

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES – APRIL 12, 2010

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on April 12, 2010. Chairman Pazdera called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Those present:

Planning Commission:           John Pazdera, Chairman  
                                          Mark Fried, Vice Chairman  
                                          Dean Dickson, Secretary  
                                          Tony Bush, Member  
                                          Karen Friedman, Member

Others:                               Nancy Frick, Director Zoning, Inspection, & Planning  
                                          John Donaghy, Township Solicitor  
                                          James Majewski, Township Engineer  
                                          Dan McLaughlin, Supervisor Liaison

**#470 BIBLE FELLOWSHIP EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH – REFERENCE LETTER DATED MARCH 4, 2010 WITH ATTACHMENTS AND ADDITIONAL BACK-UP INFORMATION**

Pastor Robert Travis was present with Kevin Wolf, engineer. Mr. Wolf stated they provided a Plan set showing what they would like to do. He stated the Church originally received approval in 1999 and it was constructed in 2000. He stated at that time half the parking was constructed as part of Phase I. The Church later determined they needed more parking so additional parking was constructed in 2004, and remainder of the parking was constructed in 2006.

Mr. Wolf stated they are looking for a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to amend the Phasing Plan. He showed the Plan from 1999 of the existing Church building which was Phase I. Shown in pink was a building addition, Phase IB, which was never constructed, and shown in yellow is Phase II which was never constructed. Mr. Wolf showed the parking and stormwater management systems that were built to handle all of the impervious surface intended for the site. Mr. Wolf showed another Plan that shows what the Church is proposing this evening which includes installing four modular classrooms, a wooden covered walkway, small retaining wall, and a handicap ramp to provide access at the locations he noted on the Plan. Mr. Wolf showed a drawing of an enlargement of the classrooms as well as a Plan showing the classrooms as they relate to the Church building. Mr. Wolf showed where they will install buffer plantings to provide shielding from the roadway. Mr. Wolf stated the Church intends to refinish the portable classrooms with siding and roofing to match the existing building.

Mr. Donaghy stated Mr. Wolf indicated that parking was completed in 2006 and asked if all other site improvements such as lighting and stormwater management have been completed, and Mr. Wolf stated they are. Mr. Donaghy asked if they will need to add to the stormwater management system, and Mr. Wolf stated they will not. He stated the Zoning Hearing Board granted relief to have 17.7% impervious on the site, and they are at 16.7%. He stated there will be no setback issues with the proposed modulars. He stated this is just an amendment to the Phasing Plan.

Pastor Travis provided a hand out this evening to explain the need for the request being made. He provided a history of the Church, and pictures of the current property were shown. He stated they have had a significant impact on the community, the region, and the world; and they are experiencing growth. Pastor Travis stated their worship attendance during 2002 was approximately 250 on Sunday mornings, and this has increased to a point where they are averaging approximately 600 people with over 800 attending on Easter Sunday. He stated when Phase I was built, the attendance at the Church was approximately 200 people. He stated Phase I was built to accommodate a Church of about 250 people with Phase II to provide a seating capacity of approximately 500. He stated they have not built Phase IB or Phase II at this time.

Pastor Travis stated their children's attendance, not including youth which is Jr. and Sr. High, has also grown from approximately 100 children in 2007 to approximately 187 on a Sunday now. He stated they have overcrowding in the children's classrooms, and the portable classrooms would allow them to expand the room capacity. He stated in addition to Sunday, they have a Kids Ministry on Wednesday evening with over 100 children attending, and they are experiencing overcrowding then as well; and the portable classrooms would be a great assistance. Pastor Travis stated in July they offer a community wide Kids Camp, and in 2009 they had over 300 children for the week. He stated the portable classrooms will allow them to move their older children out to two of the portable classrooms, and the largest room in the Church would then be used for children's ministries which would be downstairs next to their auditorium. He stated this would allow them to run a children's church service on Sunday morning which would help with some of their growth issues.

Pastor Travis stated they have also provided information on their expansion plans as a Church in the short-term, intermediate, and long-term plans. He stated the short-term plan is why they are present this evening which is the addition of the four portable classrooms. He stated they would like to have this in place by July in time for their Kids Camp. He stated their intermediate plan looks at adding a third service at the Edgewood Elementary School in the gym, and they are discussing this with Pennsbury now. He stated this would provide seating capacity for another 450 students. He stated another option they are looking at is possibly adding a third service at the Church. He stated they

have recently obtained a Parking Agreement with SEPTA so that on Sunday mornings they can park cars at the SEPTA lot, and the Church has recently purchased two mini-buses so that they can run a shuttle service between the lot and the Church. He stated their long-term plan for the Church is expansion, and they are looking for land that may be available for the Church to purchase. He stated their long-term plan would have a seven year window so that they can find land and raise funds. He stated they are also looking at what the maximum build-out potential would be on their site with Phase II recognizing that they are already experiencing a worship attendance of approximately 600. He stated the portable classrooms would give them the opportunity to bridge the time until they come up with the best long-term solution.

An artist's rendering of the portable classrooms was shown. Pastor Travis stated they will do a new roof and siding to match the existing building.

Ms. Friedman stated she understands that the classrooms are to handle the existing attendance, and Pastor Travis agreed and stated it will give them an opportunity to spread out the existing attendance. Ms. Friedman asked how many students would be in each modular; and Pastor Travis stated they would estimate 20 to 25, but they would need to get the rating per room from the architect. Ms. Friedman asked if anything will change with regard to the traffic patterns, and Pastor Travis stated it would not.

Mr. Dickson stated the portable classrooms are sited where the Phase II expansion would be anticipated, and he asked what will happen when they proceed with the Phase II expansion. Pastor Travis stated they are looking at what they can gain with Phase II and are not sure whether the best option is to move the Church somewhere within Lower Makefield or build Phase II since they have already grown to a worship capacity which is more than they anticipated. He stated with regard to the portable classrooms, they knew that if they were able to stay within the building footprint of what was approved for Phase II, it would be easier for them to do this. He stated the Edgewood Elementary School proposal is also looking favorable, and this will provide additional space as well. Mr. Wolf asked Pastor Travis how they would accommodate those in these modular classrooms if they were going to build Phase II, and Pastor Travis stated he feels they will be able to work with the School District on this or they may have to come back to the Township and request permission to temporarily move the trailers during the construction period for Phase II. Pastor Travis stated their primary goal would be to buy land, and they have made an offer to buy land in Lower Makefield but it appears this property may not be for them. He stated they have also not eliminated the possibility of constructing Phase II.

Mr. Joe Rosina, a Church member and an engineer, was present and stated they did look at the Harris Tract to purchase, but the negotiations are currently not proceeding. He stated they are also evaluating a number of other properties in the Township. Pastor Travis stated their ideal goal would be to sell the existing property and relocate the Church to another property in Lower Makefield.

Mr. Fried asked if the modulars are similar to the temporary units at Edgewood School, and Pastor Travis stated they are although cosmetically they would be different. Mr. Fried asked if they could easily be removed at some point, and Pastor Travis stated they could. Mr. Majewski stated typically modulars are sold to someone else to use on another site. Pastor Travis stated they have put a contract down with Council Rock School District on these modulars subject to Township approval.

Mr. Fried asked about projections for the growth of the Church, and Pastor Travis stated they have been growing by about fifty people per year for the past four to five years. Mr. Fried asked if this has all come from Lower Makefield or are they reaching out to other areas; and Pastor Travis stated they do have a lot of Lower Makefield residents, but they are also reaching out to people in neighboring communities as well. Mr. Fried asked if they are getting unaffiliated families or movement from other Churches, and Pastor Travis stated they are seeing a lot of people from a non-Church background and people who have not been to Church in the last twenty years. Mr. Fried asked if it is possible they will leave Lower Makefield, and Pastor Travis stated they do not want to do this and are looking for property in the Township. He stated other areas have more Churches than Lower Makefield, and they feel part of this community. He stated the further away from Lower Makefield they might move, the more people they could lose based on their current membership. Mr. Fried asked if there is anything now on the site where the modulars would be located, and Pastor Travis stated it is currently grass.

Mr. Pazdera stated the portables do not have plumbing, and Pastor Travis agreed. He showed on the Plan where the restrooms are in the current facility in relation to the proposed location for the modulars. Mr. Pazdera asked if the restrooms were designed to accommodate all the phases or only the original phase, and Mr. Rosina stated they were sized for the full build out of Phase I and Phase II.

Mr. Dickson asked the current number of parking spaces, and Mr. Rosina stated there are 171. He stated they are in accordance with the Ordinance requirements for the full build out of Phase I and Phase II. Mr. Dickson asked how many services they currently have, and Pastor Travis stated they have two services on Sunday morning. Mr. Dickson asked if they are currently using the SEPTA lot and minibuses, and Pastor Travis stated they are not although they are parking some cars at the Edgewood Elementary School with the permission of the School District. Mr. Dickson asked where they would like to see the Church's attendance going, and Pastor Travis stated they are currently growing by 50

people per year, and this is why they are considering a different location. He stated if they grow more, they could go to multiple services and Phase II would give them an auditorium with a seating capacity greater than what they currently have. Mr. Dickson stated he assumes there are times when there are weddings, etc.; and he asked the maximum number of people they could put in the building. Pastor Travis stated he feels the maximum would be 400. Mr. Dickson asked if they use the Edgewood Elementary parking lot when this occurs, and Pastor Travis stated they do. He stated there are a number of people who come on Sunday and stay for both services. Mr. Dickson stated he assumes that when the Plan came before the Township in 1999, they did not anticipate this number of people joining their Congregation; and Pastor Travis stated this is correct and their growth has exceeded what they expected time wise. Mr. Dickson stated it appears that they want to put up the modular classrooms with the intent of using them as a stop gap until they move to another location, and Pastor Travis agreed that this is their preferred option.

Ms. Friedman asked what was their growth projection for the implementation of Phase II, and Mr. Rosina stated they anticipated a building that would seat almost 500 so that with two services they could accommodate 1000; and the next step would be to find another location. Pastor Travis stated they are currently at about 600 people. Ms. Friedman stated it seems that by the time they would build Phase II, they would be maxed out, and Pastor Travis stated this is possible and is why they are looking at relocation.

Mr. Dickson stated they have indicated they want to be able to have the modulares in place by July and there would need to be Permits obtained for all four modulares. He asked if the fact that they are used makes a difference with regard to Township inspections. Ms. Frick stated the same inspections would be required including a footing inspection; but she added it does give her a feeling of comfort knowing that children have been using these in a School previously. Mr. Dickson asked if the timeline they are looking for is realistic; and Ms. Frick stated if they have to go to the Zoning Hearing Board and get approval such that they would not have to go through a Revised Land Development it may be possible, but if they have to go through Revised Land Development, she does not feel it is possible. She stated they are present this evening requesting that they not have to go through Revised Land Development. She stated if they only have to get Building Permits, the Township will do everything they can to meet their needs.

Mr. Pazdera stated typically with the modulares, they come with a certificate from the manufacturer indicating they were constructed to meet the Building Codes at the time. Ms. Frick asked how long the modulares have been at their current location, and Pastor Travis stated they have been there for twenty years. He stated they do have all the documentation. Mr. Dickson stated he worked at a School where they had modulares which were twenty years old; and when they removed them, they were not in good shape. Pastor Travis stated they did inspect them and they will re-roof and re-side them.

Mr. Fried asked the cost, and Pastor Travis stated total cost including moving the modulars and refurbishing them is approximately \$200,000. He stated most of this money has already been raised. Mr. Fried asked if they will be used for classes or services, and Pastor Travis stated they will be used as classrooms both on Sunday and during the week on Tuesday and Wednesday nights by children and youth. He also feels they will be used by other groups occasionally. Mr. Fried asked how seriously overcrowded they are at the current time, and Pastor Travis stated they are crowded and really need to do something. He stated their growth particularly in the last two years has put them to where they are now.

Ms. Friedman stated in 1995 they were granted a Special Exception conditioned on a traffic study, and she asked if they have this. Mr. Rosina stated they submitted everything. Ms. Frick stated their records do not indicate that a traffic study was submitted. Mr. Majewski stated since this is on a State road, they did need to get a PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit and had to submit something to PennDOT to justify how many cars were coming in and out; however, Ms. Frick stated she does not have this in her files. Ms. Frick stated where a traffic study would have been submitted, it indicates on the paperwork “not applicable.” Mr. Majewski stated the Township has an Act 209 Traffic Impact Study where they studied the entire Township and looked at where road improvements were needed which is typically why you would need a traffic study to see if there is a need for road widening or turning lanes, and typically a project like this would not be required to have this.

Mr. Wolf stated he has the approval letter dated 2/9/98 from Jeff Garton which is the review letter and on page 2, Item 5 it says, “The issue of the amount of traffic impact fee pursuant to the Lower Makefield Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance would be reserved to Final Plan consideration.” He stated it may be that the Supervisors accepted a fee in lieu of that traffic report which is why they cannot find it in the records; and Ms. Frick stated this is what Mr. Majewski was referring to with regard to the Act 209.

Mr. Donaghy stated the Special Exception was Conditioned on submitting a traffic study. Mr. Bush stated a traffic study from the late 1990’s would probably not be useful. Mr. Donaghy stated if they did not do what they were supposed to do, the Special Exception would not be valid unless somewhere along the line it was waived. He stated he recognizes that this was fifteen years ago, and from a practical standpoint the Township has obviously acknowledged that they can operate in accordance with the Special Exception so he does not feel realistically this could be challenged. He agrees that a fifteen year old traffic study would be of little use.

Mr. Bush stated they indicated that these are twenty year old trailers, and he asked if they know the manufacturer's life expectancy for them. Mr. Rosin stated he anticipates that they will be totally refurbished with new siding and a new roof, and they would inspect them while working on them and they would repair anything that is not up to standards. He stated they have looked at the steel work underneath and feel that they are in good condition. Ms. Frick stated they will have to get the proper Permits. Pastor Travis stated the decking, ramps, and roof supports will all be new. Mr. Dickson stated they will also have to build foundations for them.

Mr. Dickson asked about the time frame if they go before the Zoning Hearing Board. Ms. Frick stated once they make Application before the Zoning Hearing Board it takes thirty to forty-five days for them to get before the Zoning Hearing Board once the Application is deemed received. She stated it will be very tight getting them in place by July. Mr. Dickson asked the impact if the project were delayed, and Pastor Travis stated if they were not in place by July, they would rent large tents as they did last year for their Camp. He stated their next goal after July would be to have the modulares in place by Labor Day since their fall ministries begin with the School year.

Mr. Fried stated they had indicated they were looking at moving in seven years, and he asked if the installation of the modulares would be considered their expansion that would accommodate them for seven years or would they have to do something else. Pastor Travis stated they are actively talking to Pennsbury about using Edgewood Elementary School, and they could simultaneously run another worship service at that location. He stated the conversations with the School Board have been very positive to date. He stated they could also add a third Sunday morning service very early or in the evening. He stated they are looking at a seven-year window to give them time to do fundraising, purchase the land, and do the construction.

Mr. Mark Parry, 500 American Drive, stated he is a member of the Church, and they are limited with what they can do at the Church given the existing classroom space. He stated his children attend the evening programs and space is limited then as well.

Ms. Frick stated they are asking not to have to go through a Revised Land Development. Mr. Majewski stated he believes what they are proposing is similar to building Phase IB and Phase II which is already approved. He stated all the parking and stormwater management are already in place; and provided they meet all the Code requirements for the Trailers and handicap accessibility, he does not have a problem with what they are proposing. Mr. Dickson stated he assumes stormwater management is not an issue, and Mr. Majewski stated it is not since they will actually have less impervious surface than the total build out and all the stormwater facilities have been installed for the entire project. Ms. Frick stated they had to do them up front for both phases. Mr. Pazdera asked about the roof leaders from the modulares, and it was noted it will go across the grass. Mr. Majewski stated he is not aware of any stormwater problems in this area.

Mr. Dickson asked if they would be subject to LID, and Mr. Donaghy stated this is why he asked whether or not they had put in all their site improvements since once they received Plan Development Approval, they would have protection against any changes in the Ordinances for a five-year period which can be extended as to certain issues if they complete all the site improvements within that period of time. He stated based on this, he does not feel they would be subject to LID.

Mr. Fried asked if there is any concern about aesthetics since they are only seeing an architect's rendering. He asked if there is something they could require so that they can make sure that it is pleasing to the eye including shrubbery, trees, type of siding, etc. Ms. Frick stated if the Planning Commission is concerned with how it will look, the Planning Commission could make a recommendation. She stated the Applicants have already indicated that they will make the siding match the existing building. She stated the Planning Commission could make a recommendation on plantings. Mr. Rosina stated there will be a "skirt" that will match. It will be vinyl siding. Pastor Travis stated they will match the siding to the original building. Mr. Rosina stated he feels the members of the Church will want them to make sure that it is aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Majewski stated the Planning Commission could make it a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that they match the siding as they have indicated.

Mr. Pazdera asked about the mechanical units, and Mr. Rosina stated they will be refurbished if necessary, but they are proposing to use what they have assuming they are in working order. He stated they have a team looking into that. Mr. Pazdera stated the ventilation requirements have changed Code-wise, and Mr. Rosina stated they are aware of the Codes. Mr. Pazdera asked if the windows are operable, and Pastor Travis stated there are no windows currently, and they will add two windows per unit which will be inspected by the Township.

Mr. Donaghy asked if they intend that these will be temporary for a seven year period; and if relief is granted, they would agree that the modulars would be removed in seven years unless they receive further approvals from the Township, and Pastor Travis agreed. Mr. Rosina stated they might want to be able to continue to have them there for a subsequent purchaser, and Mr. Donaghy stated he feels that they would have to come back to the Township to request this.

Mr. McLaughlin asked what a new modular would cost; and Pastor Travis stated they priced out two units, and it would be \$235,000 for a three to four year rental. He stated the moves are costly as are the electric hook ups whether they purchase them or rent.

Mr. Dickson moved, Ms. Friedman seconded and it was unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of T.P.N. #20-34-021 to modify the Land Development Approval given by the Board of Supervisors (Approval received on 5/3/99) to construct four temporary modular classrooms in lieu of Phase IB and Phase II of the approved Final Land Development Plan subject to the requirement that the roofing, windows, and siding match the existing structure. The modulars must be removed no later than seven years from the date of approval. The plantings and/or shrubbery must be consistent with existing landscaping.

#### DISCUSSION REGARDING PLANNING COMMISSION INFORMATIONAL PACKET BEING SENT ELECTRONIC VERSUS PAPER

Ms. Frick stated she has had discussions with Jay who indicated he could set up the Planning Commission with a packet like the Board of Supervisors get but they cannot do a VPN because of security issues. Ms. Frick stated she could send out the packet by e-mail and this could be set up in two to three weeks. She stated this would not include the Plans until they get them in a PDF. Ms. Frick stated if they do the packet in this way, the Planning Commission would be required to print out themselves whatever documents they wanted to have in hard copy.

Mr. Fried stated he would like to have a schedule so he would know when he would have the entire packet since previously he was receiving things piecemeal from the different reviewing agencies. Ms. Frick stated there were problems with some Boards sending things out to people themselves and she was not aware of this or given copies. She stated she understands that the Planning Commission is still receiving things directly from the EAC. She stated how it should work is that the Planning Commission would get the packet just as they do now, but rather than having it delivered to their home, it would be sent by e-mail once a week. She stated she still does not have control over what the other Boards are sending the Planning Commission.

Ms. Friedman stated she had indicated that she would like a list of the things that are normally given to the Planning Commission so that they could check them off as they come in and know that they have a full packet. Ms. Frick stated there would be a cover sheet with the packet to show everything that is included. Ms. Friedman stated if it is coming by e-mail the same way it does now, there will be information that she would not need to print out for months. Ms. Frick stated a lot of what she gets does not come by e-mail; and items she gets by e-mail will be forwarded to the Planning Commission, but other items will have to be scanned. Mr. Bush stated the problem is that they get things in the packet that they do not need for months, and it may be more difficult to go back and find these things in their e-mail. He stated he feels the checklist they would like to see is a list of items they have been sent with the dates sent for the item that is on the

Agenda for the next meeting. Ms. Frick stated she was only speaking about the list that indicates what is in the packet being sent. Ms. Friedman stated the problem is they would have to go back and find these items that had been spent over a period of time and pull up each individual item for something that is going to be put on an upcoming Agenda. She said the other option would be to print out all the information she receives on her own.

Mr. Pazdera stated if there was a VPN it would be much easier to find what they needed when they needed it for each project. He stated now they are getting things six months in advance, and he does not feel the Planning Commission members are going to be able to keep track of it. Ms. Friedman stated the only way they could would be if they were printing everything out themselves which defeats the intention of reducing use of paper.

Mr. Dickson stated the problem is that they get material in a packet that they may not need to bring to a meeting for six month. Ms. Frick stated the Planning Commission gets the material when she gets it. Mr. Dickson stated if it were to all be done by e-mail, the Planning Commission would then have to go back and search for everything. He stated one of the problems he has had is that some of the transmissions wind up in his junk mail particularly from the EAC. Ms. Frick stated there have been times in the past when she did not receive copies of documents from the EAC that had been sent to the Planning Commission directly from the EAC. Mr. Dickson stated until the technology is available that enables the Planning Commission to do this by e-mail in a way that is beneficial to the Planning Commission, he feels they should continue the process they have now and revisit it again in six months.

Mr. McLaughlin stated the BOS has a server that all of their files are in and the Board members access it with a password. Mr. Pazdera stated this is what the Planning Commission was looking for. Mr. McLaughlin stated they need to find out if there can be a system set up that is password protected for the Planning Commission like the one for the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Dickson stated there would have to be a separate folder for each Subdivision and Land Development Application; and as something comes in, it would be put in that folder, and the Planning Commission would then be able to access that folder and all the information that had come in would be in that folder. Ms. Frick agreed to discuss this again with Jay and will report back. Mr. Pazdera asked Mr. McLaughlin if they are able to access this wirelessly with a laptop during the meeting, and Mr. McLaughlin stated Mr. Maloney does this now and he believes he does this wirelessly. Ms. Frick stated she will discuss this with Jay as well.

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Mr. Bush asked about the Plans being on PDF, and Ms. Frick stated they are still working on this since some agencies are not yet set up for this.

There being no further business, Mr. Dickson moved, Mr. Bush seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Dickson, Secretary