

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES – JANUARY 9, 2012

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on January 9, 2012. Mr. Dickson called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Those present:

Planning Commission: Dean Dickson, Chairman
 Tony Bush, Vice Chairman
 John Pazdera, Member

Others: Nancy Frick, Director Zoning, Inspection & Planning
 John Koopman, Township Solicitor
 James Majewski, Township Engineer

Absent: Mark Fried, Planning Commission Member
 Karen Friedman, Planning Commission Secretary

REORGANIZATION: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The meeting was turned over to Mr. Koopman who noted the Commission has the option of proceeding with reorganization this evening since there is a quorum or could postpone it until there is a full board. The Planning Commission members present agreed to proceed at this time. Mr. Koopman called for nominations for Chairman of the Planning Commission for 2012. Mr. Bush moved and Mr. Pazdera seconded the nomination of Dean Dickson as Chairman. There were no further nominations, and the election of Dean Dickson as Chairman carried unanimously.

The meeting was turned over to Mr. Dickson who called for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mr. Pazdera moved, Mr. Dickson seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Tony Bush as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission for 2012.

Mr. Dickson called for nominations for Secretary. Mr. Pazdera moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Karen Friedman as Secretary of the Planning Commission for 2012.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Pazdera moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of December 12, 2011 as written.

APPROVAL OF #614 – WELLS FARGO BANK (EDGEWOOD VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER) PRELIMINARY/FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Edward Murphy, attorney, was present with Mr. Scott Mill, engineer, and Mr. Vince Wolk, the project architect. Mr. Murphy stated the Application was submitted last fall and they went before the Zoning Hearing Board to obtain certain relief which was granted. He stated tonight they are dealing with the Land Development Plan. He stated they are proposing several modest additions that total approximately 1,200 square feet to the existing Wells Fargo branch within the McCaffrey Shopping Center project.

Mr. Murphy stated the Plan has received review letters from TPD dated 11/23/11 and from Mr. Majewski's office dated 12/6/11. Mr. Murphy noted Comment #3 on Page #3 of Mr. Majewski's letter regarding the adequacy of off-street parking. Mr. Murphy stated he discussed this with Mr. Koopman and had indicated that when the project was first approved it received an overall parking Variance to permit the parking to be 1 to 200 or 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet. He stated at the time of the original overall Approval for McCaffrey Shopping Center, the Bank was included in that overall calculation of square footage so the Bank was treated as part of the neighborhood shopping center.

Mr. Murphy stated today the bank requirement is 1 space for every 150 square feet. He stated the proposed addition complies with that requirement and the overall parking requirement for the shopping center is still being met even with the loss of several spaces to accommodate the revised drive-through lane. Mr. Murphy stated he feels that they are in compliance.

Mr. Murphy stated Page 1 of the 12/6 Remington Vernick review letter summarizes the information that is on the Plan. Under the Comments Section II 1.A and 1.B. relate to the Zoning Hearing Board Decisions granting the relief requested. Item 2 lists the various Waivers requested, and Mr. Majewski stated he has no objection to any of the Waivers. Mr. Murphy stated they will comply with Items #4 through #8.

Mr. Murphy noted the 11/23/11 TPD letter, and stated they will comply with the suggested revisions to the Plans.

Mr. Pazdera stated he agrees with the Bucks County Planning Commission where they are questioning bringing people through an active parking lot to get to the drive-through; but he recognizes that they are landlocked. Mr. Murphy stated at the Sketch Plan stage they discussed this with Mr. Majewski, and they felt that what was being proposed was more efficient than the current configuration. Mr. Majewski stated he was concerned about going around the woods in the dark with people lining up behind the building. He stated he prefers the proposed configuration pattern, and he added there will not be that many conflicts.

Ms. Frick stated she had similar concerns to Mr. Pazdera's. Mr. Wolk stated he has done hundreds of banks, and you usually go through the parking lot before you get to the drive-in. Mr. Pazdera stated the ones he has designed, he has always avoided this. Mr. Mill stated the changes they are proposing will allow them to provide a path from the handicap space and provide direct access. Mr. Pazdera agreed that was a good proposal.

Mr. Dickson stated Ms. Friedman had provided comments and had indicated that she also agreed with the Bucks County Planning Commission. Mr. Bush stated he agrees as well, and he asked if they could have an exit from the drive-through onto either Heacock Road or Stony Hill Road, and Mr. Murphy stated this was never part of the originally-approved Plan.

Mr. Bush stated the expansion will likely bring additional traffic to the Bank. Mr. Murphy stated they are planning to eliminate the other Wells Fargo Bank in the area, but they do not feel that there will be an appreciable increase in traffic. He stated Mr. McCaffrey had also indicated that he does not plan any additions to the Shopping Center. Mr. Majewski stated he does not feel that there is enough room between the light on Stony Hill Road and the Shopping Center to provide another access.

Mr. Bush stated the Applicants indicated that when the Shopping Center was built, the Bank was included in that project. He asked if Mr. McCaffrey expanded when he re-built after the fire; and Ms. Frick stated McCaffrey's had been expanded since the time it was built, but not after the fire. She stated he had taken over stores 1 and 2 and there was also an extension in the back.

Mr. Murphy provided this evening an excerpt on the parking calculation from the original Plan, and Mr. Mill provided one full copy of the Plan as well.

Mr. Dickson stated Ms. Friedman had also questioned the 24 hour access to the ATM since she felt there were time restrictions. Ms. Frick stated there were limitations as to the hours of operation, and when the Shopping Center was built they had to obtain a Special Exception from the Zoning Hearing Board which placed limitations on the hours of operation. She stated since that time different stores have come in and obtained expanded hours. Ms. Frick stated she had discussions with Mr. Murphy about requesting a Variance from the Zoning Hearing Board to expand the hours of operation for the ATM since she receives many calls from residents about having expanded hours of operation. Ms. Frick stated Mr. Murphy did include this with his requests before the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Koopman stated the Zoning Hearing Board did grant a modification of the original Approval to allow 24 hour access to the ATM, and the Township did not object to this.

Mr. Dickson stated Ms. Friedman also asked if there is a non-Bank through lane in case a driver wants to pass through the area since she is concerned that a driver may make a wrong turn and then try to back up. Mr. Wolk stated they did discuss this at the Zoning Hearing Board. He stated they are putting a third lane in what had previously been a by-pass lane; but drivers will be able to see the drive-up, and there will be signage indicating that it is for drive-up only and there should be no through traffic. He stated currently when you are coming around the building you cannot tell where you are going and how full the drive-up lanes are. He stated now you will be able to see ahead. He stated the most they anticipate are six to ten cars stacking in the lanes. He also stated banking has evolved with on-line banking. Mr. Wolk showed on the Plan where the signage will be located. It was noted the signage will need to meet Township Ordinances. There was discussion whether or not this would have to go before HARB for Approval.

Mr. Pazdera asked what is on the second floor, and Mr. Wolk stated it is a lounge and restrooms. He stated they will be adding a handicap-accessible restroom on the first floor. Mr. Pazdera asked the number of employees; and Mr. Wolk stated while there are a total of eighteen possible stations, normally there are only ten to twelve employees on site. Mr. Pazdera asked about the impact of these employees on the available parking, and Mr. Majewski stated some of the spaces will be employee parking where there will not be a high turnover. Mr. Wolk stated Wells Fargo does have employees out on appointments and most of the tellers are part-time.

There was no one present in the audience to speak to this matter.

Mr. Pazdera moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Supervisors Approval of the Preliminary/Final Plan dated 10/14/11 subject to compliance with the Remington & Vernick letter dated 12/6/11, compliance with the Remington & Vernick sanitary letter dated 10/31/11, compliance with the TPD letter dated 11/23/11, and the Bucks County Planning Commission letter dated 10/28/11. The Planning Commission supports the Waivers requested in the Remington & Vernick letter dated 12/6/11. The Planning Commission does have reservations on the traffic flow for the project; but based on the Township engineer's recommendation, this is the best they can get for this site.

#613-A – NEW CINGULAR WIRELESS PCS, LLC d/b/a AT & T – APPROVAL OF CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION – T.P.N. 20-16-41-5 – STONY HILL ROAD

Ms. Kate Durso, attorney, was present. Ms. Durso stated when they were previously present questions had been raised about the structural plan submitted and how it compared to a prior structural plan submission by another carrier. She stated they were asked to go back to the engineer who prepared the structurals to determine why there were discrepancies and what was the correct analysis. Ms. Durso stated they have since submitted to the Township a letter from the engineer explaining why there are differences in the heights and the antennas. She stated a lot has to do with a change made by American Tower as to the mounting height versus the top of the antenna. She stated there were also different antennas that were actually installed. Mr. Majewski stated it was a very thorough explanation. Mr. Pazdera stated he is satisfied with the outcome of the Planning Commission's request.

There was no one in the public wishing to make comment.

Mr. Pazdera moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Conditional Use Application for New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC d/b/a AT& T Plans last revised 11/18/11.

Ms. Durso stated the Extension expires the end of the month, but she is not sure that they have scheduled the Conditional Use Hearing. She stated she understands the Township has changed Solicitors. Ms. Frick stated she is waiting to hear back from Mr. Truelove on this matter. Mr. Koopman stated they need to see if the matter was extended to a date certain, and Ms. Frick agreed to look into this.

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There being no further business, Mr. Pazdera moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Dickson, Chairman