



**TREDYFFRIN
TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

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Tredyffrin Township Municipal Building ♦ Keene Hall

Thursday – February 21, 2019 – 7:00 pm

Minutes

Call to Order:

A Regular Meeting of the Tredyffrin Township Planning Commission was held on the above date at the Township Administration Building. Commission members present (6) included William Rountree, Chair; Victoria Snyder; Scott Growney; Troy Logan; David Thomas; and Peter Jonak. Also in attendance were Trip Lukens (filling in for Mark Freed, Board of Supervisors Liaison); William Martin, Township Manager; Matthew Baumann, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Planning & Zoning; Stephen Burgo, P.E., Township Engineer; Gabrielle Ignarri, Engineering & Planning Administrative Coordinator; Nicholas Szeredai, P.E., Review Consultant from Spotts, Stevens and McCoy (SSM), and Anthony Verwey, Esq. (filling in for Patrick McKenna, Esq., Planning Commission Legal Counsel from Gawthrop Greenwood).

The Planning Commission met in an executive session prior to the regularly scheduled meeting to discuss pending issues.

Consideration of Meeting Minutes: January 17, 2019 meeting

Mr. Rountree requested any comments and/or corrections to the minutes... none appearing

Mr. Rountree requested a motion...

Action: Motion made by Mr. Growney, seconded by Ms. Snyder and passed unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes as drafted.

New Business:

- Recommendation to the Board of Supervisor to adopt the 2018 Subdivision and Land Development Activities Report, as required by the Municipal Planning Code.

Action: Motion made by Ms. Snyder, seconded by Mr. Thomas and passed unanimously (6-0) to recommend the 2018 Subdivision and Land Development Activities Report to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Snyder left the meeting, as she was recused from the remaining applications.

SK-01-2019 “1580-1692 Russell Road – Solera Senior Living” (Alterra Property Group, LLC/Russell Road Partners, LLC) – Sketch plan review of a possible alternative redevelopment plan to the pending Preliminary Land Development Plan (LD-07-2018) for a proposed Assisted Living Facility on the site at 1580-1692 Russell Road. The sketch plan has been prepared by the Applicant to address feedback at community meetings and the 12/20/2018 Planning Commission meeting which considered the pending Preliminary Plan. The sketch plan changes the building configuration/site plan by providing for, among other things, a larger setback from Russell Road, a stepped building height of two stories for the portions of the building closest to Russell Road and three stories for the portions of the building closer to the railroad tracks, elimination of a retaining wall between the front of the building and Russell Road, and improved vehicular access into and out of the site and around the proposed building. In order to proceed with the alternative sketch plan three waivers/modifications are requested from the C 1 Commercial District design standards of Code 181-50.C as follows: (i) 181-50.C.1(c) for the length of the proposed building to exceed 160 feet; (ii) 181-50.C.1(e) for the ground floor building height to be less than 14 feet; (iii) and 181-50.C.2.(b) for the portions of the ground floor facades facing right of ways to have less than 50% transparency. The pending Preliminary Plan for the proposed Assisted Living Facility has been revised to eliminate the need for these waivers. In addition, the Township has suggested decreasing the width of the proposed sidewalk along Russell Road from six (6) feet to five (5) feet which would require a modification Code 181-46.M(4). The Applicant is willing to reduce the sidewalk width as requested if the modification is granted.

- *Application was received on January 31, 2019 for sketch plan review.*

Matthew Pfeiffer, of Alterra Property Group, discussed the revisions made to the originally submitted plan (LD-07-2018). The applicant's plan is to respond to the second set of review letters and plans to address and comply with all comments. E-mail confirmation from fire officials confirming that these plans address all comments regarding access for emergency vehicles. These adjustments are consistent on both plans (LD-07-2018 & SK-01-2019).

The original plan sought two waivers. The plans were modified, and the applicant is no longer seeking waivers. The applicant is not seeking a vote on LD-07-2018. An extension would be needed for LD-07-2018.

Mr. Pfeiffer continued to discuss the E design plan (sketch). The three items that the applicant focused on with this plan were the height, proximity to the edge of the street and the removal of the retaining wall, per neighbors' comments.

The E design is approximately the same size as the original plan, with 127 beds, no additional density, approximately the same square footage. Areas closest to the street will be 2 stories, while the back of the building will be 3 stories, closer to the railway. All of these changes comply with height/setbacks and C-1 zoning. Current setbacks are 80 feet and 86 feet. Applicant's plan will be approximately 75 feet setback. Old plan setback was 30 feet. The 3-story building is 115 feet and 130 feet, at its farthest point, back from the street. The retaining wall facing Russell Road will be removed on new E design plan.

Parking is .5 per bed. 65 spaces on E design, original plan did have more parking. Township code requires .5 per bed, and the applicant complies with 127 beds on the plan. Memory care residents don't typically to drive. Only 10 to 15% of residents would have cars. There should be ample parking, even during peak periods.

Applicant is seeking three waivers for the E design plan:

1. **181.50.C.1.c:** No building or group of attached buildings in the C-1 District may exceed 160 feet in length or depth.
 - a. Building length requirement is 160 feet. The longest part of the building is over 400 feet; two C shaped buildings, each equaling 160 feet on the back part of the buildings.
2. **181.50.C.1.e:** The ground floor of all structures must be a minimum of 14 feet in height as measured from the floor to wall plate above.
 - a. Typically sought for retail development/store front. This waiver will allow a lower first floor of the building.
3. **181.50.C.2.b:** The ground floor must maintain a transparency of 50% along any facade facing a right-of-way. Windows must be constructed of clear or lightly tinted glass. Tinting above 20% or reflective glass is prohibited. Transparency is measured in the area defined at two feet above grade to 10 feet above grade.
 - a. More of a retail requirement – waiver was granted with Brightview and Daylesford.

Design plan is to have a hyper local design that is tailored to the area; a Class A, high-end product.

Patrick Stuart, the landscape architect from Orsati & Stuart Associates, discussed that the landscaping is designed in accordance with Township ordinances; over 200 trees proposed, over 80 evergreens, 600 shrubs, 300 perennials. Front side of Russell Road is part of the street tree program. Many trees to screen the building. Applicant's intention is to preserve some mature trees on the property.

Mr. Rountree asked about preserving the mature vegetation along Russell Road. Mr. Stuart responded that most trees along Russell would need to be removed due to slopes, grading & stormwater management; some could be preserved on eastern end of the property.

Mr. Stuart continued, discussing the lighting design. Driveway around back of building & in new parking area will be lantern style, LED lights. The LED board is in the top of the light & shines down with a 16 ft. mounting height; a pedestrian scale fixture. Little to no glare; 3000 kelvin, warm features. These lights will be used throughout the campus. Lighting is in accordance with Township ordinance.

George Broseman, attorney for the applicant, reiterated the items that Mr. Pfeiffer discussed earlier in the meeting, mainly focusing on the height and building length. The applicant's focus is on the new E plan and is hopeful that the request for waivers is supported by the Commission.

Mr. Rountree asked about the sight line of the property from Russell Road. The applicant responded that the sight line from Russell Road would be the two-story appendages, the three stories will be seen in the background & through the different wings, but it is more than 100 feet back, looking uphill, plus buffer in the front. It will be seen but not be apparent along the road.

Mr. Growney asked about the images of barns/farmhouse appearance that were shown during the presentation and where they would be located on the site. Mr. Pfeiffer responded that those images were to show the idea of the frontage of the building, showing a glass entrance and a more residential look around the east side/main entrance of the property.

Mr. Jonak asked where the stormwater management would be placed on this plan. Dave Sanders of Site Engineering Concepts responded that on the northern end, against Russell Road to be able to handle the stormwater management, there would be extra impervious added on the front area and underneath the parking lot on the east side of the building. Four underground stormwater beds to meet code.

Mr. Jonak followed up, asking about the slope coming down the sidewalk and how water would be captured. Mr. Sanders responded that there would be swales & inlets in front of the sidewalks and the building would have a roof drain directly into the beds; a pipe storage or tank system underneath the entrance. Stormwater system down towards the walkway would be out of the right-of-way, between the sidewalks and building.

Mr. Growney asked if there would be any possibility for a green roof. Mr. Sanders responded that with the lower roofs, there is certainly an opportunity for a green roof on the two-story, but dependent on final design.

Mr. Rountree opened the floor to staff/audience questions/concerns...

Mr. Baumann asked if the sketch had been sent to Berwyn Fire Company for access and circulation review. Mr. Broseman responded he believed the fire company was Paoli, but it had been sent and the applicant received an email confirmation from the Chief that both the older plan and newer sketch plan were acceptable.

Mr. Baumann followed up, stating that the applicant's goal was for the Commission to find the sketch plan acceptable. Mr. Broseman responded that there were no plans to discuss older plan at this meeting, but that the applicant would respond to the second round of review letters.

Mr. Rountree stated to the audience that there was no decision to be made at the meeting. There would be no approval or denial, it was just a discussion of whether this was a better alternative than the original submission.

Many members of the audience spoke about their concerns, among them: stormwater impact, extensive stormwater controls, protection of Valley Creek, why there is a need for another assisted living facility in the Township, LEED certification, building height, number of trees, minimum age of living residents, sufficient parking, width of roadway, the development of an erosion control plan, completion of a shadow study, emergency vehicle access on road behind the property should require an easement agreement as part of the final plan,

Mr. Rountree commented that all of these concerns will be addressed during Land Development design and review.

Mr. Broseman responded on the parking concern. The parking included in the plan does meet Township code and the Chester County Planning Commission review asked that some parking to be removed.

Nicholas Szeredai, Township Review Consultant from Spotts, Stevens and McCoy responded to Mr. Rountree's question regarding the Chester County Planning Commission review letter, stating that the CCPC makes recommendations and the Township enforces the code; sometimes the code is greater than what they are requiring.

Members of the audience continued to voice their concerns, among them: length of construction time, noise issues, traffic, neighborhood cut-through and speed issues, the project will change the character of community, traffic congestion, amount of traffic in and out of facility all day long, what will happen in the future if the project fails, turning radius of both access points for large delivery trucks and emergency vehicles, sidewalks and pedestrian hazards on sidewalks, the need for a connection of raised crosswalks, other assisted living facilities built in C-1 have not been directly across the street from a residential community, quiet, residential neighborhood will be disturbed by commercial property, removal of trees and pedestrian safety on sidewalks.

Mr. Rountree stated that a complete traffic study will accompany official submission; Mr. Rountree also asked if a gap study was completed to evaluate left turns out of these residential areas today vs. future build out condition. Mr. Tavani responded that it was addressed with traffic counts & level of service evaluations at unsignalized intersections in the area. Mr. Tavani also stated that truck turning templates were completed.

Mr. Growney asked about the potential of sidewalks across the street on the residential side and residents did not think it would be possible due to the slope. Mr. Pfeiffer responded that a survey was completed previously to see if there could be sidewalks installed at the Montessori school, but the slope is so high that a sidewalk could not be installed. Mr. Growney also suggested a crosswalk with traffic calming features.

Mr. Rountree asked if the construction of the sidewalk was important to the operation of the development or is it simply meeting code requirements. Mr. Broseman responded that Russell Road is located on a green routes network and required by code. Mr. Baumann responded that sidewalks are important on a development of this nature. Mr. Growney suggest creatively routing the sidewalk through trees to develop the sidewalks and potentially keep some trees.

Mr. Rountree reiterated that all of the comments made by residents would be taken into consideration and the applicant would do their best to address concerns. There would be no approval of the plan but that even with the waivers requested, Sketch E is a preferred plan of the two plans.

Mr. Broseman asked if the Commission felt that the waivers would be accepted. The Commission agreed that Sketch E is preferred plan and there was no issue at this time with the waivers being requested. Mr. Rountree did suggest a more sight line detail and most of the Commission agreed that the length of the building and frontage landscaping is of the most concern at this time.

Mr. Burgo commented that a 6-foot sidewalk is a commercial standard. Most sidewalk in the area is 4.5 to 5-foot and 5-foot is the ADA standard. A 5-foot sidewalk would be more consistent with the area. This may require a partial waiver.

Another resident spoke briefly that the survival rate of this much landscaping is low and hopes that no waivers are approved.

Mr. Rountree asked if there was any relief requested for landscaping. The applicant responded that landscaping complies.

Another resident spoke about the public hearing held in 2012 changing the ordinance to allow assisted living facilities in the C-1 commercial district. The resident stated that there was a comment made by staff at that meeting about development not allowed along an Amtrak corridor. Mr. Rountree was unaware of that comment and is only aware of the ordinance as adopted.

Old Business:

LD-07-2018 “1580-1692 Russell Road – Solera Senior Living” (Alterra Property Group, LLC/Russell Road Partners, LLC) – Preliminary Land Development application; the Property consists of 5.01 gross acres and is located in the C-1 Commercial District. The applicant proposes to redevelop the Property to include the demolition of two existing office buildings and the consolidation of three separate parcels for construction of a three-story 116-unit Assisted Living Facility. The property is presently improved with two multi-story office buildings and associated off-street parking facilities.

- *Preliminary Land Development Application was originally received on October 16, 2018; resubmission received on January 22, 2019 - Extension has been granted through **February 22, 2019.***

This application was not discussed at this meeting.

Adjournment:

Mr. Rountree adjourned the meeting at **8:45.**