

VIA E-MAIL

June 5, 2015

TO: Whitpain Township Planning Commission
FROM: E. Van Rieker, Township Planning Consultant
RE: Township Planning Commission Meeting – June 9, 2015



1. Approval of minutes.
2. Review of a Subdivision Plan for 1902 Yost Road. This application involves a three lot subdivision of approximately 1.90 acres of property located at 1902 Yost Road, which is on the southern side of Yost Road between Cortez Road and Mauck Road. Access to the site will be from both Yost Road and Cortez Road. The property is zoned R-2 Residential District.

Comment: This is a three (3) lot subdivision which results in the creation of two (2) new single family dwellings having frontage along Cortez Road. Previously, the Planning Commission had requested that applicants' engineer submit a grading plan which would test whether or not utility or grading easements could be required over adjacent lots before they are subdivided and sold. This document has been provided and suggest that the Township Engineer review and comment on whether additional easements are required in order to implement the plan.
3. Review Conditional Use Application #CU28-15 submitted by CENTER SQUARE COMMONS, INC., 1380 Skippack Pike, 2nd Floor, Blue Bell, Pennsylvania 19422. The Application concerns ten (10) tracts of land located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Skippack Pike and DeKalb Pike in Whitpain Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, consisting of an aggregate of approximately 21.78 acres. If approved as a conditional use by the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors, the Applicant proposes to develop the Tract as a shopping center which, at present, would include a food market, fitness center, bank, retail, and restaurant uses pursuant to Section 160-258 of the Whitpain Township Zoning Ordinance. The development, as proposed by the Applicant, includes seven (7) buildings consisting of an aggregate of approximately 111,100 square feet of first floor building area, 11,500 square feet of mezzanine space, paved parking, and internal pedestrian walkways and connections.

Comment:

1. Background:

- a. You will remember that the subject plan, including a generalized master plan, an identification of all the qualifying properties, as well as zoning drafts and suggested design standards including signage, were reviewed in length by Township Staff and Township Planning Commission. Subsequently, after a period of perhaps 6-8 months, a Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in order to provide the opportunity for a community scale shopping center, which is permitted pursuant to a zoning overlay which also requires conditional use approval.*
- b. It should be remembered that the conditional use approval, consisting of plans, drawing and exhibits, is not actually a detailed engineering document but will include many aspects which will be pre-engineered and subject to in-depth review by our civil and sanitary engineering team. Most of the design elements dealing with building, parking, circulation, landscaping, site amenities, loading access controls, have been previously identified and framed, where practicable, in the zoning ordinance.*
- c. The conditional use submission requirements are also outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and I am going to focus on the submission documents rather than focus on suggested design elements, since in most respects these have been previously resolved.*

2. General Master Plan:

- a. With the exception of a few minor tweaks, the number of buildings, their location, and general building massing, based on the Master Plan exhibit Sheet 3 of 20, the perspectives and building elevations shown on sheet #4 through #13 of 20, are virtually identical to the illustrative sketch plan exhibit for Center Square Commons which was developed as a part of the illustrative documents prepared in October/November 2014.*
- b. The same can be said for the general location of common open space areas, driveway design and location, interior circulation, interior parking, at their plazas/sitting areas.*

3. Review of exhibits

- a. Roman has already completed and circulated his review comments which I concur with and for the sake of brevity will not repeat except by example in this review.*
- b. The exhibits titled "Perspective" (consisting of sheet #4, 5 and 6 of 20) are meaningful in that they document a commitment to the design of both buildings, parking areas, generalized landscaping and paving*

materials. For clarity, each perspective should be provided with a specific description. For example, the perspective at sheet #4 of 20 would be more descriptive if it would read “Perspective – looking south, southwest through the site at Building #1, 2 and 5 (in the background) and Building #6 (in the foreground right). Each perspective should be expanded to document the specifics of the area described in the perspective.

- c. As a follow up to some of the comments from Roman, on sheet 2 of 20, under the section titled Building Architecture, next to last paragraph reads as follows: “Variations in façade roof parapet heights shall (good) be used to screen HVAC equipment to provide interest and reduce the scale of large buildings. Roofs visible from the perspective of individuals facing those building facades, that have or are intended to have a customer entrance may (in lieu of may use the word shall) have articulated cornices or sloping roofs.”
- d. The final paragraph, first sentence: “Exterior building materials may (this should be changed to say shall) be composed of the following exterior building materials...”

4. Submission exhibits/documents

- a. Section 160-259 of Ordinance 4-237 “Community Shopping Center Overlay District” establishes a series of goals. It would be helpful and suggested that these goals be visualized on specific exhibits. For example “Goal 1: Promote Walkability and Goal 2: Provide adequate and attractive parking spaces with interesting small piazza spaces...” should be highlighted on a small exhibit plan each with a separate color code. The same approach could be used for Goal 3 and Goal 4 which refer to the design of gathering spaces and meeting areas and “multiple attractive outdoor spaces.” A graphic or a plan illustrating these by color code and calculating the areas of the congregate spaces should be provided in support of the plan.
- b. I would like to see a sign or signage presentation for each of the signs proposed on each of the buildings similar to the exhibits previously provided at the sketch plan stage, using by example the “Zoe’s” and “Sally’s” examples shown on example elevation.
- c. Late Friday afternoon additional documents and updated exhibits were sent by Whitpain Township. These will be reviewed for the Planning Commission meeting, but time does not permit the examination of all these documents at the time of this writing.

5. Traffic Analysis

- a. The trip generation assumptions and calculations should be reviewed by Township Engineering personal.

b. *The recommendations on page 5 should be made a part of the Conditional Use approval along with timing and staging of their implementation.*

4. Review current zoning hearing board application.

1. **NO. 2044-15: OLIVER P. SNOWDEN JR. and 711 CATHCART, LLC** request variance relief from Article XXVIII, Sections 160-216(C) and (D) of the Whitpain Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended, relating to flag lot requirements. Applicants propose to allow four proposed lots to share a common driveway in the proposed subdivision of the three consolidated parcels located at 711 Cathcart Road, 691 Cathcart Road, and 683 Cathcart Road in the Township's R-1 Residential District. Under the Ordinance, a maximum of two tiered lots or three stacked lots may share a common driveway.

Comment: These variances are the result of the desire on the part of the applicant to create a better plan with reduced impervious surfaces. The Whitpain Township Staff has reviewed the various options and is not opposed to this request for variance relief.

2. **NO. 2045-15: EDWARD J. SCOTT** requests variance relief from the Whitpain Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended, as follows: (1) Article VII, Section 160-34 relating to side yards for one-family detached dwellings in the R-2 Residential District; and (2) Article XXVIII, Section 160-203 relating to projections into side yards. Applicant proposes to construct a 506-square-foot two-story garage addition on the property located at 10 Meade Road in the Township's R-2 Residential District. Applicant's requested variance relief, if granted, will allow side yards of 13.41-feet and 5-feet resulting in an aggregate width of 18.41-feet, where side yards of 13.41-feet and 25.90-feet with an aggregate width of 39.31-feet currently exist, and side yards of not less than 25-feet each with an aggregate of not less than 60-feet are required under the Ordinance.

Comment: This is a residential application and typically the Planning Commission remains neutral unless the proposal has a community-wide impact.

3. **NO. 2046-15: NORMAN J. AND VALERIE G. BARLOW** request the following variance relief from the Whitpain Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended: (1) Article VII, Section 160-38 relating to height and setback requirements for accessory buildings or structures in the R-2 Residential

District; and (2) Article XXVIII, Section 160-204 relating to residential rear yard intrusions. Applicants propose to construct a 440-square-foot detached garage on the property located at 80 Norristown Road in the Township's R-2 Residential District. Applicant's requested variance relief, if granted, will allow a 14-foot high garage with a side yard setback of 8-feet, where the Ordinance would require a 13-foot side yard setback for a 14-foot accessory structure.

Comment: This is a residential application and typically the Planning Commission remains neutral unless the proposal has a community-wide impact.

4. **NO. 2047-15: LUIGI COLELLA, LLC** requests variance relief from the Whitpain Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended, as follows: (1) Article XXVIII, Section 160-214(C) relating to required green area; and (2) Article XXIX, Section 160-225 relating to an extension of nonconforming use. Applicant proposes to (1) increase the impervious coverage from 21,217 square-feet to 21,397 square-feet, where not more than 9,034 square-feet is permitted under the Ordinance; and (2) allow the expansion of the non-conforming use of land beyond the 38% previously approved, where the Ordinance permits a maximum expansion of 25%, to add a 180 square-foot exit-only driveway on the property located at 298 Norristown Road in the Township's R-1 Residential District.

Comment: This application concerns a proposal to upgrade an existing non-conforming service station which has significant encroachments into the existing street rights-of-way. Some aspects of the use will be repositioned to remove encroachments and reduce the width of existing driveway curb cuts near the intersection of Norristown road and Stenton Avenue.

5. **NO. 2040-15: GIANNI CALABRETTA** requests an appeal from the determination of the Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer; an appeal from a Zoning Enforcement Notice; a modification of conditions of previously granted relief (prior Decisions 643-88, 1111-97, 1469-03, 1547-04, 1626-05 and 1922-11) and/or a variance from Article XXI, Section 160-135 and 160-135(G) of the Whitpain Township Zoning Ordinance, as amended, relating to use regulations in the C-1 Commercial District as well as clarification of "hours of operation" as set forth in Decision #1922-11 relative to the property located at 1626 Kendrick Avenue within the Township's C-1 Commercial and R-2 Residential Districts. Applicant proposes (1) that the storage of outside materials such as mulch, stone, and salt be permitted on the premises; and (2) that the hours of operation be extended from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for purposes of parking and access only. Applicant's requested variance relief, if granted, will permit (1) the outside storage of materials such as

mulch, stone, and salt; and (2) access to the property between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. for the limited purposes of parking vehicles, accessing tools, and entering and exiting the property.

Comment: Change from previous decisions of ZHB to clarify current activities on the site within the C-1 Commercial and R-2 Residential Districts. Special attention should be given to impacts as on neighborhood residential uses adjacent to the R-2 District.

5. Review pertinent planning issues.

cc:	Jim Blanch	Bradley Tate	Jennifer Gallagher
	Karen Dolga	Ken Corti	Nicole Godson
	Otis Hightower	Penny Gerber	
	Tory Meitner	Richard Shorin	
	Roman Pronczak	Ted McLaughlin	