Applicant

Mr. Organski review his request for variances for a lack of frontage along a public street and a reduced front yard setback noting that his proposal is to construct a new single family home on the lot.

In response to a question from Mr. Tornetta about contacting the neighbor across from the lots on Hazleton Street, Mr. Organski stated that he had not received any feedback from the neighbor.

Mr. Van Rieker raised an issue about snow plowing and where snow would accumulate at the end of the street.

Chairman Tornetta made a motion to recommend approval of the variances with conditions that the applicant obtain a letter from the resident of 324 Hazleton acknowledging the sharing of the driveway and that the applicant discussed with the Township a location for snow to be plowed. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Henderson and passed 9-0.

**6. Review of ZHB Case #2009-8, Hazelton Street, Block 030, Units 152, 169 & 153:**

Present: Michael Organski, Applicant

Mr. Organski advised that the properties are owned by two separate owners and that he will combine the lots before building on them. Mr. Organski reviewed the relief which he is seeking including variances for a lack of frontage along a public street and a reduced front yard setback. He added that like the lots in Zoning Hearing Board Case # 2009-7, the lot is conforming with respect to area.

Mr. Tornetta inquired about a holding tank that is shown on the plans. Mr. Organski stated that the site plans submitted were taken from a sewer plan which proposes grinder pumps that will serve each of the three lots discussed tonight.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to recommend approval of the variances. Mr. Gavanus seconded the motion and the motion passed 9-0.

**7. Review of Zoning Ordinance Housekeeping Amendment:**

Mr. Bortnichak reviewed the proposed Zoning Ordinance housekeeping amendment noting that many of the changes are to remove requirements which should be in the SALDO. Mr. Schottmiller asked specifically about the changes to requirements for sheds. Mr. Bortnichak explained that the change is to clarify that the shed must be located behind the rear building line of the house.

A discussion prompted by a comment from Mr. Viglianese ensued regarding the public availability of documents that are distributed to members of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Bortnichak agreed that it would not be an inconvenience to make two copies of the documentation that is distributed to the Planning Commission members available for public review on the back table of the meeting room, but that residents who were interested in reviewing these materials prior to the meeting would have to file a record request form.

Chairman Tornetta made a motion to recommend approval of the housekeeping amendment. Mr. Griffin seconded the motion and the motion passed 9-0.

8. **Review of Land Development and Construction Update:**

Members of the Planning Commission reviewed the Land Development and Construction update. A brief discussion ensued regarding various projects.

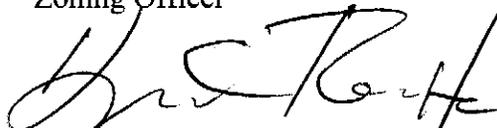
9. **Adjournment:**

Mrs. Morello made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schottmiller, and passed 9-0. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Bortnichak  
Zoning Officer



Keith Tornetta  
Chairman