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

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 23, 2022

Meeting brought to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag at 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday, August 23, 2022 by Chairman Brian Horwith

Attendance:

Supervisor Al Geosits	Secretary Leonard Nuss
Township Manager Randy Cope	Bruce Stettler
Township Zoning Officer Jeff Mouer	John Barto
Township Engineer Steve Gitch	Jeff Johnson
Township Solicitor Tom Dinkelacker	Richard Semmel
Township Planning Administrator Jane Kelly	Richard Fuller
Chairman Brian Horwith	Rod Lowe
Vice Chairman Robert Korp	Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates

Minutes of the July 26, 2022 meeting were approved. Motion made by Jeff Johnson, seconded by Richard Fuller, all others agreed. Minutes of the August 10, 2022 meeting were approved. Motion made by Jeff Johnson, seconded by Leonard Nuss, all others agreed.

1. **Coplay Apartments –** NWT-22-021, Sketch, 2260 Quarry Street, VR Zone, Parcel 5489 0543 8920, 3.0777 Acres, 13,375 Building sq ft. The sketch plan was presented by Lehigh Engineering; Mark Leuthe and Phil Albright.

   a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated August 18, 2022.
   b. Zoning Officer's review is contained in his letter dated August 17, 2022.
   c. This is a sketch and is subject to change as the preliminary plan is drafted.
   d. The plan is directly off the Ironton Rail Trail southeast of the existing Timberidge development.
   e. The proposed plan is for 2 buildings of 10 apartments, total of 20 units. This parcel is in the VR zone which allows for low rise apartments.
   f. Stormwater management will follow in future submissions.
   g. They are aware of the floodplain and will deal with it accordingly.
   h. The proposed plan's roadways are wide enough for fire trucks and the southern building can be reached on 3 sides.
   i. There is currently over 300'from the property line to the neighboring shooting range of the proposed apartments, many trees and ground elevation changes.
   j. A few of the Planning Commission members suggested the proposed entrance should be reviewed as it is too close to the Ironton Rail Trail entrance.
   k. **Planning Commission Vice-Chairman Robert Korp** suggested a pedestrian connection to the Ironton Rail Trial. He also suggested adding a disclosure to all tenant's leases about the neighboring firing range.
   l. **Planning Commission member Richard Fuller** concerned about the water run-off onto the Ironton Rail Trail.
   m. **Planning Commission member Richard Semmel** stated his main concern was the shooting on the neighboring gun range; the tenants should be made aware of this and there should be signage warning tenants of the shooting range.
   n. **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** suggested the developer should engage in a conversation with the members of Ranger Rod and Gun Club.
   o. **Planning Commission member Bruce Stettler** stated he will take the proposed plan to the Ironton Rail Trail for their comments.
   p. **Planning Commission member Leonard Nuss** suggested putting in more trees or bushes to deter people from heading towards the range. Leonard also asked if the Ranger Rod & Gun Club owned or leased the land where the shooting shoot range was on. Joseph Budinas, representative of Ranger Rod & Gun Club, stated the club leases the land.
   q. **Supervisor Al Geosits** stated the club and the developer should discuss the safety issues before the proposed plan is resubmitted.
   r. **Attorney Tom Dinkelacker** stated there are safety concerns, he also questioned if there would be a manager onsite, and Mr. Leuthe stated the manager would be off-site. In response to questions from residents, Tom also stated it is the job of the Planning Commission to make sure the developer complies with all the Ordinances.
   s. **Planning Commission member Leonard Nuss** stated the hill in the back, unless you see it, you wouldn't understand how large it is.

Comments from the Residents:

Joseph Budinas, representative of Ranger Rod and Gun Club, stated he prefers to see a fence around the new development to keep the tenants away from the shooting range.

Tara Golish, 2349 Red Maple Dr, Coplay, 18037, stated everyone is concerned about children on this site, what if this complex was a 55+?

Eugene Wolfgang, 3426 Faye Dr, Orefield, 18069, stated even if this was a 55+, there would still be children, the grandchildren would be coming to see the grandparents.

David Connor, 2316 Quarry St, Coplay, 18037, he has lived across from the gun range for many years and he has many concerns including, gun shots coming through the trees and the Ironton Rail Trail, cars flying through the cross walk and the FEMA flood risk.

Shawn Berger, 5855 Glencrest Rd, Slatington, 18080, stated she agrees with what everyone else has stated, a fence would not be enough, and she suggested a barrier.

Joe Sterling, 1507 Clearview Rd, Coplay, 18037, he was concerned about the gun range, reminded everyone about the accidental shooting in their neighborhood years ago, there should be a conversation between the developer and the Rod & Gun Club.

Joan Strong, 2272 Red Maple Dr, Coplay, 18037, questioned how many bedrooms would these apartments have? Mr. Leuthe stated 1 & 2 bedrooms.

Rob Rappaport, 4038 Hemlock Dr, Coplay, 18037, questioned the project timeline and if this will be subsidized housing or 55+? Mr. Leuthe stated the project should take approximately 1 ½ years and as far as he know it will not be subsidized housing or 55+.

Dennis Sterling, 1507 Clearview Rd, Coplay, 18037, questioned if the developer will downsize the project, it seems large for this parcel. Mr. Leuthe stated probably not.

Coplay Apartments was submitted as a Sketch Plan, only discussion on this plan, no motion was required on this plan.

2. **Vistas at Park Valley-** NWT-21-025, Preliminary, Parcel 5560 4449 4340, 5815 Park Valley Rd, AR Zone, 48.5698 Acres, 20 proposed lots, Waiver requests from SALDO Appendix F. Section F.04.F, Section 503.E.5 and 10.22, 90-Day Deadline starts 7/26/2022, 90-Day Deadline 10/23/2022. The plans were presented by Developer Jeff Johnson and Lehigh Engineering; Mark Leuthe & Phil Albright.

   a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated August 18, 2022.
   b. Zoning Officer's review is contained in his letter dated August 17, 2022.
   c. This development is proposed off of Park Valley Road, Glencrest Road and east of the PA turnpike
   d. The Coplay Creek runs through the property.
   e. They are proposing to connect the cul-de-sacs of Barry & Robert from the adjoining subdivision. Another cul-de-sac, Scott Road will be extended.
   f. On-lot septic is proposed and each lot has been tested for their primary and secondary systems.
   g. There will be no impact to the wetlands proposed.
   h. The developer is proposing ROW along the entire length of his property on Park Valley Road.
   i. Supervisors Al Geosits questioned hooking up to public water which is available along Neffs Laurys Road? If there are 11 or more lots with specific vicinity to public water, the development must hook up to water or request a waiver or variance. The Developer questioned if he hooks up to public water would he be able to have smaller lots and then more lots? Yes, 30,000sq ft lots with public water.
   j. Neffs Fire Chief Jim Steward was concerned with the grade of the driveways.
   k. Planning Commission Vice Chairman Robert Korp stated he is in favor of the water hook-up, the single family homes are consistent with our ordinance, Bob is not in favor of the waivers and he would prefer all cul-de-sacs to be connected. There was added discussion regarding extending Stephanie Drive from the neighboring development and connecting with Robert/Scott Roads, which would eliminate one existing cul-de-sac, and also potentially solve the uncertainty around street names, should Scott and Roberts Roads simply be connected
   l. There was a discussion regarding connecting Scott Road to Park Valley. The developer was not in favor of this suggestion.
   m. Most Planning Commission members were not in favor of the waiver requests.

Comments from the Residents:

Dennis Atiyeh, 5828 Park Valley Rd, Slatington, 18080, stated it is a great project, the great connectivity of Barry and Robert, two dead ends is a great idea. The bridge on Park Valley Road should have been done years ago.

Shawn Berger, 5855 Glencrest Rd, Slatington, 18080, concerned about the creek, she is also concerned if all the lots will be accessed from Park Valley Road and when Park Valley Road is widen for the bridge which side of the road is land taken from? Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith explained the ROW for the bridge project would come from the developer's side.

Ralph Kane, 5547 Stephanie Dr, Schnecksville, 18078, stated he lives next to the proposed lot #17 and currently it is mostly wooded, he is concerned with runoff onto his property and others once lot #17 is cleared off. The developer stated the runoff will be taken care of with their stormwater management plan, as any new development must comply to not create any added burdens to runoff that currently exists.

Robert Franklin, 5616 Park Valley Rd, Schnecksville, 18078, questioned the current weight capacity on the Park Valley Bridge? He also questioned why are lots allowed to get smaller with public water? **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** stated per the Township Ordinance without public utilities residential lots need to be larger but with public utilities residential lots can be smaller. **Supervisor Al Geosits** stated the current weight capacity for Park Valley Bridge is 7 tons.

Dan Gulkewicz, 5645 Park Valley Rd, Schnecksville, 18078, stated he had runoff concerns. Mr. Leuthe stated they are not allowed to add any additional water runoff than what is there now, as any new development must comply to not create any added burdens to runoff that currently exists.

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Richard Semmel motioned to table the plan and both waiver requests, Richard Fuller second the motion, Jeff Johnson abstained, all others agreed, motioned carried.

3. Continued Discussion of Comprehensive Plan

- **Judy Goldstein: Gilmore & Associates** was present for any final questions or corrections to the comprehensive plan before the plan is put in draft form to be presented to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.
- **The final draft is expected to be received by the Planning Commission September 15, 2022, after which at a future meeting the Planning Commission will discuss and determine if and what recommendations it will propose**

4. Draft Northern Lehigh Multi-Municipal Comp Plan-Discussion

- Emailing LVPC for electronic copy of the Draft Northern Lehigh Multi Municipal Comp Plan for the Planning Commission to review.
- Comments should be sent to the Township by September 25 to be forwarded to LVPC.

Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith adjourned the meeting at 9:55pm.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:55pm
Jane K. Kelly
Planning/Recording Secretary
North Whitehall Township