

**COLLEGE TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
In Person and Via Zoom**



September 6, 2022 7:00 p.m.
1481 East College Avenue, State College, PA 16801
www.collegetownship.org

PRESENT: Ray Forziat, Chair
Ed Darrah, Vice Chair
Peggy Ekdahl, Secretary
Bill Sharp
Robert Hoffman
Matthew Fenton
Noreen Khoury, Alternate

ABSENT: William McKibbin

STAFF PRESENT: Don Franson, P.E., P.L.S., Township Engineer
Lindsay Schoch, AICP, Principal Planner
Mark Gabrovsek, Township Zoning Officer
Sharon Meyers, Senior Support Specialist – Engineering/Planning

GUESTS: Steve Bair, Centre Region Fire Director
John Sepp, Penn Terra Engineering, Inc.
Ed Maxwell, Maxwell Trucking & Excavating Inc.

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Forziat called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ZOOM MEETING PROTOCOL: Mr. Forziat verified there was no one present via Zoom and decided it was unnecessary to review Zoom protocol.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Forziat confirmed Mr. McKibbin's absence.

OPEN DISCUSSION: Nothing presented.

CONSENT AGENDA: Mr. Hoffman requested a change be made to the August 16, 2022 minutes as they were written. He asked that his comments of fire safety be added to the discussion of the Ondik Subdivision Plan. Ms. Meyers agreed to make the changes.

*Mr. Hoffman moved to approve the August 16, 2022 meeting minutes with the discussed modifications.
Mr. Darrah seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

PRESENTATION:

SP-1 Mr. Steve Bair to Present, followed by Q&A

Mr. Bair introduced himself as the fire director and chief of department for the regional fire protection program. He stated he would be discussing a general fire 101 and what the fire departments are concerned about with site plans and plans in general. Mr. Bair stated there are two entities reviewing plans and he reviews them with concerns to the site while Centre Region Code reviews the building plan. Mr. Bair stated the purpose is quite simple, his job is to be able to get the fire engine in front of the structure, drop hose and put the fire out. This can be quite a task as the hose weighs one pound per foot dry, and once filled weighs about five pounds per foot. When Mr. Bair reviews plans for developments he takes hydrant location into consideration. As a rule of thumb hydrants can be up to 1,000 feet apart, depending on the types of structures and occupancy in the area. Mr. Bair stated the route of travel of the fire engine is also taken into consideration when hydrant location is being determined. He doesn't want the engine to have to pass the structure fire to access the hydrant then have to turn around to fight the fire, this wastes precious time.

Mr. Bair stated when reviewing plans he also takes driveway widths and parking layouts into consideration. The primary reason behind this consideration is the larger ladder trucks that need to access structures. Mr. Bair talked about standards for rural areas which include, hydrant installation, cistern installation, and sprinkler system installation. He delved a little deeper into cisterns and what goes into having a cistern for the reason of fire suppression. There is a minimum volume requirement for cisterns of 4,000 gallons, this amount has been determined the amount needed to extinguish the aftermath of a fire. Cisterns are nice but quite costly, take up a lot of room/land and require a lot of maintenance.

Mr. Bair stated that hydrants and cisterns become less of a concern when the plans show a building having a sprinkler system. For the most part, commercial structures are required to have sprinkler systems installed, however residential dwellings are exempt from this requirement. Mr. Darrah asked about plans that state the dwelling is proposed to have a sprinkler system and what are the requirements involved. Mr. Bair stated dwellings are required to have a minimum of a 300 gallon reserve for a sprinkler system, which is approximately the size of a standard water heater. Mr. Bair stated commercial system will put out approximately 30 gal./min. while a residential system is only required to have a discharge of 12 gal./min. The main difference between the two systems is a commercial system is intended to save the structure while the residential system is designed to give residents enough time to exit the dwelling.

Mr. Fenton asked about response time of the fire department. Mr. Bair stated the average response time in most urbanized areas is four to seven minutes and in the outskirts is about eight to ten minutes. He also mentioned those times are from when they receive notification from dispatch and it typically take about one to two minute to dispatch. Mr. Sharp added that he had a tour of the facility years ago and an alarm had gone off when they sat down and he was very impressed with the efficiency and rapid response.

Ms. Khoury asked about budgets in the fire companies. Mr. Bair stated that much of their funding comes from fundraising and some from tax dollars. He also talked about how much a fire engine currently costs.

Mr. Forziat asked about the color coding of hydrants in the area and who does the calculations on a plan for hydrant placement. Mr. Bair explained that most hydrants in College Township are blue which indicates a flow of 1,500 gallons per minute. He also stated the developers engineer will work with the local Water Authority to make those calculations.

The Planning Commission thanked Mr. Bair for taking time out of his busy schedule to make the presentation. He was also thanked for his service and told he will be missed when he retires later this year.

PLANS: None presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

OB-1 Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan

Ms. Schoch informed the Planning Commission that within the meeting packet they will find a Remand from Council, a Memo as well as an Ordinance. Prior to reviewing the packet information Ms. Schoch let everyone know that there was a discussion during the previous Council meeting about constructing a landing for school bus stops to be implemented in the Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan. The Planning Commission discussed the matter and reached the consensus that the ordinance needs to be kept simple and bus stop pads should not be required in the ordinance due to demographic changes.

Ms. Schoch moved forward to the memo and what changes are proposed for the ordinance. She mentioned what was to be added and what draft language was to be changed, particularly the language concerning easements between cul-de-sacs. After some discussion, Mr. Forziat clarified the wording lead him to believe the Planning Commission can make a recommendation but can still be overturned. Mr. Forziat requested the wording be changed to "required". Mr. Darrah and Mr. Hoffman agreed the language should say "required/requirement/shall".

Ms. Schoch stated that work force housing needed to be referenced in the sidewalk ordinance as sidewalks are mentioned in the case of incentives in the work force housing ordinance. There was discussion amongst the Commission and staff. Ms. Schoch clarified that the intent of the discussion was to simply inform the Planning Commission that a reference to the work force house ordinance needs to be made as sidewalks are specifically referenced in that ordinance. It was determined that the work force housing ordinance should be added to the list of ordinances to be reviewed and updated, and it was acceptable to make the prior reference within the ordinance.

Ms. Schoch spoke about deferrals. One section in particular seemed a bit confusing, so that section was cleaned up and no language was changed. Mr. Hoffman stated he finds the word "etc." to be inappropriate in ordinance language and it should be removed. Other members agreed and Ms. Schoch agreed to make the change. Mr. Sharp questioned the portion of the ordinance stating surety will be reviewed annually. Mr. Darrah agreed, he believed the Planning Commission had asked that the values be reviewed quarterly. Mr. Franson stated A203 of College Township Code makes it possible for Township staff to reevaluate more frequently if necessary, as any changes to A203 are made by resolution.

Mr. Darrah moved that as remanded to Planning Commission from CT Council per the memo dated September 2, 2022, Planning Commission has viewed the necessary changes to the sidewalk ordinance, ordinance 0-22-04, to be changed per our discussion as of September 6, 2022. (Make language stronger to require the connections to cul-de-sacs, remove "etc.", and bring back work force housing at some point in the future)

Mr. Hoffman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

NB-1 Maxwell Request

Ms. Schoch introduced the topic and gave a brief history on the Maxwell property then introduced Mr. Sepp and Mr. Maxwell to present and further analyze. Ms. Schoch stated that this is another remand coming from Council which is for a zoning request. She stated the Township staff had met with Mr. Maxwell and Penn Terra Engineers to discuss a storage shed to be placed. After discussing various avenues, it was determined that a change in zoning would need to be requested. It was also determined that a Development Regional Impact study (DRI) would need to be completed before rezoning may occur. Ms. Schoch also stated that Planning Commission has until November, as stated in the remand, to make a recommendation to Council. Ms. Schoch recommended to Planning Commission to hear the remand and discuss, and should there not be a decision tonight there is time for staff to further analyze and bring back to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Sepp thanked Ms. Schoch and stated Mr. Maxwell continues his business on Struble Road since 1989 and he lives in that area as well. There is an existing thirty-two acre tract of which Mr. Maxwell

would like to rezone three acres contiguous with the existing industrial zoned shop area. This request would extend the industrial zone up Struble Road another 275 feet with a width of about 475 feet, connecting back to the existing industrial zone. Mr. Sepp added that there would be a swath of forest land that would remain along Struble Road which would create a buffer between the Residential District across Struble Road and the proposed Industrial Zone. The proposal appears to be a natural extension of the existing Industrial Zone. Mr. Sepp stated the proposed building for the project is to be used for a storage facility, therefore there would be no reason to extend public utilities to the proposed three acres.

Mr. Darrah questioned the size of the storage building which is proposed for the area. Mr. Maxwell stated fifty feet by sixty feet, for the purpose of storing inventory. Mr. Hoffman recommended the developer check with code to be sure a restroom facility is not required.

Mr. Sharp verified that the Planning Commission is looking at a rezoning at the moment not a site development plan. Ms. Schoch confirmed that we are considering changing the existing three acres currently zoned as Forest to Industrial.

Mr. Darrah referred to the map provided and questioned the reasoning behind not coming straight across the property and if Mr. Maxwell will outgrow the proposed area. Mr. Maxwell replied there is a homestead in that area which he would not want to be in an industrial zone. There were questions on the property and how it would be laid out. Mr. Sepp stated once the area is rezoned, there will be a land development plan submitted.

Mr. Forziat stated that anytime there is a rezoning there needs to be a consideration as to what the original zoning was and why it needs to be changed. He stated he would question the same way if this area were agricultural. Mr. Forziat said this is zoned forest and it was designated that way for a reason. Mr. Sepp stated the area is designated forest, however there is no forest on the proposed land and it is a peninsula surrounded by industrial zoning and residential zoning. Mr. Sepp believes this to be a classic example of a growth of one zone into another. Mr. Forziat questioned that the natural tendency would also to be extend the regional growth boundary and the sewer service area as well. Mr. Hoffman clarified Mr. Forziat's question and stated that the developer may need to discuss the options of sewer and water with Centre Region Code. Mr. Sepp stated that Mr. Forziat and Mr. Hoffman's concerns are noted.

Mr. Forziat stated at this point a DRI study is to be conducted, and asked staff if that is correct. Ms. Schoch confirmed a DRI study will need to be conducted. Ms. Schoch then asked Mr. Sepp if the process for a DRI has begun. Mr. Sepp stated the process has not yet begun, as this is a preliminary step to see if the rezoning will be considered prior to initiating a DRI.

Planning Commission discussed tabling the matter, to be revisited at a future meeting. Mr. Darrah clarified what is being asked of the Planning Commission as it was determined a DRI will most likely not be completed by the time Council would like the recommendation.

Mr. Darrah moved to recommend to Council that the request to rezone a three acre tract which is now existing forest district to general industrial zone subject to satisfied DRI study by CRPA and additional staff analysis.

Mr. Hoffman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Forziat recommended a five minute recess. Meeting resumed at 8:57 pm.

REPORTS:

R-1 RFQ Review Committee Update

Ms. Schoch provided an update. The committee has met and discussed the submissions. The next step is to request further information including a sealed cost analysis from each applicant. Once obtained and reviewed we hope to set up in-person presentations and interviews with three applicants to be completed in one day.

Mr. Forziat stated he had emailed the CRPC minutes and Ms. Meyers had printed a copy for each Planning Commission member to peruse. Mr. Forziat then quickly reviewed the what was discussed at that meeting.

STAFF INFORMATIVES:

SI-1 CT Council Minutes from August 4, 2022 Meeting

Mr. Darrah discussed the most recent Council meeting on September 1, 2022. Mr. Darrah stated the two subdivisions which were reviewed at Planning Commission's last meeting had both been approved by Council. Council then had a long discussion concerning the Nittany Casino project with public comment. Mr. Darrah then summed up the Casnio discussion in his own words. Mr. Darrah also mentioned Penn State has a meeting with Mr. Brumbaugh to discuss alcohol being served throughout the football stadium.

SI-2 Zoning Bulletin

Mr. Forziat stated the zoning bulletin has been provided for Planning Commission's perusal.

SI-3 EZP Update

Mr. Forziat stated the EZP update has been provided for the Planning Commission's review.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Forziat announced the next meeting will be Tuesday, September 20, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS: Nothing presented.

ADJOURNMENT: *Mr. Sharp moved to adjourn. Mr. Darrah seconded. Motion carried.*

Meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

Sharon E. Meyers

Sharon E. Meyers
Senior Support Specialist - Engineering