

MINUTES
UPPER SAUCON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 5, 2015 - 6:30 p.m.
Township Municipal Building

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Falcone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Members Present: **Samantha Falcone, Chair**
 Alfred Cancellieri
 Anthony Roman
 Roderick Chirumbolo
 George Bloeser, Jr.

Staff Attending: **Joanna Slagle, Secretary/Director of Community Development**
 Thomas Dinkelacker, Township Solicitor
 Kevin Chimics, Township Engineer

Board of Supervisors Meeting Actions

None

Minutes

The minutes of March 5, 2015 Planning Commission meeting were presented. Motion was made by Mr. Roman and seconded by Mr. Chirumbolo to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2015 Planning Commission meeting; the vote was unanimous in favor.

Subdivision and Land Development Reviews

Springhill Suites, Stabler Lot 10 - Sketch Plan #2015-03

Representatives from Springhill Suites included Mike Ogden, P.E. from Rettew, Ken Hornbeck, High Hotels, and Joe Fitzpatrick, Esq.

Mr. Ogden presented on overview of the sketch plan using three exhibits; overall sketch plan on an aerial, architectural renderings, and an existing conditions aerial. The property is located at the intersection of West Drive and Center Valley Parkway. The site consists of nine acres. There are two right-of-ways and a water line easement on the property which give the site a net area of 7.03 acres. The project consists of two hotels with associated parking and other improvements. The project will consist of two phases, one for each hotel. The site includes a floodplain on the eastern portion of the property, a depression to the south is from an old

quarry pit that had been historically backfilled. The proposed development will locate parking in that area with no structures. A monitoring well is located on the property which is no longer required and will be removed. In addition, the site includes .03 acres of wetlands where the depression from the old quarry pit is located.

Mr. Cancellieri inquired as to the type of hotel proposed. Mr. Ogden stated the two hotels would be a Springhill Suites and a Towne Suites, both are Marriott Hotels.

Ms. Falcone asked if there would be two separate entrances for the hotels and Mr. Ogden indicated there would be, the hotels would not be physically connected.

Mr. Bloeser inquired if geotechnical analysis have been performed on-site. Mr. Ogden indicated that some initial testing had been done and they continue to work with their own geotechnical engineer and Mr. Littlefield.

Mr. Dinkelacker discussed the issue of two principle units on one property and the requirements in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Fitzpatrick indicated they believed that since both hotels were in common ownership that the hotels could constitute one principal use. Both agreed this would be further discussed and worked out as the plan progresses.

Ms. Slagle inquired about how stormwater management will be addressed. Mr. Ogden stated that they are still investigating how they will address stormwater for the proposed development.

Mr. Fitzpatrick discussed the issue of the zoning ordinance and its requirement to provide oversized bus parking spaces for hotels, stating that the provision required far too many bus spaces for the types of hotels, and potential patrons, locating in Upper Saucon Township. A discussion followed indicating that while requiring some bus spaces is reasonable, the amount required by ordinance is too many. Ms. Falcone indicated that shuttle buses may be needed to accommodate guest access to the Promenade, events at DeSales or other offices in the area.

Ms. Falcone expressed some concern over the proposed color palette shown on the renderings for the hotel. The colors are very similar to those approved for HMB hotel and having both sites using the same color palette may have an undesirable effect.

Ms. Falcone also asked that the applicant review the density provision of the ordinance and their proposed site to see if the design standards required to achieve the bonus are being met.

Mr. Bloeser reminded the applicant to have the plan reviewed by the fire chief.

Mr. Roman asked that they look at the driveway cuts. The proposed plan shows sharp driveway cuts at the intersection. He suggested a smoother or tapered driveway cut to allow for easier ingress and egress and provide better sight lines.

There being no more discussion the applicants ended their presentation and no action was taken on the sketch plan.

Traditions of America - Locust Valley - Sketch Plan #2015-02

David Biddison, Partner of Traditions of America provided an overview of the proposed sketch plan. Mr. Biddison identified that the property is divided by the municipal boundary between Upper Saucon Township and Springfield Township. The plan proposed 125 units to be located in Upper Saucon Township and 17 estate lots located within Springfield Township. The proposed subdivision is intended to use the R-2 Conservation Design provisions with cluster development and open space areas. Mr. Biddison indicated that they may look to partner with developers of Brinley Court to determine a sewage conveyance method that would be advantageous to all parties. This may entail a pump station that both developments would benefit from.

Mr. Cancellieri asked why the proposed subdivision was not brought in earlier. Mr. Biddison stated that they just secured agreements on the property five months ago.

Mr. Biddison stated that the proposed plan was a "by-right" plan. However they had some issues that may require relief from the Zoning Hearing Board. These include relief from the setback requirements for driveways which are intended for typical driveway configurations but not for a clustered development as proposed. In addition, the plan proposes sidewalks on one side, not both as required.

Mr. Bloeser inquired if a traffic study had been conducted which Mr. Biddison stated no studies had been done yet.

Mr. Dinkelacker inquired about the amenity area identified on the plans. Amenity areas, typical of the type of age restricted housing developments TOA general constructs, are not permitted in the R-2 zone. Mr. Biddison stated that they were uncertain as to if this amenity area would remain, and if it does remain, how they will address the issue.

Ms. Falcone stated that she felt the plan was a hybrid of an AQC overlay and a Conservation Design Development. Mr. Biddison stated it was a departure from their typical model and that it is intended to be age qualified but is not an AQC development. Mr. Dinkelacker stated that Mountain Glen is a similar development which is a traditional subdivision but is an age qualified community.

Mr. Bloeser inquired about the zero lot line provisions and asked for additional information as well as raised the concern over the difficulty right now in getting sewer connection to the site.

Mr. Dinkelacker provided an overview and status of the Township's Corrective Action Plan.

Mr. Biddison stated they were uncertain as to the target of the proposed subdivision, it may or may not be age restricted. The decision will likely be market driven.

Ms. Falcone stated that she appreciated the sketch plan attempts to take into consideration the natural features and topography of the site, and any additional effort to that point is encouraged.

Ms. Falcone indicated that sidewalks on at least one side should be required.

Mr. Roman asked that the entrance drive be reviewed and a tapered cut be considered.

Mr. Cancellieri asked what the anticipated selling price of the homes would be. Mr. Biddison stated they would be comparable or slightly less than what is being asked at Saucon Valley, or approximately \$400,000.

Ms. Falcone indicated that she liked how the homes were set back and the eyebrow loops however stated that enough area should be considered in the design for activities such as snow removal.

Mr. Chimics stated that traffic impact studies will have to reflect the type of occupancy of the homes, family or age-restricted.

Ms. Falcone stated that they may want to consider a visitor parking area(s). She also highlighted the proposed developments attempt to use the natural grade and hoped that there would be no large retaining walls.

Mr. Biddison appreciated the comments related to the site layout and that they hope to mimic as much of the natural grade as possible.

Mr. Biddison stated that the plan is at an early stage and they do not anticipate being back before the Commission soon, possibly late fall.

There being no more discussion, the presentation was concluded and no action was taken on the sketch plan.

Discussion

Environmental Advisory Council

No discussion related to the EAC was presented.

Amended Official Map of Upper Saucon Township

The Planning Commission received draft copies of the updated Official Map. A discussion of some of the changes was presented. The Planning Commission will be given the opportunity to provide comments to the Board of Supervisors once the draft plan and resolution are prepared and referred to the Commission for comment.

General Discussion

Mr. Dinkelacker provided an overview of the Township's Corrective Action Plan and the work the Authority has done in the Township to improve the system.

Ms. Slagle and Mr. Dinkelacker provide a brief announcement that Township staff has been working on a list of Zoning Ordinance amendments that should be reviewed. It is hoped at the next meeting a memo highlighting the relevant provisions to review.

Ms. Falcone mentioned that the YMCA may be looking at locating a facility in or around Upper Saucon which would be a great asset. No details or information was provided.

Public Comment

No public was present.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for **June 2, 2015, at 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Slagle,
Secretary