

MINUTES
WEST MANHEIM TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Thursday, September 15, 2016, 2016
6:00 PM

ITEM NO. 1 Meeting Called to Order

The regular meeting of the West Manheim Township Planning Commission was called to order at 6 p.m., by Chairman Jim Myers, followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM NO. 2 Roll Call

The roll was called and the following Commission Members were present: Chairman Jim Myers, Duane Diehl, Andy Hoffman, Darrell Raubenstine, Jay Weisensale and the Township Manager, Marc Woerner. The Township Engineer, Chris Toms was not present.

ITEM NO. 3 Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting, August 18, 2016

Chairman Myers questioned if the spelling of Mr. Roepoke was correct. The recording secretary will verify if the spelling is correct and make the necessary corrections.

Darrell Raubenstine had a question on the motion that was made on the 366-lot Homestead Acres plan. He asked that the Minutes record/note that he was under the impression that the Planning Commission was voting on a four-phase plan versus an eight-phase plan. Darrell expressed that he was not under the impression that he was voting on the complete plan. He expressed that he wanted to contest that part of the minutes.

Chairman Myers who seconded the motion understood that the motion on the floor was for the complete plan with the conditions that were stated in the motion.

Darrell requested a copy of the minutes from the stenographer that recorded the meeting.

Andy Hoffman made a motion to approve the Minutes from the regular Planning Commission meeting of Thursday, August 18, 2016, seconded by Duane Diehl. ***The motion carried.***

ITEM NO. 4 Correspondence

Chairman Jim Myers noted the Township did receive an extension request from JA. Myers for the Homestead Acres – 134 Lot Preliminary Plan.

ITEM NO. 5 Visitors

Chairman Jim Myers asked were there any visitors present that wished to address the Commission, and received no reply.

ITEM NO. 6 Public Comment – Items Not Listed on Agenda

Chairman Myers asked if anyone present wanted to discuss an item not listed on the Agenda and received no reply.

ITEM NO. 7 Emergency Services Group Report

Mike Hampton, Director of Emergency Services had nothing to report.

ITEM NO. 8 Report from Zoning Officer

Marc Woerner, Zoning Officer, informed the Planning members that besides the ECHO housing application before them, he wanted to inform them that the Wildasins are appealing the Zoning Hearing Board's decision.

ITEM NO. 9 Old Business

1. Extension Requests

A. Homestead Acres – J.A. Myers – Oakwood Dr. & Valley View Dr. – 134 Lot Preliminary Plan

Jay Weisensale made a motion to table this plan.

Darrell Raubenstine questioned why the Planning Commission was keeping a plan opened when they already voted on a plan for that lot. Township Manager Marc Woerner explained that there had not been any preliminary plan approval by the Board of Supervisors. He explained the plan is scheduled to be on the agenda for the Board of Supervisors meeting September 20, 2016. ***The motion died due to no second.***

Andy Hoffman made a motion for an unfavorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to approve Homestead Acres – J.A. Myers – Oakwood Drive & Valley View Drive – 134 Lot Preliminary Plan due to inactivity on the plan, seconded by Darrell Raubenstine. ***The motion carried.***

Darrell Raubenstine made a motion to deny the request for the extension. A brief discussion took place on whether a motion is needed to act upon J.A. Myers request for an extension. Chairman Myers asked for a second to Darrell Raubenstine's motion and did not receive a second. ***The motion died due to no second.***

B. Benrus L. Stambaugh II, et al – 1 Lot Land Development Plan – Brunswick Dr. & Oak Hills Dr.

Darrell Raubenstine made a motion to table, seconded by Duane Diehl. ***The motion carried.***

ITEM 10. New Business

A. Joshua & Vanessa Schmidt, 270 Tracey Road Application – Conditional Use Hearing – ECHO Housing

Joshua Schmidt introduced himself, his wife Vanessa and his mother-in-law Sandy to the Planning Commission. He explained that they were before the Planning Commission for a favorable recommendation on the Conditional Use for their ECHO Housing application. The purpose is to place a mobile home on the 10 acres that he owns on Tracey Road. Mr. Schmidt explained the reason and purpose behind the request was due to his father having a massive stroke. He then went on explaining the reason for the placement of the mobile home and on-lot septic system on his property.

Jay Weisensale made a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for conditional use of ECHO Housing on the stipulation that once the family member is deceased or no longer able to live there that the housing must be removed, seconded by Darrell Raubenstine. **In a 4 to 1 vote, the Motion carried. Duane Diehl, Andy Hoffman, Darrell Raubenstine, and Jay Weisensale voted yes. Chairman Jim Myers voted nay.**

B. SpiriTrust Lutheran 2100 Utz Terrace – Variance Requests

K. Greg Smith, RGS Associates Engineers and Joe Sabold, with SpiriTrust Lutheran were present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Smith explained they came before the Planning Commission to discuss Utz Terrace and the proposed apartment building, sketch plan and the variance requests. Mr. Smith gave a Power Point presentation to the Planning members of the sketch plan.

After the Power Point presentation, Mr. Smith explained the need for the variance request from §270-28 Area regulations – All other uses, maximum building height.

1. Variance request from Zoning Ordinance §270-28 Area regulations – All Other Uses, Maximum Building Height

Mr. Smith explained the Zoning Ordinance defines the building height as measured from the average finished grade to the highest point of the roof. In the SR zoning district, the maximum building height requirement is 35 ft. He explained that SpiriTrust is asking for a variance to allow a maximum height of 50 ft.

Planning Commission members expressed their concerns of safety issues on the height of the building and a retaining wall being so close to the building in fighting a fire.

Mike Hampton the Director of Emergency Services expressed the same concerns the Planning members had expressed, and would not make any comments on a sketch plan since he had not seen a detailed plan.

Jay Weisensale made a recommendation to wait until the Planning Members had input from Emergency Services before the Planning Members decide.

More discussion took place on whether the Planning members felt comfortable in making any kind of recommendation on the request to go from 35-foot height requirement to a 50-foot height requirement of the building since Emergency Services would not make any comments on the sketch plan. **Jay Weisensale withdrew his original motion.**

Zoning Officer Marc Woerner explained to the Planning members that the original land development plan included the purposed building at a maximum height of 50 feet. He explained that the height restrictions have changed causing the hardship and the need for the variance request.

The Zoning Officer went through each of the requirements that the applicant will need to meet when their request goes before the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Smith explained that each of those requirements in the narrative of the application. He reiterated that the most effective and efficient way to utilize the available space was to ask for this variance request on the height requirement.

After no further discussion, Chairman Myers asked for a motion for a favorable or unfavorable recommendation.

Darrell Raubenstine made a favorable recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board to grant the variance request up to a maximum height of 45 feet. Chairman Myers asked for a seconded to Darrell Raubenstine's motion and did not receive a second. ***The motion died due to no second.***

Jay Weisensale made a motion for an unfavorable recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board for the Variance request from Zoning Ordinance §270-28 Area regulations – All Other Uses, Maximum Building Height, seconded by Darrell Raubenstine. **In a three - two vote, the motion passed. Andy Hoffman, Jay Weisensale and Darrell Raubenstine voted yes. Duane Diehl and Chairman Jim Myers voted no.**

2. Variance request from Zoning Ordinance §270-197 Schedule of required parking spaces, Residential, Dwelling, multifamily

Mr. Smith explained that this request pertains to the number of parking spaces required. He explained the current zoning ordinance required 3.5 parking spaces for every multifamily dwelling unit. The plan proposes to provide 1.5 parking spaces per apartment unit. He explained that although this is multifamily, it is a retirement community with an age restriction. Of the 41 proposed units, approximately 80 percent are 1-bedroom apartments. Since the majority of apartments will be smaller one-bedroom units, the need for parking will lessen accordingly. Mr. Smith also explained with less parking spaces it will result in less impervious cover, reduce the amount of storm water runoff and increase the amount of open spaces. He explained that 3.5 equal 144 parking spaces, the last thing the developer wants to do is to build 144 parking spaces 2/3 of which would set empty for most of the year.

Darrell Raubenstine brought his concerns about the lack of current parking spaces in the area where his parents live. He felt that more parking spaces are needed not less.

Andy Hoffman made a favorable recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board to approve the request to the variance request from Zoning Ordinance §270-197 Schedule of required parking spaces, Residential, Dwelling, multifamily to allow for 1.2 spaces per unit, seconded by Duane Diehl. **In a three - two vote, the motion passed. Duane Diehl, Andy Hoffman, and Chairman Jim Myers voted yes. Jay Weisensale and Darrell Raubenstine voted no.**

ITEM NO. 11 Signing of Approved Plans

None at this time.

ITEM NO. 12 Sketch Plans and Other Business

None at this time.

ITEM NO. 13 Public Comment

Chairman Jim Myers asked if any one present would like to make any comments at this time and Kelli Mertz, 200 Tracey Road wanted to clarify that the home under ECHO housing would be placed closer to the Schmidt home and not closer to the Mertz property.

ITEM NO. 14 Next Meeting

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2016 at 6 p.m.

ITEM NO. 15 Adjournment

Jay Weisensale made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m., seconded by Andy Hoffman. ***The motion carried.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Miriam E. Clapper
Recording Secretary