

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008**

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, November 12, 2008. Vice-Chairman, Joseph Gavanus, called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m. Attending were Township Planning Commission members Joseph Gavanus, William Griffin, Colleen Henderson, Joan Morello, Robert Schmidt, Robert Schottmiller, Kristl Wiernicki and Derek Bell. Zoning Officer, Bryan Bortnichak was also in attendance.

1. Approve Minutes of the September 17, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting:

Vice-Chairman Gavanus called for a motion. Mrs. Henderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's September 17, 2008 meeting. Mrs. Morello seconded the motion and the motion passed 8-0.

2. Approve Minutes of the October 1, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting:

Vice-Chairman Gavanus called for a motion. Mrs. Henderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's October 1, 2008 meeting. Mrs. Morello seconded the motion and the motion passed 8-0.

3. Approve Minutes of the October 8, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting:

Vice-Chairman Gavanus called for a motion. Mrs. Henderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's October 8, 2008 meeting. Mrs. Morello seconded the motion and the motion passed 8-0.

4. Approve Minutes of the October 15, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting:

Vice-Chairman Gavanus called for a motion. Mrs. Henderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's October 15, 2008 meeting. Mrs. Morello seconded the motion and the motion passed 8-0.

5. Review Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to the RR Zoning District:

Present: Marc Salamone, Applicant
Jim Garrity, Applicant's Attorney

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Mr. Garrity introduced the proposed text amendment noting that it would permit age-targeted housing in the Retirement Residential zoning district. Mr. Garrity noted that the amendment would allow units to be sold to owners under the age of 55 years, but that the developer expects the price point, limited number of bedrooms and lack of exterior maintenance requirements of the proposed Williamstadt development to make the units attractive to owners over the age of 55.

Mr. Garrity displayed a site plan of the Williamstadt development showing 2.5 parking spaces per unit (including garages) and an illustrative rendering showing landscaping islands that could be accommodated between unit driveways.

Mr. Garrity then displayed a site plan showing 2.6 parking spaces per unit (excluding garages) and an illustrative rendering showing the lack of landscaping islands that could be accommodated under this parking scheme.

Mr. Garrity then displayed a site plan that provides 2.2 parking spaces per unit (excluding garages) and an illustrative plan that showed landscaping islands which were similar to the first site plan. Mr. Garrity explained that by reducing the number of required off street parking spaces to 2.2 spaces per unit, landscaping islands consistent with the approved plan could be provided and that some of the buildings could be spaced further apart. Mr. Garrity noted that if the development were to be constructed, the homeowners' association documents would restrict the garages from being used as storage and stipulate that the garage must remain as an available off street parking space.

Mr. Garrity noted that the text amendment would allow the Board of Supervisors to place up to .2 parking spaces per unit in reserve to provide for additional green space in the development. He continued adding that he had reviewed fifteen similar developments in surrounding communities and that many of these developments provide 2.2 parking spaces per unit and that many of the units in these developments had three bedrooms. The proposed Williamstadt units would only have two bedrooms. For this reason Mr. Garrity believes that a parking ratio of 1.8 or 1.9 spaces per unit would be adequate for the development. Even with .2 parking spaces per unit in reserve, the proposed amendment would provide 2 parking spaces per unit exclusive of the garages. Effectively 3.2 parking spaces could be made available which would far exceed the needs of this development.

Mr. Garrity concluded his presentation noting that the parking that has been added to the plan would offset any greater demand for parking that would be created by the text amendment.

Mrs. Henderson asked if parallel on street parking would be provided in front of the units. Mr. Garrity noted that signage would prohibit on street parking anywhere in the development except for the designated spaces that are shown on the plan.

Mrs. Wiernicki asked about the size of the units. Mr. Salamone responded that they would be approximately 1400 to 1600 square feet and that all units would be single level

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units – either first floor and some second floor. Mrs. Wiernicki asked if each unit would have independent access. Mr. Salamone responded that they would.

Mr. Gavanus noted that the units look as though they will be attractive to older buyers and asked if anything in the homeowners' association documents would make the units more desirable to older people. Mr. Garrity explained that it would be illegal to implement age restrictions in the form of association documents but that features such as only two bedrooms, the limited size of the units, the lack of exterior maintenance and the price point would make the units more attractive to older residents.

Mr. Bortnichak asked what price point the developer was aiming for. Mr. Salamone responded that he expects the units to sell in the \$300,000 range.

Mr. Griffin noted that the development could become anything in the future and asked why the applicant was not requesting a change of zoning or a variance instead of a text amendment. Mr. Griffin added that he understands the economic situation that developers are facing, but that he does not believe that the parking situation has been adequately addressed. In response, Mr. Garrity again noted that 3.2 parking spaces are being provided and that this parking ratio is adequate for the development.

Mr. Griffin acknowledged the similarity of Williamstadt to the Jefferson Crossing development and noted that there is not enough parking in the Jefferson Crossing development. Mr. Griffin expressed a concern with the lifting of the age restriction on the Williamstadt development which could result in many units having more than two cars per household. Mr. Salamone noted that one quarter of the units in the Jefferson Crossing development have three bedrooms and that the Williamstadt units would have only two bedrooms. Mr. Griffin noted that he is not convinced that this is good for the Township.

Mr. Schmidt asked about the size of the undeveloped Village of Caralea parcel and if the amendment would apply to other properties in the Township. Mr. Bortnichak responded that the Village of Caralea property was approximately twelve acres and that this amendment would only apply to properties in the Retirement Residential district which are less than 7.5 acres in area.

Mrs. Henderson noted that there is no parking along DeKalb Pike or Johnson Highway and remarked that all residents must park within the development as there is no cross connection to the adjacent residential area.

Mr. Viglianese of 3105 Whitehall Road expressed an opinion that the development should remain at 2.5 spaces per unit in accordance with the approved plan.

Ms. Bennett of 2910 Whitehall Road asked about the number of parking spaces in other developments that Mr. Garrity cited and asked if the number of spaces cited were constructed parking spaces or both constructed spaces and reserve spaces. In response

Mr. Garrity clarified that the numbers cited were of constructed parking spaces and noted that he was not aware of any overflow parking problems in these developments.

There being no further questions, Vice-Chairman Gavanus called for a motion. Mr. Griffin made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend against approval of the Zoning Ordinance text amendment to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Schottmiller seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0.

6. Review of Zoning Ordinance Housekeeping Amendment:

Mr. Bortnichak introduced the Zoning Ordinance housekeeping amendment which he prepared noting that the vast majority of the changes were not substantive in nature, but that there were a few significant changes. Most of the proposed changes are to better organize the Ordinance.

Mr. Bortnichak reviewed the Ordinance noting the substantive changes which include adding a definition of the term helipad which prohibits ancillary services, permitting temporary outdoor events in the Commercial, Executive Campus and Executive Campus II districts, changes to the allowable width of a rear deck or porch from 20' to 25' in the AR residential district to be consistent with the span tables of the building code, and increasing the allowable size of signage in the Residential Professional and Residential Office districts. Mr. Bortnichak also described some of the changes to fencing and net lot area requirements of the Zoning Ordinance that would better organize the layout of the Ordinance.

Mr. Viglianese of 3105 Whitehall Road asked how the fencing requirements were affected and noted that the definition of the term helipad is inconsistent with the FAA definition. Mr. Bortnichak responded that the technical requirements of the Ordinance were not changing, but that the fencing requirements which are currently identified in each zoning district are being consolidated in the general provisions section of the code and that the definitions of the Zoning Ordinance apply to the text of the Ordinance regardless of the definitions that may be adopted by other agencies.

Ms. Bennett of 2910 Whitehall Road noted that the helipad definition would not affect the Einstein project. Mr. Bortnichak acknowledged that it would not and added that the land development application would be governed by the Zoning Ordinance that was in effect at the time when the application was submitted.

There being no further questions, Vice-Chairman Gavanus called for a motion. Mr. Griffin made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance text amendment to the Board of Supervisors. Mrs. Henderson seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0.

7. **Review of Current Land Development and Construction Update:**

Mr. Bortnichak noted the extreme slowdown in residential development that has occurred and added that exceedingly few permits had been issued for new units at the Heatherwood or Pimlico Farms developments. He continued noting that commercial construction at the McDonalds on DeKalb Pike and at the DeKalb Apartments continues to progress.

Mrs. Henderson asked about the proposed Wendy's restaurant at DeKalb Pike and Germantown Pike. Mr. Bortnichak noted that the Township had received a call from Wendy's corporate office expressing an interest in completing the project in 2009.

8. **Adjournment:**

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

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Bortnichak
Zoning Officer



Joseph Gavanus
Vice-Chairman