

VIA E-MAIL

September 4, 2015

TO: Whitpain Township Planning Commission
FROM: E. Van Rieker, Township Planning Consultant
RE: Township Planning Commission Meeting – September 8, 2015



1. Approval of minutes.
2. Review of a Subdivision Plan for 683-691-711 Cathcart Road. This application involves a five lot subdivision of approximately 5.50 acres of property located at 683-691-711 Cathcart Road, which is on the western side of Cathcart Road between Morris Road and Skippack Pike. Access to the site will be from Cathcart Road. The property is zoned R-1 Residential District.

Comment:

- A. *The evolution of the Snowden Plans has been well documented over the last year. At the suggestion of Township Staff members and confirmed by the Planning Commission, the Snowden Family initiated a re-design of the original 5-lot subdivision, which resulted in a significant decrease in:*
 - *Number of curb cuts along Cathcart Road;*
 - *Reduction in overall impervious surfaces;*
 - *Increase to the setback particularly of the driveway and thus the elimination of disturbance along the property boundary adjacent to the Raynes property.*
- B. *The current submission has done an excellent job of documenting both the impact on existing tree canopy (which has been reduced from the initial submission) and the green area and impervious surface calculations (as mentioned above, green area has increased and impervious surfaces have decreased). The proposed plan also institutes an extensive on-lot storm water management plan.*
- C. *I would defer to Jim Blanch and the Engineering reviews, but overall the new subdivision appears to be a welcome alternative to the original design.*

D. I have several minor recommendations:

- 1.) The common driveway proposed for Lots #1-4 should be provided with a clear site triangle at its intersection with Cathcart Road.*
- 2.) The main stem of the common driveway when scaled equals 16 feet in width. This is the width recommended when vehicular service is provided to more than two dwellings. It is suggested this width be dimensioned on the applicable plans, such as Drawing #4, #5 and #6.*
- 3.) A note should be provided on the plan indicating that driveway access to Lot #4 must be taken from the common access drive and not from Cathcart Road.*
- 4.) In order to avoid any confusion or dispute in the future, it is suggested that a general note be provided binding Lots #1-4 to having to use and share the common driveway in the alignment depicted on Drawing #4 through #7 of 18 in the final subdivision plan submission as dated (insert the final revision date).*
- 5.) The planting schedule provided on Drawing #6 of 18 should be revised by switching the asterisk from the column "Size" to the column "Common Name".*

3. Review of a Land Development Plan for the Centre Square Commons Shopping Center located at 938-956-990-998-1010 DeKalb Pike & 1324-1380 Skippack Pike. This application involves construction of an 111,100 SF shopping center, 5,300 SF outdoor seating area and an 11,500 SF mezzanine area, which is on the southeastern corner of the intersection of DeKalb Pike and Skippack Pike. Access to the site will be from both DeKalb Pike and Skippack Pike. The property is located entirely within the Community Shopping Center Overlay District.

Comment: Please see attached reviews issued 8/28/15 and 9/2/15.

4. Review of Conditional Use Application for 1625 Union Meeting Road (Outfront Media, Inc.) that proposes the installation of a 300 square foot, double face, off-premises advertising sign.

Comment:

- A. *Ordinance #4-235 (enacted in 2012) amended the Whitpain Township Zoning Map to create the "Off-premises Advertising Sign Overlay District". The map amendment establishes various sections limited to within 100 feet of the right-of-way boundary of the Pennsylvania Turnpike - Northeast Extension. At the same time numerous general regulations were added to the Zoning Ordinance text to provide for design guidelines, setbacks, maximum size, regulations dealing with changeable copy (which shall be instantaneous and shall not fade in or fade out) and other elements that are summarized in the "recap of sign zoning controls."*

- B. Approval for an off-premises advertising sign (AKA billboard) is controlled by the Board of Supervisors via the Conditional Use procedure. Applicant is also seeking modifications of some of the requirements such as:
- A sign 30 feet in length, which exceeds the maximum permitted length of 20 feet;
 - A height of 45 feet (which shall be measured from the grade of the immediately adjoining highway) to allow 45 feet which exceeds the maximum of 35 feet permitted;
 - A location which would place the proposed sign within the 1,000 foot setback from an existing residential dwelling.
- C. This application is fact sensitive and I expect that the applicant will discuss the proposal as well as the modifications at the Township Planning Commission meeting.
5. Review of the MCPC Turnpike Corridor Reinvestment Report.
- Comment:*
- A. This report identifies potential PA Turnpike slip ramp locations and possible municipal zoning and land use changes near the Turnpike Corridor that, together, will help reinvigorate the county's older business parks.
- B. One of the sectors addressed in the Turnpike Corridor Reinvestment Project is titled "Plymouth Meeting/Blue Bell Area." Existing developments identified in Whitpain Township, known as the Blue Bell employment area, include:
- Unisys/Arborcrest, Blue Bell Office Campus;
 - Century Park Business Center;
 - BET Revitalization (formerly Yarway);
 - The newer Blue Bell Executive Campus (Danella)
- C. For those that have not actually reviewed the study, there is a brief summary titled "Transportation Context" which states in part:
- "This area is well served by two Turnpike interchanges..."
 - "Because these interchanges function well under their current design, no changes or new interchanges are proposed."
- D. Under "Other Transportation Improvements" the following is listed:
- "There will be a future study of feasibility of a new interchange at the intersection of the Northeast Extension with Route 202."
6. Review Ordinance #341, an ordinance amending the Code of the Township of Whitpain, Part II (general legislation), Chapter 142 (vehicles and traffic), Section 142-32 (parking prohibited at all times in certain locations) to add a new parking prohibition on the west side of Norristown Road from a point 142 feet north of the centerline of the northernmost intersection of Huntsman Lane and Norristown Road to a point 137 feet

south of the centerline of the southernmost intersection of Huntsman Lane and Norristown Road.

Comment:

This is an Ordinance that is more appropriately reviewed by Township Public Works, Police Department Traffic Safety Unit and Township Engineering Department and I offer no additional comment at this time.

7. Review current zoning hearing board applications.

1. #2055-15,137 Stenton Ave, LP, Floodplain

Comment:

A. This application refers to the existing macadam driveway and stone bridge which will be utilized when providing driveway access to Lot #6. Some activity in the FEMA regulated floodplain is required and this proposal deals with the necessary relief in order to accommodate a new expanded driveway and proposed culvert pipes designed to pass a 100-year storm event. I have no specific comment or recommendation on this application but would note that it would be helpful if the exhibits attached to the application refer to "Lot #6, Oak Lane Estates."

8. Review pertinent planning issues.

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