

Honey Brook Township Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
November 15, 2012

The Honey Brook Township Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on November 15, 2012 at the Honey Brook Township Building. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike France at 7:15 p.m.

Commissioners present: Stacie Popp-Young, Leslie Siebert, Greg Frederick, Max Dobles and Mike France, Chairman; Michael Reinert, Township Engineer, was also present.

Minutes

Stacie Popp-Young pointed out a misspelling of her name. With the correction noted, a motion to approve the October 25, 2012 meeting minutes was made by Stacie Popp-Young, and seconded by Greg Frederick. All in favor. None opposed. The motion carried.

Subdivision/Land Development Applications

Poplar Realty (Tabas Tract) - Preliminary Plan Submission

Jon Tresslar of Boucher and James was present to discuss the application and reminded the Commission of his presence before both the PC and Board of Supervisors over the past several years. He addressed the following issues:

Background: The proposed site is 123 acres at the corner of Chestnut Tree and Grieson Roads. The subdivision is proposed into 10,000 square foot lots for a total of 128 units, with 114 single family units. Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) have been approved.

In accordance with the previous sketch plan: the proposed development has stayed away from a stream corridor and wetlands to the west and north. There is little disturbance to the natural features. One utility line is crossing a wetland.

Mike France made reference to a letter dated November 8, 2012 in which the Brandywine Conservancy did not have enough time to review and comment prior to its formal submission.

1. Typically for developments of this size, the Township uses Brandywine Conservancy as consultants for planning aspects, and Mr. France would prefer to get their input initially. They have made comments in their letter indicating open space needs, and recreational facilities.
2. Secondly, development is focused in Rockland Station area

Stacie Popp-Young raised a question from last time about including the layout as an overlay to the existing features of the site. Ms. Popp-Young provided a copy of a Google Earth photo of the site. Mr. Tresslar will provide this next time.

Mr. Tresslar has discussed the content of the Technicon review letter with the Township Engineer and will address the comments accordingly. However Mr. Tresslar wished to discuss a few items requiring PC input.

One of the item to clarify is the property ownership, according to Mr. Tresslar. He stated that the applicant is Poplar Realty. The owner is Mr. Tabas. It has been a family property since the 1960's. It has been sold to Poplar Realty which is made up of family members.

The applicant requested some guidance on the location of walking trails. They are proposing sidewalk on one side of the street and would propose walking trails to integrate with the sidewalk if requested. The applicant expressed concern if they are too close to residents' backyard.

There was some discussion on the open space. Stacie Popp-Young suggested following any guidance within the comprehensive plan to address this topic. Mike France responded that the Township had started to address this, with a potential to connect to Struble Lake and Hibernia Park. There is a Chester County greenway project from Honey Brook to Delaware. He referred the applicant to Sheila Fleming at the Brandywine Conservancy for additional guidance and input.

Mike France remarked that the "green space" in the center is basically a retention basin.

Mr. Tresslar stated that the plan kept open space for a tot lot; can do three smaller lots at multiple locations throughout the site or one large lot with more facilities. The Ordinance suggests consideration of wading pools, playground equipment, and multi-use field and would like input on this.

Mike Reinert offered the example of Whitehorse Glen (Brandywine Preserve) that had proposed a tot lot but had not been implemented. He suggested multiple tot lots at one location for different age levels, for younger and older kids. This may allow more effective use of the tot lot by all residents of the community, especially with those with children of different age groups. A trail system should be interconnected with the sidewalk at some points and toward the edges of the tract; away from the houses.

Mike France prefers a strong Parks & Recreation component which includes baseball or multi-purpose fields. Mr. Tresslar offered that they could do some additional grading for fields possibly along Grieson Road. Mike Reinert stated that the ordinance requires 3 tot lots, 2 basketball courts, 2 tennis courts and a multi-purpose field and the PC should comment on what they would prefer to see in this development. Max Dobles stated that he would prefer three tot lots, 2 basketball courts, and a

perimeter walking trail that hugs the outside. He noted the connection between walking and good health. Mr. France echoed that suggestion and a multi-purpose field. Mr. Tresslar responded they would leave vegetation and work a trail through it, skirt the wetlands, and come out near Cupola Road. Stacie Popp-Young reminded of the need to consider the comprehensive plan and consult with the Brandywine Conservancy. She is ok with the single lot location and a multi-purpose field with a small basketball court near the field, away from the houses. Mike France agreed that it would be good to consult with the Brandywine Conservancy since they have done a lot of developments and can offer some suggestions. Mr. Tresslar agreed he would contact John Snook to discuss.

Mr. Tresslar has addressed storm water management throughout the plan. Stacie Popp-Young asked whether storm water management is using best management practices. Mr. Tresslar responded that he met with Chester County and is following the ordinance providing as much infiltration as possible. This property has been under investigation for 12 - 15 years and infiltration rates have been a challenge based on existing conditions.

Mike France and Max Dobles prefer sidewalks on both sides of the new interior streets. Mr. Tresslar stated that the ordinance says to minimize impervious surfaces and they did try to follow the recommendations to eliminate impervious surfaces.

Mr. Tresslar requested discussion on the traffic study requirements and requested a waiver to use the PADOT traffic study requirements since one will be required for the new intersection with Chestnut Tree Road. The intersection of Grieson and Chestnut Tree Roads, and Road E and Chestnut Tree would be included. Mike Reinert responded that he would consult with his traffic engineer, however suggested that the intersection of Cupola and Grieson should be added as well as the new intersections with Greison Road.

The applicant is also requesting a waiver to count trees on the site. Stacie Popp-Young asked about specimen tree identification. Mr. Tresslar answered that if there were any specimen trees in the area being disturbed, he would identify those.

Stacie Popp-Young asked whether it is possible to get permission to walk the site. Mr. Tabas (property owner) responded affirmatively.

Mike Reinert further added he has yet to see the landscaping plan. At the preliminary plan stage, there are some drafting issues that can get deferred to final plan. The major issues have been addressed tonight. Zoning in general is in compliance. They are still working out some storm water issues, but will sit down separately with the engineer and discuss technical details.

Mike France again stated he would like the Brandywine Conservancy to weigh in, specifically on the central greenway and possibly removing the retention basin? Mr. Tresslar stated the expansion of the center would only affect a few people. Over 50%

of the units are backing up to green space. From a developer's point of view, the more open space available to residents, the happier they are and quicker they will buy. They have worked hard on this and there are tradeoffs. It is a balancing act and they have tried to achieve a balance. Mr. Tresslar added they have not submitted a landscaping plan yet. It takes several passes with input to get it to final form, so they will take this back, clean it up and bring it back. There is a pretty good natural buffer along Grieson Road. The PC indicated they would prefer the natural buffer to remain and only remove invasives.

Mr. Tresslar stated he would consider the comments made and submit a revised plan in the near future for additional review. No further action was taken.

Future Meetings - All dates subject to change

December 12th - Regular Board Meeting (6:30 pm)

December 20th - Planning Commission Regular Meeting (7:00 pm) \* Date changed due to holiday

December 20th - Park & Recreation Committee (6:00 pm)

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Greg Frederick, seconded by Stacie Popp-Young. All in favor. None opposed. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Siebert, Secretary  
Honey Brook Township Planning Commission