

**Tredyffrin Township**  
**Planning Commission Workshop Meeting Minutes**  
May 7, 2009

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A workshop meeting of the Planning Commission was held on May 7, 2009, at the Tredyffrin Township Building. Members present included: Sean N. McCauley, Chairman, Robert O'Leary, Edward C. Sweeney, Thomas J. Cooper, Trip Lukens, and Libby Brinton.

Members absent: Victoria Snyder, Giovanni D'Amato, and Robert Whalen.

Also present: Mimi Gleason, Township Manager, Tom Scott, Assistant Township Manager, and Stephen Burgo, Township Engineer.

Chairman McCauley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**CARRYOVER MATTERS:**

Application (#02-08) **FEBA Associates**; Subdivision and Land Development Preliminary Plan: Plan to subdivide one lot into four lots and build two twins at 916 Upper Gulph Road in an R4 Residence District [Plan prepared by R.H. Smith Surveyors dated 1-28-08, last revised 3-1-09.]

- Robert Smith, engineer for the project, did not attend the meeting so the only representative for the applicant was Maria Gomez, the real estate agent. This made it difficult to discuss the plans. Mr. Burgo noted that the last version of plans were sketch plans submitted in early 2008. After several meetings some revisions were suggested, including the idea of making Fairview a two way street. To do this required zoning variances for lot area. The Planning Commission recommended this change; however, the police and neighbors were not in support of it. Consequently, the ZHB did grant a special exception to build four units but denied the request for reduced lot areas. This eliminated the possibility of Fairview being made into a two way street. Mr. O'Leary noted that the applicant did make changes to the land development plan based on previous comments from the Planning Commission. The storm sewer is extended to connect to the site, curbing and sidewalk are included, and the intersection of Fairview and Upper Gulph has been realigned to 90° with full depth curbing wrapped around the radii of the intersection and then depressed after that, a stripped crosswalk is shown, and a streetlight was added between lots two and three. Several comments were made about the revised plans. Mr. O'Leary asked if the storm sewer pipes on Fairview had been inspected and cleaned out. Mr. Burgo responded that the pipes were severely clogged and would probably have to be replaced. The applicant will have to look into this. Mr. O'Leary also asked that the new streetlight be shown on a detail sheet. Mr. Burgo said that the ADA details for the ramps would have to be shown and all waivers should be listed on the plans. It looks like waivers from a shadow analysis and a plan showing significant features within 300' will be needed. Requests were made that the sidewalk detail around the barber shop, where it connects to the new curbing, be shown and that the new 19' paved cartway and the 23' ROW be more clearly defined. At this point, the discussion turned towards the new sidewalk along Fairview in front of the proposed twins. It was noted that the four foot sidewalk is outside of the ROW and will require an easement. The easement will have to be netted out of the total lot area which could reduce them below the required minimum. This would require another trip to the ZHB for a minimum lot size variance. Mr. McCauley

suggested that the applicant's engineer call to set up a meeting with Mr. Burgo, Mr. McCauley, and Mr. O'Leary to discuss the plans. Mr. Burgo said that he should call Erin McPherson to set that up.

## **OTHER MATTERS:**

**Green Building Incentive Programs:** Discussion about green building incentives. Information on the Doylestown, Pa. and Arlington, Va. programs will be used for discussion purposes.

- Molly Duffy, a member of the Environmental Advisory Committee, reported on a presentation that had been given to the EAC by a lawyer who is looking for a municipality to participate in writing a green building incentive ordinance with help from a grant. This document would be used as a model for other municipalities who would like to do something similar. Ms. Gleason said that there would no money in the budget to write such an ordinance. Mr. McCauley noted that when the TCD District zoning was being written, the Planning Commission had tried to incentivize green building by giving a height bonus. Township residents strongly objected. Most of the PC members commented on the fact that the incentives to build green would have to be enough of a monetary benefit for the developer before they would even work. The Township is certainly not interested in subsidizing any form of green building. It would have to be a strictly incentive based program. The Doylestown program of reducing building permit fees for points given toward green building methods was discussed. Mr. Scott stated that this is an incentive tied to the building code as opposed to the zoning ordinance of Doylestown. Builders and developers were given points for building techniques that would help to make buildings more energy efficient and would get reduced permit fees in return. The members did not feel that the Doylestown model would work for Tredyffrin Township. The Planning Commission had talked about tying the incentives to the zoning requirements by allowing bonuses for green buildings. Mr. O'Leary noted that they had also talked about giving credit toward impervious coverage if the developer agreed to install a green roof. He suggested that this type of change to the zoning ordinance could possibly be an incentive along with the height bonuses. Ms. Gleason said that this works well for urban areas but not so well for more suburban areas like Tredyffrin. Mr. Burgo stated that we currently ask for green roofs to help control the volume of stormwater where the applicant would otherwise have trouble meeting those requirements. It was decided that writing a new ordinance was not feasible at this time. However, everyone agreed that some aspects of encouraging green buildings could be looked into during the ordinance reviews as defined in the Comprehensive Plan. For example, environmental protection regulations are scheduled to be updated within the next year as part of the Planning Commission review of the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO as mandated by the Comp Plan. The riparian buffer ordinance is also still up for discussion and could perhaps be used as a springboard for green incentives. Mr. Sweeney suggested that the PC and the EAC form a working group to review our current ordinances and come up with suggestions for improving them with regards to environmental concerns. Ms. Gleason said that a memo should be sent to the Board of Supervisors to inform them of the specific ways that the PC plans to move forward with implementing the Comprehensive Plan including changes related to environmental regulations. She said that the PC is the party responsible for making official recommendations to the BOS so they would be the lead entity in any ordinance changes. However, the EAC could certainly make suggestions and participate in discussions with the PC before the official recommendations are written.

**Discussion for Implementing the Comprehensive Plan:** Review the action plan from Chapter 4 with a specific focus on the two actions involving the Planning Commission which are scheduled as being done within one year.

- Mr. Scott noted that chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan included an action plan which identifies a timetable for implementing the Comp Plan. According to the Action Plan, several amendments to the ZO and the SALDO are to be completed within one year by the Planning Commission. These include updating environmental protection regulations, encouraging smaller cluster developments, and reviewing

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parking and coverage requirements to prevent excess impervious. He suggested that these could tie in with the concerns of the EAC and could be focal points in the discussions of the Planning Commission work group/subcommittee. Discussion on who might be part of this group and when they would hold meetings will be continued at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol O'Neill  
Recording Secretary

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