

Ross Township
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2022

These are the minutes of the regular meeting of the Ross Township Planning Commission held on Thursday, April 28, 2022, held in person and called to order by Chairman Jim Wigal at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were also present: Chairman John Sample, Secretary Bridget Watson O'Brien, William Grady, Lauren Hergert, Joseph Argenas, and Ken Petri. Also, present were Dominic Rickert, Director of Community Development, Travis Stanczyk, P.E., Gibson-Thomas Engineers, and PJ Murray, Township Solicitor. Absent Edward Nassan and Jennifer Deemer.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the January 27, 2021. Planning Commission meeting be approved.

***Approval of secretarial bills.
Unanimously approved.***

NEW BUSINESS

Motion moved to accept application for study made John Sample and seconded by Bill Grady. Unanimously approved.

S-22-3 Subdivision Approval: Urban Terrain, on behalf of the Adair and the Hartle family, is seeking subdivision approval for a lot line revision and consolidation between their parcels located at L/B 519-L-154, 519-L-152, 1008 W. Sutter Rd, and 519-L-250, 1010 W. Sutter Rd. in a R-1 District of the 9th ward.

Amy Hopkin, with Urban Terrain, addressed the Commission stating that they are proposing a lot line revision/consolidation. Mr. Adair owned a piece that was an L shape flag lot that went around the back of the Hartles. The Hartles would like to purchase the back portion to attach to their existing property, and the Adair's will retain everything in the front.

Mr. Wigal opened questions to the Planning Commission

Mr. Grady asked if it was all one piece of property? Ms. Hopkins said no, it was 3 parcels, the Adair's owned the two and the Hartles owned in the middle.

Mr. Rickert inquired from the Solicitor, stating our ordinance requires all new lots to have access to a public or private road, so their proposed new lot in the back will not, but will have access via an easement, does that easement satisfy that portion of that ordinance?

Mr. Murray said since a new lot is not being created, the legal non-conforming use will still apply.

Ms. Hopkins stated that the easement is noted in the deed. Mr. Rickert told her she might want to put easement noted in the deed for ACED and for the Department of Real Estate.

There were no further questions from the Planning Commission.

There were no questions from the public.

Mr. Grady made a motion to recommend approval of S-22-3 subject to all comments being addressed.

Mr. Sample second.

Motion passed unanimously

NEW BUSINESS

Motion moved to accept application for study made John Sample and seconded by Lauren Hergert. Unanimously approved.

S-22-4 Subdivision Approval: Civil & Environmental Consultants, on behalf of McKnight Residential, is seeking Subdivision Approval for a Lot Line Revision to add approximately 2 acres of lot 2 to lot 1 located at L/B 431-K-240, 7207 McKnight Rd. and 431-K-259, 7201 McKnight Rd. in a C-1 and TD-1 District of the 8th Ward.

SP-22-1 Final Site Plan Approval: Civil & Environmental Consultants, on behalf of McKnight Residential, is seeking Final Site Plan Approval for proposed multi-family apartment buildings and townhouses located at L/B 431-K-240, 7207 McKnight Rd. and 431-K-259, 7201 McKnight Rd. in a C-1 and TD-1 District of the 8th Ward.

JJ Richardson, attorney, and legal counsel for the applicant, addressed the Commission by introducing the project team. He stated this is virtually the same plan and proposal that was before the Commission in January which was recommended for approval. He stated all conditions have been satisfied for the final approval of the preliminary plan. Mr. Richardson said they are now able to present a final land development plan that is fully compliant with all applicable ordinances and regulations.

Christina Rauh, with Civil and Environmental Consultants, provided the Planning Commission members with power point slides showing the existing site conditions as well as proposed plans. Showing the proposed site plan, she said it is very similar. It will be 4 apartment buildings, proposed 272 apartment units, the club house at the top of Idaway Dr. and the proposed townhouse units. She said there is a minor change on this plan, stating they eliminated one of the units so instead of 17 units they are now proposing 16 units. They will have two buildings of 5 units and one building of 6 units. Ms. Rauh said that is the biggest change between the preliminary and final plan. She stated that they meet the parking requirements, 442 are required and they are proposing 443. There 45 of the Parking Spaces underneath building D and 32 of the parking spaces in the townhouse garages. She showed the Commission the access point to the site, stating there are two main access points off McKnight Rd that leads into the site, and then also showing off site access point one that leads up to the Kentzel and Idaway intersection, which is

the main entrance to the site. She showed some of the project amenities, which includes a walking trail, a club house, office working spaces for the residents, a pool, a bar area, and a green space adjacent to the clubhouse for outdoor yarding. Shown next was the proposed landscaping plans. She showed the existing buffer and vegetation areas, showing along the perimeter of the parking lot, and in between the residential properties they have enhanced the existing vegetative buffer with additional plantings, trees, and shrubs.

Chuck Wooster, with David E. Wooster and Associates, Inc., performed the traffic analysis for the project. He stated the initial analysis was a trip generation analysis because this project is in the TD-1 District. He stated essentially his job was to compare what they were proposing to what had been assigned to that lot already. Mr. Wooster said that they are generating a fraction of what was there before. He said that PennDOT had one concern, which was how was the northbound left turn lane at McKnight and Sieber going to function with some additional traffic to it. He said that he found out that there was some effort put toward and some funding obtained for the intersection for some future improvements, so there are ideas set forth. He said it was decided they did want to see a traffic impact assessment, and they wanted new volumes. It was decided for them to collect new traffic volume data and to add the three intersections to the study. He stated that the report has addressed all comments and they are ready to submit it.

Mr. Fox let the Planning Commission know they did enter into an agreement with Mr. Hine, who lives in the neighborhood above the site, to replace his fence on his property and additional landscaping to help him block any view of the site below. He stated they also agreed to fix the steps that needed repair.

Mr. Wigal opened questions to the Planning Commission

Mr. Argenas inquired if everything has been addressed from the Gibson-Thomas review letter. It was answered that all comments that have not already been addressed, will be addressed.

Mr. Grady asked if the Township Engineer if they are satisfied with the analysis that they have done. Mr. Stanczyk, introduced Eileen, Gibson-Thomas' Traffic Engineer, who said they did feel that their analysis was sufficient, and it did address and evaluate all items asked. Mr. Grady also voiced his concerns regarding traffic going west on Siebert and turning into Kentzel. He mentioned that is more than a 90 degree turn and was questioning how a moving van will be able to make that turn. Mr. Wooster said they would not be able to make it easily, and their best bet would be to continue north onto McKnight and pull off Patrick and make a left, and then right turn onto the site. He said that Ross Township owns the land between Kentzel and Siebert to the east of the intersection all the way down. Mr. Grady also inquired who would be retaining the retention pond? Mr. Fox said the owners will be responsible for that and have no intention of turning that over to the Township.

Mr. Petri asked about the steps coming from Idaway Dr., inquiring who will maintain those steps and who owns them? Mr. Fox said the steps are on their property and they will be replacing and maintaining them.

Mrs. Watson-O'Brien asked about the sheet showing the townhomes and what the closest distance between the townhome structure next to the match line. Ms. Rauh said the distance between the front two corners is over 20 ft, but she did not have the exact dimension. She said the back two corners are about 6-8 ft.

Mr. Rickert inquired from the solicitor if the structures are to be 20 ft. apart is it in compliance being the front of the building is 20 ft apart, but the back of the building is not?

Mr. Murray said yes, and no. The front is in compliance, but the back is not. To which Mr. Rickert questioned if they would need a variance. Mr. Murray stated he is going to do more research and between now and the Board of Commissioners meeting they will give a more definitive answer regarding the variance.

Mrs. Watson-O'Brien asked about the number of trash enclosures and asked to see where they were on the site plan. A member of the development team stated this facility will have concierge trash. The residents will not be responsible for taking their trash out to the dumpster, that will be part of the management companies' responsibility. He stated they do feel they have an adequate amount of trash enclosures.

Mr. Wigal inquired about the retention facilities. Mr. Stanczyk stated that they meet all the detention requirements.

Ms. Hergert asked if any studies have been done regarding light pollution. It was answered they meet all ordinances per the Township Engineers.

Mr. Wigal opened questions to the Public

Becky Cordell addressed the Commission regarding Kentzel Rd. She brought up that there are two bus stops for school children. She also mentioned about waiting for the light to change and how long that can take, and how dangerous it can be.

Donna Tessmer, a resident of Kentzel Rd., brought up her concerns on Kentzel Rd, and the turn that must be made there. She said she cannot imagine a firetruck or anything big to make that turn. She said Berkley Hills Fire Department is to come up Simon, they are not coming up Kentzel Rd because they cannot make that turn.

Darlene DiDonato voiced her concerns regarding the traffic and the safety of the residents.

There were no further questions from the public

Ms. Hergert made a motion to recommend approval of S-22-4 subject to all comments being addressed.

Mr. Sample second.

Motion passed unanimously

Mr. Argenas made a motion to recommend approval of SP-22-3 subject to all comments being addressed, and verification of the variance.

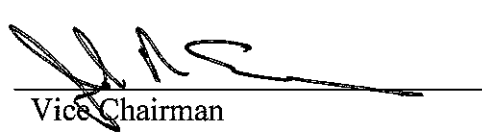
Mrs. Watson-O'Brien seconded.

Motion passed 5-2

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.


Chairman


Vice Chairman

Respectfully submitted by Dominic Rickert