

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission
Agenda
Tuesday, January 7, 2020
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

REORGANIZATION

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes: December 3, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENT/CONCERNS/QUESTIONS

PLANS

1. MacIntyre/Stratton Tract
Address: 1460 Pottstown Pk.
First Review: Sketch Plan
Request: Two sketch plans, one showing commercial development of a 5.4-acre tract allowed under current regulations and another showing residential development of the tract with two adjacent lots (9.8 acres total), which will require an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: January 21, 2020



MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 3, 2020
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: John R. Weller, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning
SUBJECT: MacIntyre/Stratton Tract
Sketch plan

APPLICANT: Vernon MacIntyre

SITE ADDRESS: 1460 Pottstown Pk.
West Chester, PA 19380

TAX PARCELS: 41-5-143.1, 41-5-146.1 (41-5-141, 41-5-146)

ZONING: NC, Neighborhood Commercial (R-3, Residential)

DESCRIPTION: Two sketch plans, one showing commercial development of a 5.4-acre tract allowed under current regulations and another showing residential development of the tract with two adjacent lots (9.8 acres total), which will require an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Background

The Applicant has provided two sketch plans for discussion. The first shows re-development of the commercial properties at 1460 Pottstown Pk. owned by William Stratton: two contiguous lots with a total area of 5.4 acres in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning district. That plan proposes the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of three buildings with a total of 30,240 sq.ft. of retail space. The second plan adds two parcels to the Stratton lots and shows a residential project of 37 townhouse units. The added lots are both in the R-3 Residential zoning district and increase the total tract size to 9.8 acres. Both configurations have frontage solely along the southbound lane of Pottstown Pk. and are adjacent to the CVS pharmacy at the corner of Pottstown Pk. and Boot Rd., the self-storage facility now under construction at 1464 Pottstown Pk., and the northern portion of the Township's Boot Road Park.

The drawings show several small areas of steep slope scattered across the tract; there are no FEMA-designated floodplains or wetland areas. The Stratton lots are currently developed for commercial use: each lot has an existing structure and areas for outdoor storage. Of the two parcels added for the residential project, the one fronting Pottstown Pk. has a single-family residence while the other is currently vacant, although it was once the site of a single-family home. The latter is more heavily wooded and has no street frontage but has access to Boot Rd. by means of a 20-foot wide easement along the western edge of the adjoining lots.

Staff met with the Applicant on November 21, 2019 to discuss the sketches. We note that the commercial project is fully compliant with the current zoning regulations, but the Applicant would prefer to construct the residential project. The Applicant recognizes that residential use is not permitted in the NC district, so they are requesting an amendment to the Zoning Map to change the Stratton lots from NC to R-3 - the same as the current zoning for the two abutting lots. Staff advised the Applicant to present the concepts to the Commission as sketch plans for discussion and for guidance as to whether the Commission would support such an amendment or if the development permitted by the current regulations was preferred.

The Stratton lots and the surrounding area were originally zoned NC to accommodate the smaller commercial operations in existence at the time when the Zoning was enacted in 1998. In addition to the existing operations on the Stratton lots and the Banbury Shoppes, these included the Coach House Motel site now being redeveloped for a self-storage facility and a Sunoco gas station that was replaced by the CVS pharmacy several years ago.

The Sketch Plan process allows the Applicant to choose whether to have their plan reviewed by the Township consultants or just by Staff. This Applicant has elected the latter. In addition to the Planning staff review, we have asked for comments from the Chief of Police, the Director of Public Works, and the Fire Marshal.

Staff Comment

We offer the following comments for your consideration:

General Observations

- Any development of this tract will need to address the challenges presented by the unusual configuration of the property, the short road frontage, and the fact that access is limited to southbound traffic. The Commission should consider the viability of the site for new commercial uses allowed under the existing NC district regulations as well as what uses may be more suitable.
- The Applicant has included on the drawings the improvements proposed for the adjacent Boot Road Park site to assist in determining the impact of development on the park. Commercial development is less likely to conflict with any park use, but residential development may present a more attractive appearance to park users as well as a round-the-clock presence that would discourage inappropriate activity.
- The residential design shows a driveway connection to Boot Rd. through Boot Road Park, which is Township property; this has not been officially approved by the Township. We expect that the Applicant has not shown a similar provision for the commercial design to emphasize its by-right status. It is not clear that the alignment shown on the residential design is compatible with the proposed Park improvements, particularly the stormwater management facilities.
- No stormwater management facilities are indicated on either plan. The tract is not in the carbonate district, so it is likely that infiltration and sub-surface facilities can be accommodated given satisfactory percolation rates.
- Neither design indicates any permanent open space. The Commission should consider what open space - if any - may be appropriate given the proximity of Boot Road Park.

- The entire tract is within our Transportation Service Area and will therefore be subject to payment of a traffic impact fee of \$1,219.65 per p.m. peak-hour trip generated by the project.

Commercial Design

- The design complies with the applicable area and bulk regulations of the NC district, including the 12,000 sq.ft. size limit for retail buildings, assuming that these would be single-story buildings.
- Most retail uses seek locations that are highly visible and readily accessible. We note that the visibility of this tract is limited by the configuration of the tract and the adjacent uses. Even for the most visible eastern building, it will be difficult for passers-by to see what businesses it contains; the northern building will be almost completely obscured from view by traffic on Pottstown Pk.
- As noted previously, access to the site is limited to southbound traffic. The existing easement to Boot Rd. is twenty feet wide, which would be sufficient for an emergency access, but not for a full access drive for public use.
- As shown, the project requires 15,120 sq.ft. (0.35 ac.) of permanent open space, or payment of a fee of about \$27,520 in lieu of such space.

Residential Design

- The design is based upon the standards of the R-3 Residential zoning district, which abuts the tract to the west and includes the two northern lots that are not part of the commercial design. Townhouse dwellings are permitted in the R-3 district by §325-11.B(2)(a) of the Zoning as a type of multifamily dwelling, as that term is defined in §325-8 of the Zoning. Section 325-11.C(10)(d)[1] requires a minimum lot size of five acres for multifamily developments. The tract as shown is nearly twice this size, but the two lots currently in the R-3 district have a total area of about 4.7 acres, hence the Applicant's request to extend the R-3 designation to the Stratton lots.
- Based upon the lot calculations shown under General Note 2, Staff calculates that the site could accommodate not more than 33 dwellings, not the 37 townhouses shown. We note that the lot calculation excludes only the rights-of-way: the area of slopes in excess of 25% must also be excluded in order to determine the total developable acreage which is the basis for the density calculation in §325-11.C(10)(d)[2].
- The drawing suggests that the existing home at 1470 Pottstown Pk. (the northeastern corner of the tract) will remain. We note that this would not be permitted if a portion of that property were to be developed with townhouses; even if it were permitted, it would need to be counted as one of the dwellings on the tract. The Applicant may demolish the house (it is not historic), or they may subdivide a lot from the tract to accommodate it, although such action would reduce the size of the tract and further reduce the number of permitted dwellings.
- As with the commercial design, no permanent open space is indicated. For 33 dwelling units, 66,000 sq.ft. (1.52 ac.) of permanent open space is required or a fee of about \$114,675 in lieu of such space.
- As noted above, the Applicant has not yet sought any sort of agreement with the Township regarding the proposed driveway connection to Boot Rd. through Boot Road Park. We note that some improvement must be found for the access to this site since it would be unacceptable for a residential community to rely solely upon the existing Pottstown Pk. access.

- Regarding the site layout, we note that the proposed dwellings are well back from both Pottstown Pk. and Boot Rd., and the multiple short access drives allow most of the units to be away from through traffic. The units nearest the fork in the access drive are poorly located, since headlights from vehicles entering the site would shine directly into the front rooms unless some sort of evergreen buffer or fencing is provided. We note that eliminating these units would reduce the count to be closer to the permitted maximum and would also allow either the provision of some permanent open space adjacent to the Township park or, alternately, increased distance between the three short access drives that extend westward from the main access.
- The Director of Public Works expresses concern about how sanitary sewers will access the site - an issue that affects both designs. Mr. Otteni also addresses the matter of access through the Park and sidewalk connection to the CVS.
- The Fire Marshal advises that the commercial alternative provides better accessibility for emergency vehicles and that the connection through the Park should be provided for both alternatives, not just the residential design. It will be necessary to connect the site to public water supply in order to satisfy firefighting requirements.
- The only significant Police Department concern is the accessibility of the site. Capt. Herkner notes that the access through the Park addresses this, but we must consider the effect of the additional traffic upon the Park.

Since the submissions are Sketch Plans, no official action or motion by the Commission is warranted. Please bear in mind that the Applicant is seeking guidance from the Commission regarding support for an amendment to the Zoning Map that would allow development similar to the residential design. While comments on the specific designs are doubtless welcome, the possibility of re-zoning is the more critical matter.

Attachments

1. Director of Public Works memorandum dated December 31, 2019.
2. Fire Marshal memorandum dated January 2, 2020.
3. Police Department memorandum dated December 20, 2019.
4. Sketch Plans (2) by D.L. Howell dated December 15, 2019.

Plans\JKLM\MacIntyre\PC memo - 200103

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 31, 2019
TO: John Weller, Director of Planning and Zoning
FROM: Theodore D. Otteni, P.E.
Director of Public Works



**SUBJECT: Macintyre/Stratton Properties
Sketch Plan Review**

I have reviewed the two alternative sketch plans for the Macintyre/Stratton Properties dated 12/15/19. My comments/suggestions are as follows:

Related to both alternatives:

1. Sanitary sewer service will be a bit of a challenge. Likely looking at a centralized on-site grinder pump and force main to service the properties that will pump up the road (approx. 600 ft. to the south) to a manhole near the intersection with Boot Road. Alternatively, a 2,100 ft gravity sewer line could be installed northerly along Pottstown Pike, but this is likely an expensive proposition given the need for PennDOT HOP as well as the likely rock excavation.

Residential development alternative:

1. The proposed access through Township (park) property will need a bit of public discussion to verify if granting such an easement is in the best interest of the community. From an access management standpoint, allowing the access to the existing traffic signal would be beneficial compared to a second access driveway being constructed along Boot Road. Such a consolidation would eliminate potentially conflicting turning movements onto Boot Road, particularly in proximity to the turn lane of the traffic signal. The legal requirements/challenges to allow access across the property need to be investigated further.

Commercial/Retail development alternative:

1. Provide a sidewalk along the property frontage of Pottstown Pike Ramp to connect to existing sidewalk on CVS property.

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Exton, Pennsylvania 19341



Tel: (610) 363-9525
www.westwhiteland.org

Memorandum

DATE: January 2, 2020

TO: John Weller/Director of Planning and Zoning
Justin Smiley/Township Planner

FROM: *MM* Mark Moses/Code Administration Officer/Fire Marshal/Assistant
Zoning Officer

RE: MacIntyre/Stratton Tract Sketch Plans FM first review

I have reviewed both alternatives for the above sketch plan . Regardless of use, the site will need to be served with public water supply for firefighting. The commercial alternative is preferable due to the continuous flow throughout the site allowing access to multiple building sides for emergency vehicles. The layout of the townhome alternative appears to present an issue for snow removal, however, the driveway connection to Boot Road Park North is preferable for either design. Hydrants will be located during LD review. The applicant should be made aware of the Emergency Responder Communications Ordinance if the commercial alternative is chosen.

See me with any questions.

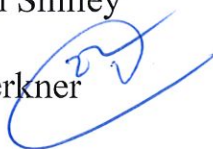


WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

101 Commerce Drive · Exton · PA · 19341

(610) 363-0200 · Administrative Offices · (610) 692-5100 · Police Dispatch



TO: Township Lanner Justin Smiley
FROM: Captain D. Matthew Herkner 
DATE: Friday, December 20, 2019
REF: MacIntyre/Stratton Tracts Sketch Plans (First Review)

On this date, I reviewed the sketches that you sent to Chief Joseph Catov, Jr. My only obvious concern deals with the ingress and egress for the property. I recommend that vehicular traffic have two points of exiting the property specifically since the eastern exit limits motorists to turning right onto southbound Pottstown Pike. I like the sketch where traffic can exit to a controlled intersection on West Boot Road. I recommend, however, the Planning Commission take into account the increased traffic that would pass through the southern portion of Boot Road Park North.