

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES – JULY 28, 2014

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on July 28, 2014. Ms. Friedman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Those present:

Planning Commission: Karen Friedman, Chair
John Pazdera, Vice Chair
Dean Dickson, Secretary
Tony Bush, Member

Others: Nancy Frick, Director Zoning, Inspection, & Planning
Nathan Fox, Township Solicitor
Mark Eisold, Township Engineer
Ronald Jackson, Township Engineer

Absent: Dan McLaughlin, Supervisor Liaison

ZHB APPEAL #14-1701 – DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF SPECIAL EXCEPTION - CHINMAYA MISSION TRI-STATE CENTER APPLICATION TO THE ZHB INCLUDES A REQUEST SO AS TO PERMIT THE PREMISES TO BE ONCE AGAIN UTILIZED AS A PLACE OF WORSHIP

Mr. Edward Murphy, attorney, was present and stated the Application is scheduled to be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board on August 5; and an Application for a Special Exception is required by Ordinance to go before the Planning Commission for a recommendation. He noted the Board of Supervisors has reviewed this as well and have made a recommendation in support of the Application. He stated this involves the use of the property at 905 Big Oak Road as a place of worship. He stated since 1958 the property has been used as a place of worship. He stated most recently the property has been in a state of disrepair, and his clients purchased the property last month.

Mr. Murphy stated the principal day the property will be used will be on Sunday. At present no expansion is proposed inside the building, and currently there is an area used for a place of worship. He stated Monday through Friday there may be occasional language and ritual dance classes. Saturday would periodically be reserved throughout the year for special occasions.

Mr. Murphy stated in 1969 when the Zoning Hearing Board granted an expansion to the Church of Latter Day Saints, there was a Condition that the parking lot be expanded to accommodate up to 75 cars. He stated the lot is not lined so it is difficult to tell how many spaces there are. He stated at that time the spaces were designed to be 200 square feet minimum. He stated they estimate that today there are between 85 and 95 parking spaces available on site which is in excess of what any use of the property will require. He stated there is no formal membership. He stated there are multiple locations within the Philadelphia area where those who wish to worship may go. He stated between Newtown, Langhorne, and Yardley which is where the bulk of the worshipers would come from, presently they all go to a location in Langhorne which is the principal operation; and this facility in Lower Makefield would be used as a satellite area.

Mr. Murphy stated there will be no one residing at the Church. It will be a place for classes and on Sunday there will be a regular worship service and a Sunday School.

Mr. Murphy stated when a place of worship was permitted in this District years ago, the minimum acreage was two acres. He stated this property is two and a half acres; and today the requirement is for five acres.

Mr. Dickson stated the letter received dated the 25th indicates that the parking lot will be resurfaced, and he asked if it will be lined; and Mr. Murphy stated he feels that would be wise.

Ms. Friedman asked if they will have weddings, and Mr. Murphy stated he feels it will be used more for religious festivals that are held throughout the year; and he has not heard about any weddings. Ms. Friedman asked if the festivals will involve a huge number of people from all the satellites, and Mr. Murphy stated it would not because the festivals are offered at each of the locations.

Ms. Friedman asked if it a Mission, and Mr. Murphy stated it is a Hindu Temple. Ms. Friedman asked if it is possible it could temporarily be used as housing, and Mr. Murphy stated it will not. He stated the President of the Chinmaya organization resides at the Langhorne location, and there is no intention to have anyone reside at the Lower Makefield location either temporarily or permanently.

Mr. Dickson moved, and Mr. Pazdera seconded to recommend to the Zoning Hearing Board that they accept the Applicant's request for a Special Exception. There was no public comment, and the Motion carried unanimously.

#637 – LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENTS PRELIMINARY/FINAL PLAN DISCUSSION

Mr. Eisold was present with Mr. Jackson. Mr. Eisold stated some months ago the Township Board of Supervisors reviewed a number of sites for the proposed Community Center, although at this point they are calling it a Public Recreation Facility which relates to the Zoning Ordinance Use regulations. He stated they have worked with the architect who had provided the footprint of the building, and at this point they are only dealing with the Land Development part of the project. He stated he understands that the architects are working on the architectural plans which would be the actual lay-out of the interior to include a meeting room, game room, rest rooms, and associated facilities such as a kitchen, etc. He stated tonight they are just discussing the outside/exterior Land Development portion of the project.

Ms. Friedman asked if the building will be one story, and Mr. Eisold stated it is a single-story building; and he believes that there will be meetings in the future when the inside of the building will be reviewed and discussed. Ms. Friedman asked if the building will be constructed in such a way that it would be able to support a second story; however, Mr. Eisold stated he could not answer that, and this would be a question for the architect although he does not believe it is being designed to have a second story although there could be an add on in the future.

Mr. Eisold showed the lay-out of the project noting the proposed location. The location of the building was shown along with the associated sidewalks. He stated the parking lot is in two sections with the main parking lot in the front which includes a number of handicapped spaces as well and a secondary parking lot toward the back. He showed an access point to temporary parking that could still be used in the future. He stated the majority of the parking lot shown in dark gray is standard paving, and the lighter gray areas will be pervious paving. Mr. Eisold stated water will come in off Oxford Valley Road, and the sewer connection will be to a manhole in the back at a location he showed on the Plan. With regard to stormwater detention, Mr. Eisold stated there is an above-ground infiltration basin at a location he showed on the Plan, and he also noted an area of pervious paving with a substantial amount of stone underneath which will be an underground infiltration area. Mr. Eisold stated there are a number of trees for the parking lot as well as street trees. He stated they also have a Building Landscape Plan.

Ms. Friedman asked if they considered moving any of the parking in the front toward the back of the building since it seems to be a huge amount of asphalt in the front. Mr. Eisold stated they did look at a number of alternatives, adding the ground slopes away from the road; and the first floor of the building itself sits about 3'

below the center line of Oxford Valley Road. He stated there will also be a substantial amount of additional topsoil available, and they are looking into possibly putting in a berm into the trees along Oxford Valley Road to take peoples' eye across the parking to the building itself as opposed to seeing the parking.

Mr. Eisold stated they have received a number of review letters, and he did receive a call today from the Water Company apologizing for the delay in getting out their review letter as the person who was to review the Plans was out for a few weeks. They will get out their review letter shortly; however, Mr. Eisold added he does not expect that there will be too many comments from them.

Ms. Friedman noted the letter dated June 30, 2014 from Boucher & James outlining the numerous requests for Waivers. She stated the first Waiver request is to not be required to provide separate Preliminary and Final Plan submissions ; and the Planning Commission indicated they would be okay with this provided all their questions are answered.

Ms. Friedman stated the next request is to not be required to perform a comprehensive analysis of existing conditions of areas within 500 feet of the site. Ms. Friedman asked Mr. Eisold if this would include stormwater management or do they feel that they have that under control. Mr. Eisold stated the stormwater from the site has been completely designed. He noted 500 feet would include the Samost ball field, and they are asking not to have to show the survey information 500 feet around the whole site. Mr. Bush asked if Mr. Eisold would not request this if an Applicant asked for a Waiver like this, and Mr. Eisold stated many times if they are not familiar with the surroundings they ask for a top aerial plan and do not require a full detailed survey. He stated they could provide that as a substitute.

Ms. Friedman stated the next Waiver request is to not be required to conduct a Site visit. Mr. Eisold stated Waiver requests 3, 4, and 5 go hand in hand, and many times they get these Waiver requests. Ms. Friedman asked what is the Four-Step Design Process, and Mr. Eisold stated he will verify this but it is a large list of details that are followed by most developments. He stated he will verify this and provide that information.

Ms. Friedman stated the next Waiver request is to not be required to depict underground utilities within two hundred feet of the site, and this was acceptable to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Friedman stated #7 is to not be required to depict existing trees eight inches in caliper or greater. Mr. Eisold stated as they did with Samost, they did evaluate it before the trees were removed to determine how many trees were coming down; but they have not performed a preliminary survey. It will be inventoried prior to being disturbed which is what they had done at Samost. Mr. Eisold noted a wooded area with a lot of overgrowth. Mr. Bush asked about the cost to do this now as opposed to delaying, and Mr. Eisold stated they would have to do a field survey with a crew for a few days which he estimated would cost \$3,000 to \$4,000. He stated typically at the time of construction someone would be there anyway.

Ms. Friedman stated # 8 is to not be required to provide pavement core samples. Mr. Eisold stated this part of the Township is well travelled; and while there will be additional traffic, it will not be substantial. Ms. Friedman asked how many Seniors are typically at the Township Building now, and Ms. Frick stated Ms. Liney would have this information. Ms. Friedman asked those present in the audience if they had an idea of the numbers participating in the Seniors program currently, and one individual estimated it would be fifty at the most at any one time.

Ms. Friedman stated #9 is to not be required to submit an Environmental Assessment Report. Mr. Eisold stated with regard to stormwater they did testing to determine infiltration rates. He added with regard to the other environmental factors, other than the woodlands, there is not that much out there; and there are no streams, wetlands, or steep slopes. Ms. Friedman asked if they are planning to have minimal disturbance to the property to the best of their ability, and Mr. Eisold stated the woodlands at the corner of the site he showed on the Plan are really the only natural resources that they will be disturbing.

Ms. Friedman stated #10 is to not be required to pay an Off-Site Public Transportation Impact Fee. Mr. Eisold stated the Township has a plan in place that with additional traffic, developers are required to donate a certain amount to the Township to pay for regional public transportation improvement projects. He stated in this case, they are taking an existing use which is currently taking place in the Township Building and transporting it 800 feet away so it does not seem necessary.

Ms. Friedman noted #11 to not be required to provide sidewalks along the streets. Ms. Friedman stated they wanted to have contiguous access around all the fields, and she feels they should have a sidewalk. It was noted that there are no sidewalks on the ball field side. Mr. Eisold stated there was a discussion about getting a full pedestrian/bike path not just for this site and the Samost fields but for the whole Complex. He showed the location of this on the Plan which was the direction they received when they did the Samost Ball Field Plan, but that was an Alternate that was not part of the Contract that was done. He stated they have shown the location

of a bike path along Oxford Valley, but at this point it is an Alternate. He stated this would be a decision for the Board of Supervisors to consider if they want to do it piece by piece or the whole Plan. Ms. Friedman noted #11 to not require the establishment of a bike path would be the same thing as the sidewalk. Ms. Friedman stated she feels both are important even if it is an internal bike path to connect people from the fields to this Center. Mr. Eisold stated there is a bike path along Oxford Valley Road, but there is nothing between the different ball fields at this point. Mr. Eisold stated the Planning Commission did make a recommendation on this, and he understood the Board was going to try to find some Grant money to do this as a separate project.

Ms. Friedman noted #13 to not require the installation of street lights. Ms. Friedman stated if the facility is going to be open at 9 p.m., she feels there should be street lights. Mr. Eisold stated they do have a street light shown in the parking lot, but they do not have them on the street per se on Oxford Valley Road. Ms. Friedman stated there is a street light across the street at the development on Countess. Mr. Eisold showed the location of the street light which is facing toward the site at the main entrance although not on the street per se. He stated all of the rest are internal to the parking area.

Ms. Friedman noted #14 to not be required to provide an easement for sanitary sewer and storm drainage. Mr. Eisold stated in this case the Township is the owner of the property and will own the sanitary and storm sewers.

Ms. Friedman noted #15 to not require the easement(s) to be monumented, and Mr. Eisold stated if there are no easements this would not be necessary.

Ms. Friedman noted #16 to not be required to provide curb for the entire parking lot; and Mr. Eisold stated the way they have designed the stormwater management they want the water to run off directly onto the grass areas. He stated typically when you have curbs there are additional costs because you have to add inlets and pipes. He stated the Stormwater Plan has a minimal amount of inlets and pipes as the water is going to the underground infiltration basin and the above ground basin.

Ms. Friedman noted #17 to not be required to provide a minimum of twenty feet between the building and the parking lot, and she asked how close they are looking to put the parking lot to the building. Mr. Eisold stated the Plan shows 15' to 18'. He stated they are at 20' along the front of the building except at the front left corner of the building which is approximately 17.6'. He showed this location on the Plan. Ms. Friedman asked why the Township requires a minimum of 20'. Mr. Eisold stated it is a random number, and for the majority of the building they are meeting the requirement. This was acceptable to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Friedman noted #18 to not be required to provide a vegetation study for existing vegetation buffers. Mr. Eisold stated to the southern side there is a fairly large buffer between it and the Fred Allan Field, and the rest of the side is buffered in also; and the only area not buffered is along the front of the property. He stated they will have street trees along the front. He stated the area across the street from the building is fairly open, and they could add additional buffer at an additional cost where the berm will be. Ms. Friedman stated she would like that area to be as dense as possible with vegetation out of respect for the people who live across the street, and they should soften that view as much as possible. Mr. Eisold stated they could include evergreens for the lower bushes.

Ms. Friedman noted #19 to not be required to provide replacement trees adding she is concerned that the Township itself is not following its own rules. She stated the Environmental Advisory Council wrote a letter. Mr. Eisold stated he did see the letter, and they recommended that the replacement trees be provided as required. Mr. Eisold stated the Supervisors will make the final decision. Mr. Alan Dresser stated they would prefer the Alternative Bid Plan and would prefer that the Supervisors do that.

Ms. Friedman noted #20 to not be required to provide open lands or Fee-In-Lieu; and Mr. Eisold stated since this is recreation, they are meeting that need. Ms. Friedman stated she assumes #21 would relate to this as well.

Ms. Friedman noted #22 to be permitted to provide basin side slopes steeper than four feet horizontal to one foot vertical for the infiltration basin. Mr. Eisold stated they are showing three to one for the basin slopes which is not an uncommon slope for basins. He stated the intent is not to disturb too many woodlands.

Ms. Friedman noted #23 to not require edges of slopes to be offset five feet from a property line or right-of-way; and Mr. Eisold stated he does not feel this is really an issue because the property at the south is also owned by the Township so at this location, they are not bordering anybody but the Township itself.

Ms. Friedman noted #24 to allow the proposed grade to be steeper than four feet horizontal to one foot vertical. Mr. Eisold stated this is so that they disturb the minimal amount of woodlands.

Ms. Friedman stated there is a Waiver request from the Stormwater Management Delaware River South Watershed Ordinance to not require the two-year storm post-development peak runoff rate to be less than or equal to the one-year storm pre-development peak runoff rate. Mr. Jackson stated this deals with the size of the development against the size of the property as the total size of the property is vast

at twenty-five acres compared to the size of the disturbance they are doing on the five acres. He stated there would be no way for this development to reduce the site-wide range to that standard. Mr. Eisold stated toward the back there is quite a bit of space before you get to the adjacent development, and they are not draining right near an adjacent development.

Mr. Eisold stated one Waiver they overlooked was to go to 9' by 18' as opposed to 10' by 20' for the parking stalls, and he feels this would make a lot of sense.

Mr. Bush stated at the Commercial areas one thing that people complain about a lot besides traffic flow is the spots; and when the spots are narrow people bang the car next to them and cause damage. He stated in designing this parking lot, he would strongly recommend that they keep to the Ordinance requirement on the parking spots. Mr. Eisold stated the front parking lot will be more congested; and he suggested that the front stalls be 10' by 20', and the other lots have 9' by 18'. Mr. Bush stated he is concerned about the size of the large cross over vehicles that a lot of people have.

Ms. Friedman asked Mr. Eisold if he feels that one ingress/egress will be satisfactory, and Mr. Eisold stated he believes it will be. He stated there was a comment in one of the letters that they would like to see the "throat" opened up a little bit at the entrance drive, and he feels they could handle that easily.

Ms. Friedman stated the Citizens Traffic Committee discussed one-way traffic flow; and Mr. Eisold stated they have looked at that, and he feels this could be done. He stated they could have signage and arrows, and he also noted locations where they could have stop signs. He stated there were also comments about handicap spaces, and they have shown the minimum requirements which is four spaces, and they could add two or four more. Ms. Friedman stated she would like to see more handicap spaces. Mr. Eisold showed on the Plan where they currently have handicap spaces and noted other locations where additional spaces could be located.

Mr. Eisold stated there was a comment from the Police Department about using this facility for an Emergency Management Shelter, and he feels this makes sense. He stated the Police asked that there be a place provided where emergency vehicles could temporarily be located if there were an emergency situation. Mr. Eisold stated he will discuss this with the Police Department as to what is needed as he would prefer not to add additional impervious surface, and possibly they could use a stabilized base at a location where the trucks could go. Mr. Eisold stated where the Police have suggested that it be located will not work as it is tight in that location. Mr. Eisold noted another area on the Plan which he feels makes more sense.

Ms. Friedman asked for percentages as to pervious versus impervious surfaces, and she asked if they are evaluating it according to the entire lot including the ball fields or are they looking at it separately. Mr. Jackson stated they were cognizant of the fact that they did not want it to be a "percentage of a percentage," and the development established a Natural Resource Protection Plan with percentages of allowable disturbance. He stated they added this on to the original, and did not do a percentage of what they left off, but rather added this onto their original and they are still under all the thresholds of Natural Resource Protection standards.

Mr. Eisold stated they took Samost and added this to it for the whole tract.

There was a question about disturbance of the woods, and Mr. Jackson stated they are permitted to disturb 30% of the total woods; and at the Samost Tract, he believes they disturbed 20%, so they had 10% allowed for this - not that they had another 30%.

Mr. Bush stated while he recognizes that the interior of the building is not before the Planning Commission this evening, in order to evaluate the parking lot etc. he would like a better understanding of what the Township feels will be the uses as a recreation facility in addition to use by the Seniors. Mr. Eisold stated they did get a count from the architect as to the number of seats in the main meeting room which was 120. Mr. Jackson stated they applied the standard in the Ordinance based on the Community Center at the time and the minimum required spaces was approximately 40, and they are at 85 now. He stated the architect also provided a maximum allowable per Code. He stated there is a kitchen proposed for events, and they asked the architect the maximum capacity, and the architect indicated it would be 249. He stated they applied the same standards for a Community Center to that number, and the maximum would be 83 spaces required; and they have 85.

Mr. Bush asked if they are suggesting that there will be catered events here, and he asked how this would impact the neighborhood across the street. Mr. Eisold stated he does not feel it was based on any particular event, rather it was based on the architect telling them what the maximum capacity of the building could be – not what it will be. Mr. Bush asked if there was a statement as to how the building was going to be used; and Mr. Eisold stated he has not heard this other than it was to be a Community Center for all those in the community, and he has not seen a detailed lay out of what that is.

Mr. Bush asked what interest groups or stakeholders have been spoken to about having activities there such as performing arts, dance, book clubs, Seniors, and children's activities since all of this would impact what the parking lot would look like and how to design everything else. Mr. Eisold stated he feels the operation and programs are still in the beginning stage of being developed by the Township. He feels there will be additional meetings when they discuss what can be done in the building; but until that point, they need to design a maximum for the building.

Ms. Friedman stated she is concerned that they are being asked to okay something when they do not know what the end result will be. She stated this could be adverse to the nearby residents and may not be in the best interest of the neighborhood if they do not know what they are doing.

Ms. Friedman stated she also feels this project will come in at a cost of more than \$1 million. She stated there was a Referendum on a space like this which was turned down, and she asked if it is known if it was turned down because of the monetary side or because the community did not want a center. She also asked how this is going to be paid for. She stated she is reluctant to go forward with this since the community has not given approval for this. Mr. Eisold stated this is part of the RACP Grant, and money has been set aside for a Community Center. He stated he believes that there is approximately \$1 million allocated in that Grant Program for these facilities, although it probably will not cover the whole thing.

Mr. Dickson stated this has been discussed since 2004, and what was perceived in 2004 is different from what is perceived today. He stated at one point it may have been considered to be a youth center, but the demographics have changed. He stated he feels they need a better description of the use of the building. He stated originally it was called a Senior Center, but now it is called a Community Center which means everyone.

Mr. Eisold stated he agrees that at some point the Township will have to address those issues and let them know exactly what is the perceived use of the building.

Ms. Friedman asked how much square footage is available for expansion; and Mr. Eisold stated as noted earlier this evening that relates to the architect's design for the interior, and he does not know what their plan is for future expansion, the perceived growth, or how long they feel the building will be sufficient. He stated the architect will be solidifying his Plan and will be having meetings to discuss programs, etc. in the near future. Ms. Friedman stated she does not want to address this Plan until they have more information. She stated she would like to see this Plan again with a definition of uses, future expansion, etc.

Mr. Eisold stated the Conservation District and NPDES Permits will be required and will take some time to acquire which can be four to six months so they want to get this started.

Mr. Jeff Benedetto stated he agrees with Ms. Friedman about the definition of use and future planning, but the problem is that the Seniors have been waiting a very long time for this. He stated he feels that there was approval for a Community Center but then they "punted" this to the Planning Commission and left almost all of this up to the Planning Commission. He stated his sense when the Board of Supervisors approved this was that the Planning Commission would hash out the details, and he feels this is unfair to the Planning Commission. Mr. Benedetto stated the Board approved Option 3 which was 7,600 feet for over \$1.5 million. He stated there was an outline from the architect of what this would encompass including a kitchen and rec room; but throughout the meeting it was discussed that this was not set in stone, and when it "gets to the Planning Commission they will hash out the details" which he feels is completely unfair to the Planning Commission since ultimately the Supervisors are elected to do their job. He added the Seniors have been waiting, and they have been asking when this is coming up. Mr. Benedetto stated he is not happy with where the parking is all on Oxford Valley, and he feels there should be a Traffic Impact Study, a bike path, and a sidewalk. He stated he feels it is the responsibility of the Supervisors to fill out the details; but the Seniors have been waiting for an extremely long time, and there is a time limit on the Grant money.

Ms. Friedman asked if the Grant money is specifically for new construction or can it be for re-construction or a re-hab; and Mr. Benedetto stated it could be a re-hab of a building, and he knows that the Patterson Farm was one of the places that was discussed, but this was the site that was selected and it will be a new building.

Mr. Benedetto stated while he does not want to rush into something that will ultimately have to be changed, the Seniors have waited a long time for this. He feels the Supervisors "punted" this to the Planning Commission with a very limited outline. He stated the inside of the building is nothing that has been established.

Ms. Friedman stated originally this was to be a Senior Center, and she feels a Senior Center presents a different set of circumstances. She stated now they are trying to put a Community Center in with the Senior Center which makes it complicated.

Mr. Bush stated the money was found in 2010, and now it is four years later; and this is the first time it has come to the Planning Commission. He stated he understands that everyone is anxious to move this forward, but they cannot “throw that on the Planning Commission.” Mr. Benedetto stated he is trying to provide a perspective of what he feels happened at the Board of Supervisors, and he does not hold anyone responsible on the Planning Commission; and he does not feel the Supervisors fulfilled their responsibility. He stated this has taken four months to get to the Planning Commission, and he does not feel it should have taken this long.

Mr. Benedetto stated the architect did move the parking a little bit away from Oxford Valley to the other side. He stated there were two options for the building one that was closer to the water tower and one that was closer to the Fred Allan Complex, and that was not even really established.

Mr. Dickson stated the ball fields were approved two years ago, and he had asked at that time where the Senior Center would be; and he was not comfortable because that was not planned at that time. He stated Ms. Tyler brought up the bike paths and the sidewalks at that time, but they were told that they did not know where the Senior/Community Center was going to be so they could not be designed. Mr. Dickson stated at that time he indicated it did not make sense since they were talking about interconnecting parking lots, bike paths, and sidewalks, but they did not know where the Center was going to be. Mr. Dickson stated this should have been done at that time.

Mr. Benedetto stated there were other options, and Mr. Bush was on the Committee to make a recommendation for which site would be picked; and ultimately the Board of Supervisors decided it was going to be at Samost, but the actual building footprint was never truly decided, and there were different options. He stated it seems that the Planning Commission could move the building envelope to the side, and there are many other issues the Planning Commission has to deal with that he does not feel is fair. He stated the Planning Commission has asked for a definition of use and expansion plans, and the Board of Supervisors has only one meeting in August. He stated he understands that it is a five year Grant, and the money has to be used in five years so that if it started in 2010, it would be the end of 2015 by which it has to be used.

Mr. Eisold stated he believes that it is a phased Grant, and there are five phases. He stated one was the tennis courts, the second was the ball fields, the third was the work on the inclusive playground, and he believes there is another. Mr. Benedetto stated there were two different Grants – one for \$1 million for those items and one specifically for the Community Center.

Mr. Benedetto stated he does not have a problem if the Planning Commission does not make a decision tonight, and they could come back with a definition of the use. He stated he is sensitive to what the Seniors have been waiting for, and there is a frustration level.

Mr. Eisold stated this is the first time they have come in with this detail, and they were not looking to have all the decisions made tonight. He stated he does not feel the Planning Commission should feel they have to vote on this tonight, and they are just opening the dialogue.

Mr. Dickson stated he feels some of these issues should have been addressed when they were discussing the ball fields; and if all of it had been done at one point, he feels they would have been two years “down the road.”

Mr. Benedetto stated if the Planning Commission has concerns about the footprint or where the parking should go, he has faith in them making the right call; although if they want further definition of the use or future expansion, these are fair questions. He stated he personally feels there should be rooms for PAA, YMS, etc. so they can be accommodated. He stated there had been talk about a gym, but it is difficult to pin this down.

Ms. Friedman stated there are residents nearby, and they are changing what is going to go on in that building. Mr. Bush stated he feels the residents deserve to know what is a possibility for the use of the building. Mr. Benedetto stated they never discussed it to any great length, and he feels this is unfair. Mr. Benedetto stated none of this has ever been “etched in stone.” Ms. Friedman stated there is only a vaguely-defined use. She stated Elm Lowne was a problem for residents; and if there is the ability to have a wedding with tents here, there could be issues and problems. She stated she does not want this to impact the residents since it is not fair since they were there first. She stated they are now calling this a “Public Recreation Facility.” She stated she feels a Senior Center would be nice there if the Seniors want it there.

Mr. Dickson stated in Newtown they had the Rose Bank Winery, and there was a limited use; and all of the sudden there were tents and music and the neighbors around it went to the Supervisors to complain that they were told there would be limited use and now there are rock bands playing.

Mr. Benedetto stated people from the neighborhood came to the Supervisors and asked if there was going to be a gym or meeting rooms, and the Supervisors said they were only voting on one of the options.

Mr. Eisold stated he feels the programs and internal architecture should be part of this whole thing, and he feels this could happen before or after the next Supervisors meeting; and they could come back to another Planning Commission meeting to discuss all of this.

Ms. Friedman stated she is not in favor of the "Recreational Facility" and is having a hard time understanding why they have to "marry a Community Center with youth center activities." She stated this could be a "gorgeous Colonial home" established as a Senior Center but it would look residential with a residential parking lot in the back. She stated it could also be used for other quiet affairs, but it would still look like a "gorgeous home" instead of a Community Center for soccer and baseball meetings.

Mr. Benedetto stated a Community Center was voted down on three different times although it was much larger than this.

Ms. Friedman stated it was never just a Senior Center which is why it has taken fifteen years in the making.

Mr. Benedetto stated the only reason this is happening is because of our State Representative, Steve Santarsiero, who provided the \$1 million Grant. He stated he does not know why it was termed a Community Center since he was not on the Board then.

One individual noted that what was voted down was a \$6.5 million Center.

Mr. Frank Fazzalore discussed the different Referenda that were voted on which were for much more money. Mr. Fazzalore stated he has been a proponent of the Senior Center from the day he joined the Board of Supervisors. He stated there is a Grant for \$1 million, and they should get this done. He stated the Seniors do not generally meet at night so they would use it during the day; and they talked about other people using it at night.

One gentleman stated the Grant called this a Community Center, and he does not see why the Supervisors could not cut this short and come back to the Planning Commission and define a Community Center as something that only the Seniors want. He stated they should make the Community Center look like a Senior Center but call it a Community Center so that they can be done with this.

Mr. Paul Allen noted the location of his property which is across the street from where they are putting the Senior Center. He stated he is for the Seniors, but this could be a dangerous situation. He stated he feels like he is the "sacrificial lamb." He stated he does not feel that he should have to put up with this when he put a lot of money into his property. He stated there are other solutions.

Ms. Catherine Beath, 1049 Countess Drive, reviewed the parking in the area; and she stated many people will be able to walk to the facility and questioned why they would build so much parking. She stated there are four street lights on two miles of Oxford Valley Road currently, and it is a very quiet, dark residential road. She stated she does not want there to be parties there because it will involve trash, bottles, etc.; and they should define the use narrowly. She stated they should also move it back so that there is more of a buffer zone for the neighbors. Ms. Beath stated she has calculated the time that the Township meeting room is used by Commissions and the Board of Supervisors, and it is less than 50% of the time Monday through Friday; and on weekends it would be zero. She stated she does not feel that is good use of taxpayer money.

Mr. Eisold stated they designed for the maximum occupancy of the building, and there is no reason why that could not be cut down if this is what the Township feels is the right thing to do. He stated they wanted to show that they could provide the maximum.

Mr. Joe Parell, 612 Brandywine, showed his development on the Plan. He stated when they were designing the parking for the ball fields, they wanted the parking as far away as possible from the main road which is why the parking is behind the ball fields and not in front. He stated now they are creating a "strip-mall design" with all of the parking out along Oxford Valley Road. He stated as a resident across the street after looking at woods all these years, now he will be coming to the top of the hill and looking at a "strip center." He stated he sees why people get frustrated with Government when there are two Boards here that do not seem to be talking to each other. He stated they are asking the Planning Commission to approve something when they have no idea what they are approving. He stated Lower Makefield is the only Township in Bucks County that does not have a Center for their Seniors, but he agrees with Ms. Friedman that it should be designed to blend in with the community. He stated he feels the Township Municipal Building is one of the ugliest buildings there is. He stated he feels the parking should be behind the Center and not out front. Ms. Friedman stated this is not written in stone and is just to show how the area could potentially be used. Mr. Parell stated he is concerned about Mr. Allan since his driveway is directly across from this, and they are creating an intersection that does not need to be an intersection.

July 28, 2014

Planning Commission – page 16 of 16

One gentleman representing the Seniors stated currently their membership is between 350 to 400, but on a busy day the most they have in the Township Meeting room is 50. He stated they feel they will get more membership and more participation if they have a building and a place where they do not always have to set up tables. He stated he saw the Plans for the interior of the building at the fall meeting, and he was very "disgusted." He stated he does not feel they need such a big kitchen or a big meeting room that could fit 320 chairs. He stated they were told they could partition it off. He stated they would like to see something like Middletown has.

A woman residing on Waterwheel noted the location of her home on the Plan. She stated she would be in favor of a "home-type" building with the parking behind. She stated she does not feel they should build a facility for 300 people and it should be just for the Seniors.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was discussion about the next Planning Commission meeting, and Ms. Frick stated they will just have the second meeting in August.

Ms. Friedman stated she received a letter from Frederick Childs who stated he is a long-time resident commenting on the Plan for Fieldstone on Edgewood Road for thirty-five homes presented by Beazer Homes. He asks that the Planning Commission and other authorities reject the proposed development and any associated Permits or Appeals for Variances or Waivers which may be requested. He stated the proposed development may not meet Township Codes and he is concerned about the density, emergency access, traffic congestion, infrastructure and service demands, environmental impact, cluster planning, and property values. She made the letter available to those interested.

Mr. Bush asked where they are with this Plan, and Ms. Frick stated it went to the Board of Supervisors two weeks ago with an Informal Sketch Plan.

There being no further business, Mr. Dickson moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Dickson, Secretary

