NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
3256 LEVANS ROAD, COPLAY, PA 18037

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 24, 2021

Hybrid Meeting brought to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag at 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday, August 24 2021 by Chairman Brian Horwith

Attendance:

Chairman Brian Horwith	Secretary Leonard Nuss
Attorney Lisa Young	Richard Semmel
Township Engineer Steve Gitch	Robert Korp
Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz	Jeff Johnson
Township Manager Chris Garges	Planning Secretary Jane Kelly
Township Zoning Officer Jeff Mouer	Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates

Minutes of the July 27, 2021 meeting were approved. Motion made by Jeff Johnson, seconded by Leonard Nuss, Dennis Klusaritz abstained, all others agreed.

1. **Views at Fells Creek** – NWT-21-021, Preliminary/Final, 3054 & 3061 Neffs Laurys Rd, AR Zone, Parcels 5560 7474 2192 & 5560 8335 7945, 40.3072 Acres, 38 proposed lots, Waiver Request from SALDO 3.02.A & Appendix F.04.F, 90-Day Deadline starts 7/27/2021, 90-Day Deadline 10/24/2021. Attorney Joseph Zator and Engineer Lew Rauch presented the plan.

a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated July 22, 2021.
b. Zoning Officer's review is contained in his letter dated July 22, 2021.
c. Project Engineer Lew Rauch stated the HOP plan has been submitted to PennDot since the last time this plan was before the Planning Commission.
d. A "will serve" letter has be received from Mid Atlantic Utility Group Inc for sewerage disposal. The actual figures will be determined in the planning module, which will be completed, submitted and approved before recording the plan.
e. The developer is requesting a Preliminary/Final approval with the same additional waiver requested at the July Planning Commission meeting, allow basin slopes of 3:1.
f. **Planning Commission member Leonard Nuss questioned** if there were any comments from PennDot on the road connection to Neffs Laurys Road? Lew stated the road will need to be improved 200ft in either direction.
g. **Township Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz** questioned if a new name was picked for Vista Drive since there is already a Vista Drive in the Township? He also questioned if Meadow Lane (formerly a cul de sac) will be straightened out once connected to the new development. Lew stated the recommended new road name is Vista View Drive, and yes, Meadow Lane will be straighten out once connected.
h. **Township Manager Chris Garges** reminded everyone about Parkland School District's request for street lights to be placed at Sunset & (currently) Vista and Dur Court & Neffs Laurys Rd. The school district also requested a bus standing area for the school children.

Planning Commission has recommended the following conditions:

1. Developer shall address to the satisfaction of the General Planning Engineer the comments and recommendations set forth in his letter dated July 22, 2021.
2. Developer shall address the Zoning Officer's comments as set forth in his review letter dated July 22, 2021.
3. Developer shall comply with the July 6, 2021 email from Parkland School District, installing a street light at the Sunset intersection and creating a standing pad for students waiting for the bus.
4. Developer shall, at a minimum, install one street light at the new road intersection with Neffs Laurys Rd.
5. Developer shall revise Vista Drive to a name acceptable to the Township.
6. Developer shall work with Township staff to provide signage in adjacent roadways that will become through streets.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

- **Joann Coppola, 5489 Skyline Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned if the proposed development will have a through street from the current development she lives in to the new development? Mrs. Coppola questioned if the proposed development will have their own drainage? Lew stated yes to both questions, the developments will connect at Sunset Dr, not Skyline Dr where Mrs. Coppola lives. He also explained the drainage plans and indicated there will be no increase to flows in Parkland Estates coming from Views at Fells Creek
- **Matt Guesto, 2842 Meadow Ln, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned if once Meadow Ln is connected as a through street, will he get more drainage water? Lew stated the plans include additional inlets and pipes in the proposed development, which should prevent added water flowing down Meadow Ln.
- **Scott Mellen, 4209 Mohican Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, asked the Planning Commission Board if they are nervous about a "will serve" letter with no specifics. He stated only a few years ago the board approved a plan with a similar letter from Allied Utilities, there were problems and now that development has onlot septic. Attorney Zator stated because the "will serve" letter is from an outside agency and meets the requirements for this stage of the planning process. (We further note that the project referenced by the Allied Utilities comment has not been finalized and if the stipulations of the approvals are not met, the project will need revision)
- **Alex Konya, 2839 Meadow Ln, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned signage, currently Meadow Ln is a dead-end road, and will the developer put up signage warning drivers to slow down, that children are playing in the neighborhood or speed limit signs? **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated the Township can request the developer purchase the signs to be placed along the roadways.
- **Ruth Tobia, 4433 Valley Green Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated at the July Planning Commission meeting it was said that signage was the Township responsibility not the developers. Attorney Zator stated the developer will work with the Township. **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated again the Township can request the developer purchase the signs and the Township will install the signs.
- **Tom Doyle, 2854 Meadow Ln, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned if sewage will run down Meadow Ln? Will there be on lot wells? Lew stated the proposed development will be public sewage and water with NBMA and Mid Atlantic Utility Group LLC.
- **Jim Osmun, 3623 Green Hill Cir, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated everything should be in place before the development starts. **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated there will be agreements such as security and improvement agreements to make sure everything is completed before the building starts.
- **Township Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz** questioned when will the sewage numbers be available? **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** stated those numbers would be completed during the planning module phase.
- **Planning Commission member Robert Korp** questioned the speed limit for the development, will it be posted and what will it be? Robert also questioned what happens if the planning module is not approved? Lew stated the speed limit will be posted at 25MPH and if the planning module is not approved they will go back to 1 acre lots, on lot septic.

Robert Korp motioned to send a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors granting both waivers, Section 302.A to permit Preliminary/Final plan approval and relief from Appendix F Section F.04.F to allow basin slopes of 3:1, also adding signage to be placed in adjacent roadways to become through streets, Jeff Johnson second the motion, motion taken, all agreed.

2. Review draft SALDO revisions regarding property owner notification

- **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** reviewed the draft ordinance with the Planning Commission members and opened up for comments.
- **Planning Commission member Richard Semmel** questioned the intent of the ordinance? If he wants to build a house on his property, does he need to notify his neighbors? **Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates** stated the new ordinance would be for subdivisions and land development, not for building a new home. Richard suggested only notifying a neighbor when subdividing over 2 acres, can we limit the size of the development that needs to be notified?

- **Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson** believes a property owner has a right to do whatever he wants with his property and should not have to notify his neighbors if he is subdividing or doing a land development.
- **Jim Osmun, 3623 Green Hill Cir, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated this new ordinance will not cost the resident anything.
- **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated this Ordinance will go to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors next also it will be advertised as a public meeting.
- **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** stated this ordinance would bring awareness and disclosure to any projects submitted to the Township. He continued that the ordinance should apply to any project that is included in the subdivision and land ordinances, and not be customized to exempt based on parcel size or number of proposed lots.
- **Planning Commission member Leonard Nuss** suggested a larger sign to be posted at the properties, make it easier to be seen. **Township Manager Chris Garges** stated a 1sq ft sign can be added to the ordinance text.
- **Karen Osmun, 3623 Green Hill Cir, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated she is in favor of this Ordinance, it is one letter, it is not a difficult thing to do and it is out of respect to your neighbors.
- **Paul Semmel, 3620 Excelsior Rd, Schnecksville, 18078**, requested the Commission add to the Ordinance that realtors need to inform prospective buyers of neighboring properties that are farmland and possibly smells that may come from the farmland. This would stop the future property owners from complaining to the Township if they knew in advance.
- **Eugene Wolfgang, 3426 Faye Dr, Orefield, 18069**, stated he is on the Township Zoning Hearing Board and this board notifies properties of items on their agenda, why not do the same policy for the Planning Commission. **Zoning Officer Jeff Mouer** stated the Zoning Hearing Board notifies all properties within 200ft and this is by Township Zoning Ordinance.
- **Tom Tomko, 4058 Coplay Creek Rd, Schnecksville, 18078,** stated he is in favor of this Ordinance and asked if this was in effect when North Valley Trade Center was submitted, would he have been notified? **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated yes, based on the current draft of the new recommended ordinance.
- **Alex Konyo, 2839 Meadow Ln, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned if he would have been notified for the Views at Fells Creek?(He lives 3 houses from where Meadow Lane will connect with the new development) **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated No, you would not have been notified, but you would still have been able to see the sign on the property. Mr. Konyo suggested the notices should go to all property owners on all roads effected by the new development.
- **Township Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz** questioned what happens if a property owner is missed when the notices are sent out? He also question if we need to notify property owners in adjoining Townships and Counties. **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated that the Township Planning Administrator will review the submission and notify the developer if anyone was missed. Lisa also stated only North Whitehall Township residents need to be notified.
- **Planning Commission member Richard Semmel** suggested the signs should be placed at a certain height due to the grass growing. **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** stated there is a current height Ordinance in effect for how high your grass can be.
- **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** questioned if this Ordinance could move forward with a motion with amended language or does it need to be revised and revisited. **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated a motion can be made which includes amending the language as discussed.

Robert Korp motioned to send a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, adding to only notify North Whitehall Township residents and signs should have a size requirement, Richard Semmel second the motion, vote taken, Jeff Johnson opposed, all others agreed, 5-1, vote carried.

3. North Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan Discussion

- **Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates** reviewed the highlights of the recent Comprehensive Plan survey.
- There were 1,064 responses, this was the 2nd highest throughout Covid for projects where Gilmore participated.
- The majority of the residents that took the survey were:
  - ages 41-65 years of age
  - older, long-term residents
  - from the Schnecksville area
  - have no plans to relocate
  - 98% own their own homes
- 477 people provided contact information to stay engaged and receive emails of the Comprehensive Plan progress
- the public meeting be on October 12, 2021 – township staff to secure time and place
- This meeting will be a focus group meeting, everyone attending will be separated into 4 groups and given 4 questions.
- Everyone will have a chance to speak if they want and decide what is most important to them.
- This meeting needs to be well advertised.
- **Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson** questioned if the Township needs another sewage plan for affordable housing. Judy stated this would be handled during an ACT 537 review after the Comprehensive Plan is completed.
- **Sue Williams, 5646 Brook St, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned what the growth will be in the next 10 years? She also hopes there is land preservation involved in this review.
- **Ruth Tobia, 4433 Valley Green Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated she was not trying to be rude, but she doesn't see North Whitehall as a younger community.
- **Scott Mellen, 4209 Mohican Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned if the assumption was made that only one person per household answered the survey?
- **Planning Commission member Robert Korp** stated this is a very long process, 1st the Comprehensive plan, 2nd the Zoning Ordinance.
- **Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates** stated the Zoning Ordinance will need to be review and updated along with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Planning Commission members agreed on Tuesday evening October 12, 2021 at 6:30 pm for the next meeting. Meeting should be approximately 90 minutes long. Suggested locations are Schnecksville fire hall or pavilion and LCCC. **Township Manager Chris Garges** will contact these locations to reserve a locations for October 12, 2021.

➢ Any other items that may be discussed at the discretion of the Planning Commission

- ✓ **Ruth Tobia, 4433 Valley Green Dr, Schnecksville, 18078,** questioned what book would give more information on development and where can she get that information? Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith stated the SALDO and she could contact the Township office for a copy of the book.
- ✓ **Karen Osmun, 3623 Green Hill Cir, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned how to get on the agenda? She was told to contact the Township office.
- ✓ **Mike Miletics, 4450 Valley Green Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, commented on the intersection of Sand Spring Rd & Valley Green Dr, this is a very dangerous intersection, signs are needed to stop or slow down traffic. **Township Engineer Steve Gitch** stated this is a state road and the Township can make recommendations for signage but ultimately it will be a state decision.
- ✓ **Jim Osmun, 3626 Green Hill Cir, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated he has pictures from the last meeting, they need signs to keep the truck traffic out of their development.

- ✓ **Dean Miller, 3616 Green Hill Cir, Schnecksville, 18078,** stated the tractor trailers are getting in their development because they are missing their turn and see Valley Green Drive. There should be a NO TRUCKS ALLOWED sign.
- ✓ **Township Engineer Steve Gitch** stated the street name for the North Valley Trade Center will be changed soon and alleviate this problem. **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated the plans are being circulated for signatures to record the plans to change the name of the roads. She is working with the developers and the Board of Supervisors to make sure this doesn't happen again.
- ✓ **Joanne Coppola, 5489 Skyline Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, questioned once the street name is changed, how soon does it change in gps?
- ✓ **Ken Kerestus, 4457 Valley Green Dr, Schnecksville, 18078**, stated there was a "no outlet" sign at the entrance of their development, what happened to it? **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** stated we will have Public Works look into it.
- ✓ **Township Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz** questioned Mr. Semmel's comments, can these be addressed? **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** stated this should be handled in another Ordinance. **Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates** suggested working with Township Solicitor Lisa Young on what Zoning Code this would fit best with.

Brian Horwith adjourned the meeting

Meeting Adjourned: 10:15pm
Jane K. Kelly
Planning/Recording Secretary
North Whitehall Township