

**Planning Commission
Minutes
October 7, 2024
7:00 PM**

Present:

Brett MacKay, Chairman
Nancy Becker
Douglas Leach
Michael Main
Joseph Vavra
Ed Buonocore
Dennis McGeehan

Absent:

Patricia Younce
Matt Chartrand

Staff:

Mary Stover, Township Engineer CKS

Supervisor Mr. Kofi Osei was present.

Supervisor Ms. Joyce Snyder was present.

Approval of the August 5, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Mr. Vavra requested that Mr. Brugger reference Lower Salford's square footage restriction for the chicken ordinance discussion and amend as appropriate. Mr. Brugger confirmed that there may be a typo, and he will investigate. Mr. Vavra made a motion to approve the September 9, 2024 meeting minutes, as amended, and Ms. Becker seconded. Mr. MacKay abstains. The motion carries.

Old Business

ZA 2024-01 – Main Street Overlay Concept

Presented by Mr. Mark Nicoletti, President & Co-CEO of PSDC, Mr. Matt McHugh, attorney with Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg, LLP, and Mr. John Alejnikov engineer with Bohler.

Mr. Nicoletti introduced himself and his company. He provided a verbal vision of the proposed Main Street concept to the Commission. He stated that the concept of a Main Street and a downtown goes back to 1996. He stated that in 2020 the east side of Sumneytown Pike received zoning approvals, however Covid began. In 2022 his company began to look at the 30-some acres of office park on the other side of Sumneytown Pike and began to incorporate these properties into an expanded scope of Main Street. At this point Mr. Nicoletti is pointing to and

referencing "Concept Plans" projected on the screen. He talked about how he listens and works with the Township in order to form a good relationship.

Mr. Nicoletti went on to state that they have made huge concessions based on the last meetings before the Commission. They have addressed the maximum height of buildings on the east side of Sumneytown. There is no residential proposed on the east side, again pointing to the Concept Plan. He pointed to the willingness to make concessions. He stated that residential development along the west side of Sumneytown Pike needs the height requested for apartment buildings. These units will be constructed over parking within the building. He stated that it is what people like to have. He said that most of these buildings would be up against the Turnpike. Mr. Nicoletti said this residential component is a critical part of the business plan for Main Street to be successful. There has to be a certain number of residents on campus. He said that this formula will help resuscitate the empty office buildings.

Mr. Nicoletti then began to discuss the Veterans Park. He said this project ties together with the Main Street project. He stated that he has met with the senator a couple of times. He has walked through the park and emphasized how impactful it can be to the town and history. He provided a video on the screen for the Commission members to see. It was a video of current conditions and historical features of the park. He stated that there is no proper access to the park and no room for parking.

Mr. Nicoletti discussed the Main Street project again and how there is a piece of land that he wants to have for dedicated parking. He stated that the Township owns this piece of land. He goes on to say that if the land were to be used as parking, the existing pedestrian bridge will and can be utilized.

Mr. Nicoletti proposed to trade land. The Township would trade the property at the eastern end of the Main Street concept for land near Veterans Park. Mr. Nicoletti shows the Commission an exhibit of the proposed land trade. He stated that he would donate land which has access to Tomlinson Road. He said that without access to parking and an accessway, Veterans Park is not going to happen. He said that now is the time to do the swap because grant applications are being submitted for the park. He also said that the current Township property is important to the Main Street concept.

He asked that the Planning Commission provide a positive recommendation on the proposed Main Street language at their November meeting.

Supervisor Snyder asked about the residential aspect along the west side of Sumneytown Pike and how those residents would get to the commercial businesses on the east side. Mr. Nicoletti proposed that the project would have to "quiet down" Sumneytown Pike at the intersection near Margaritas.

Mr. McGeehan asked about the piece of land next to the SKF building. Mr. Nicoletti said that they have suspended any planning on that land for now.

Ms. Tina Gallager, resident, stated she lives off of Reiff Road and asked about properties surrounding Walgreens. Mr. Nicoletti said that the current height restriction is around 50' but is proposing all buildings would be one (1) story retail.

Supervisor Osei stated that he had reservations of the land swap. He did agree that PSDC has made concessions. He also said that development could likely hurt stormwater issues in the area. Supervisor Osei noted that on the office side of the development, the amount of required parking is a lot and would like to see a zoning revision. He stated that he is in favor of 1.5 spaces per residential units.

Mr. Alejnikov stated that stormwater will be required to be controlled during any project. Mr. Nicoletti admitted that the original overlay had its issues and took a long time to get going. He talked about the proposed zoning overlay and how development will be focused around Forty Foot Road and Sumneytown Pike. Mr. Nicoletti felt that they have met the open space requirements.

Mr. Main brought up the new height restrictions. He asked what the previously proposed building heights of "H" and "K" buildings were. Mr. Alejnikov stated that they were three or four story. Mr. Main then asked about the western side development and concerns around a proposal of 70' height. Mr. Nicoletti said they will need the height because they need residential over the parking and need around four to five stories of residential. He did say that he would have to defer to the market conditions at the time. Ms. Stover indicated that the current permitted height is 50'. Mr. McHugh referenced past discussions about keeping open space and changing the surface parking to a parking garage style. Mr. Nicoletti stated that the Marriott is 70' in height and he hasn't heard a complaint regarding the height.

Mr. Main addressed the ability of emergency crews to respond to a fire or emergency in a building that tall. Mr. Nicoletti agreed that it needs to be addressed. Mr. Main stated that there is more risk of fire in residential because there are kitchens in those units and typically not in hotels. Mr. Main feels that emergency response to top floors needs to be available before people move into a building. Mr. Nicoletti said they will have to collectively look into getting a ladder truck.

Ms. Becker brought up ownership and accessibility issues for parcels located along the Turnpike. Mr. Alejnikov stated that they have researched the properties and that it does not appear any property was dedicated to the Township. They conducted a title search. He said there was a walking trail easement recorded on the particular the property though. Mr. Nicoletti stated that he would be willing to dedicate or provide an easement along Bustard Road for a trail connection.

Ms. Gallager asked if then entire parcel that currently belongs to the Township, within the Main Street concept, was to become a parking lot. Mr. McHugh pointed out on the concept plan that there was to be an area of open space, closer to Reiff Road, and the area closer to Forty Foot Road was to be a parking lot. Mr. Nicoletti stated that he has been working with property owners in the area regarding a potential purchase, specifically the Trongone's.

Mr. Joe Silverman, resident, addressed two pieces of proposed development property that are currently owned by the Township. He would like further clarification and the possibility for a subdivision. Mr. Nicoletti stated that if PSDC can acquire the properties they would likely be consolidated. Discussion occurred regarding the open space and proposed land swap between members of the Commission and Mr. Nicoletti.

Mr. Main would like clarification on the equitable ownership of properties by PSDC regarding the concept plan presented. He said he still has not seen this. He has concerns regarding rezoning property that is not owned by PSDC. Mr. McHugh stated that they would follow all MPC notice requirements. Mr. Nicoletti stated that by the next meeting they would likely have Mr. Trongone's permission to include property in the rezoning. Mr. McHugh stated that by the time a Conditional Use application would be submitted, PSDC would have standing.

Mr. Buonocore asked how the high-rise residential buildings with exit the property. Mr. Nicoletti stated to both roads of Bustard and Sumneytown Pike. Mr. Buonocore referenced the additional traffic and how it will affect pedestrians. Mr. Nicoletti stated that the buildings were designed for office buildings which creates more traffic than residential. Mr. Alejnikov stated that PSDC will have to meet pedestrian safety warrants set by the Township and County. The Township will have to be satisfied that there will be safe crossings. Ms. Gallager stated that she has crossed Sumneytown Pike and would not recommend crossing it as designed.

Mr. Nicoletti asked the Planning Commission to keep the process moving.

Other Business

Mr. Leach stated that he has accepted a position as a member of the Township staff and will be resigning from the Commission immediately. He was excited to be able to continue to work with the Planning Commission.

Mr. Vavra made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Becker seconded. All were in favor. 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,



Will Brugger

Director of Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement