

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

Minutes of the first April meeting

April 6, 2021

*This was a virtual meeting; all participants attended on-line via Zoom.*

**Members Virtually Present**

Mark Gordon, Chair  
Joe Altimari  
Dan Cote  
Brian Dunn  
Jeff Glisson  
MaryFrances McGarrity  
Ray McKeeman

**Township Personnel Virtually Present**

John Weller, Planning Director  
Justin Smiley, Township Planner  
Mimi Gleason, Township Manager  
Pam Gural-Bear, Asst. Township Manager  
  
Rajesh Kumbhardare, Board of Supervisors Liaison

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Mark Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the meeting was held virtually via Zoom, and Mr. Gordon asked that everyone observe video etiquette.

A moment of silence was observed for the members of the military that protect our nation and first responders who protect us daily at home.

**II. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve the minutes for the meeting of March 16, 2021.  
(Altimari/Dunn)

ACTION: Passed, 7-0

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Resident Anita Nardone asked how the Township was moving forward with the suggestions of the Urban Land Institute report for the Exton Crossroads. Mr. Weller said a brainstorming committee consisting of Staff and selected members of various Township commissions will be meeting next week to discuss the best ways to communicate the report to the public and receive feedback to ensure that any recommendations and implementations have public support.

**IV. PLANS**

1. **Ship Run Developers, LLC**  
**Address: 500 E. Lincoln Hwy.**  
**First Review: Land Development**  
**Request: Construction of 95 single-family detached homes**

In virtual attendance on behalf of the Applicant were Attorney Lou Colagreco; Greg Richardson, traffic engineer; and Dave Gibbons, project engineer. Mr. Weller provided an overview of the proposed development, noting that the Board of Supervisors approved the conditional use application for the project on February 10, 2021. There are two historic sites within 300 feet of the tract, so the Township Historical Commission will review this plan on April 12. Mr. Weller summarized the consultant reviews, noting that there were remarkably few significant concerns. The County Planning Commission review

has been received and contains many of the same concerns described in Mr. Weller's memo of April 1, 2021:

- The proposed sidewalks are insufficient: there should be sidewalks at least five feet wide on both sides of all streets.
- The trail network is not well thought-out; the section behind Lots 11 through 37 is poorly sited.
- The convergence of the sidewalks, pedestrian trail, and the Chester Valley Trail connector near the Ship Rd. entrance is confusing.
- The open spaces do not relate well to each other or the tot lot. Staff suggests turning Lots 47 and 65 into open space, creating an open corridor from the southwest corner of the tract to Road C as well as a larger open area between Road A and Road B, which better accommodates the tot lot. There are several locations where an additional residential lot could fit, including the area currently shown as the tot lot, so there need not be any loss of units.
- The narrow strip of open space between Lots 50 through 64 should be eliminated and the lots enlarged to incorporate that land.
- Traffic calming measures are needed to discourage speeding along the long, straight stretches of road. Staff suggests including gentle curves and/or landscaped islands.

Mr. Colagreco indicated that the Applicant agrees to construct five-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides of the streets, and they will re-design the open space as suggested. Regarding the converging sidewalks and trails at the Ship Rd. entrance, the Applicant is waiting for the County to design this area, but they will remain flexible.

Mr. Richardson said the Applicant will comply with all of McMahon's comments, but that they cannot provide additional traffic calming: the two T-intersections on Road B will be all-way stops, and that will be a traffic calming measure. He added that bump-outs at the corners would be difficult due to driveway locations. Road-side parking will narrow the road to 20 feet, making it difficult to provide landscaped islands. Mr. Otteni suggested landscaped islands at the two entrances to the development, which would not interfere with any driveways and is similar to other developments in the area; Mr. Richardson agreed to consider this. Ms. Gleason urged the Applicant to solve the issue now rather than wait until construction is complete when the matter will be more difficult to resolve. Mr. Kumbhardare added that speeding drivers are often people living within the development rather than outsiders using the road as a cut-through. He added that children popping out from behind parked cars is a safety issue. Mr. Richardson said the addition of gentle curves will reduce the lot sizes and added that the stretch of road in question was only 600 feet long, but he will look further into the matter.

Mr. Otteni asked about the existing stormwater basin on the site, which appears will continue to serve the Laborers' Training building; Commission member Brian Dunn expressed concerns about the geology, the existing pipeline along the western edge of the tract, and the floodplain area. Mr. Colagreco responded that the existing basin is not part of the Ship Run project but belongs to Laborer's Training, which will continue to maintain it. Since the basin is on what will be HOA property, maintenance responsibilities will need to be clarified in the stormwater management facilities maintenance agreement that will be required as a condition of final plan approval. Mr. Gibbons pointed out that the flood plain areas are on the eastern part of the tract, where no development is proposed.

Commission member Joe Altimari expressed concern about the impact of the additional impervious surface upon the siltation in West Valley Ck. as well as about the aesthetics of large homes on relatively small lots. Mr. Gordon reminded everyone that the lot size is permitted under the high-density single-family option of this zoning district; also, the Applicant will be required to obtain an NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit for the project, and that permit will require soil erosion controls for the entire project.

Mr. Gordon called for public comment on the plan. Resident Virginia Kerlake asked what the price range will be for the proposed homes. Mr. Colagreco said it will fluctuate with market conditions at the time of construction, but the homes will be approximately 4,000 square feet. Ms. Kerlake asked if consideration had been given to constructing homes in close proximity to the pipeline, to which Mr. Dunn echoed her concerns from a liability standpoint. Mr. Gordon said there is no ordinance prohibiting proximity to a pipeline, and Ms. Gleason added that the Township cannot legally create a setback requirement from an underground facility. Mr. Colagreco said the Applicant moved the proposed units further away from the valve station to address previous concerns. He said potential buyers will have full disclosure, and it will be a matter of individual homeowner's comfort level.

The Commission took no action on the plan. The Applicant will address consultant comments and submit a revised plan.

## V. NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Chester County Transportation Improvement Inventory (TII) Review

Mr. Smiley reviewed the Township's "wish list" of transportation projects for submission to the County for inclusion on the Transportation Improvements Inventory (TII), which is used to set priorities for the use of Federal and state funds. The Township's highest priority is for the construction of an additional northbound lane for Pottstown Pk. between Boot Rd. and the Exton By-Pass. Commission member MaryFrances McGarrity asked what the Township can do to raise the profile of its projects. Mr. Smiley said Staff is working with McMahon Associates to create a brochure describing the importance of the Pottstown Pk. project to the region. Members were encouraged to speak to any local and federal officials they may know to educate them on the importance of the project.

## VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The ULI brainstorming committee will meet next Tuesday to work on priorities. They will meet through June and begin the visioning process with the public in the summer.

Mr. Weller said the Board of Supervisors will appoint members of the Advisory Committee for the Act 209 update at their next Board meeting.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Recording Secretary,



John Weller, AICP

Director of Planning & Zoning