

**Planning Commission
Minutes
April 7, 2025
7:00 PM**

Present:

Brett MacKay, Chairman
Nancy Becker
Joseph Vavra
Ed Buonocore
Dennis McGeehan
Rich Marino
Craig Brown
Patricia Younce

Absent:

Michael Main

Staff:

Mary Stover, Township Engineer CKS
Will Brugger, Director Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement
Douglas Leach, Assistant Zoning and Planning Officer

Supervisor Mr. Kofi Osei was present.

Approval of the March 3, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to approve the March 3, 2025 minutes, by Mrs. Becker. Mr. Vavra seconded. All were in favor with Mrs. Younce abstaining.

Old Business

ZA-2025-01-R-15 Cluster Single Family Zoning Amendment

Presented by Mr. Chris Canavan, President WB Homes. Mr. Canavan reminded the PC that the 33-acre development was at the corner of Kriebel and Anders Roads also known as the Walton Farm. Mr. Canavan noted that he was here to address the text amendment that he presented last month creating R-14 cluster single family-detached dwelling use by right in the R-175 residential zoning district. The proposed property would yield 34 small lot single family homes on 14,000 square foot lots (the text amendment calls for a minimum of 12,000 square foot lots) allowing for side-entry garages and still retain the existing family farm. This would allow approximately 13 acres of open space which would retain the current heavily wooded area and provide a buffer to the Pennsylvania Turnpike. At the suggestion of Mr. MacKay, Mr. Canavan discussed comments from CKS Engineers in their letter of March 11, 2025, the first comment requiring discussion was in regard to expanding the “Special Criteria for R-14 Cluster Single Family-Detached Dwellings to include a requirement for maximum building height of 35 feet not exceeding 2 ½

stories. Mr. Canavan noted that he felt this issue was adequately addressed in the current wording and noted that the height limit would not change in the proposed amendment, making it superfluous.

Mr. Canavan next addressed the point that maximum density requirements are not typically provided for single-family detached dwellings. Mr. MacKay in his written comments, agreed with the developer that the maximum density figure should remain and the PC was in agreement.

Mr. Canavan next addressed the question of why the proposed impervious surface was increased to 25%/45% from 20%/40%. He explained that the aim was to reduce lot size to allow for additional open space but not to necessarily reduce the size of the homes. Mr. Brown asked about how open space is related to storm water management but agreed to hold his question due to it being addressed in the letter. Mr. Marino asked, given the size of the lots, if setbacks would allow for pools, etc. and was answered that in most cases they would.

In response to the CKS comment that current wording indicates minimum lot size of 12,000 square feet, the proposed amendment calls for a minimum of 12,000 square feet with an average lot size of 14,000 square feet, Mr. Canavan replied that he had no objection to retaining current wording.

Discussion followed regarding providing buffers. Mr. Canavan noted that typically a buffer was not required between “like” properties (in this case, the existing single-family homes). Mr. MacKay suggested that some sort of buffer be installed. Mrs. Stover asked if there should be a buffer on the Freddy Hill side of the property. Mr. Buonocore felt it was more a matter of personal preference and noted that a buffer would make the properties appear smaller. Mr. Canavan agreed to work with Mrs. Stover on an acceptable solution. Mrs. Stover asked Mr. Canavan to confirm that no additional buffering was needed along Kriebel Road apart from street trees.

Item #8 in the CKS letter noted that a minimum of 35% of the gross tract acreage be set aside as open space. Mr. Canavan stated that he believed that the ordinance stated that if there was an oversized lot on the property a portion could be applied to open space and that was the case here with the existing home and its outbuildings and thus felt it appropriate to carry that language forward.

It was agreed that minimum parking requirements of two off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit be written in as a “use” under R-14.

The last item discussed from the CKS letter concerned meeting the minimum requirements of SALDO Section 136-502, Community Facilities. In the SALDO there are a certain number of required community facilities based on the number of units. Storm water facilities and parking areas are not included per SALDO. Typically, if this is not provided, the Developer is required to pay the “fee in lieu of.” The current plan does not show any playground or neighborhood park acreage. Mr. Canavan noted that open space not deeded to the Township would be deeded to the HOA and that WB Homes would probably pay a “fee in lieu of” to satisfy the requirements. He went on to describe the proposed trail tying Kriebel into Anders Road.

Mrs. Becker expressed concern regarding the lack of sidewalks on Kriebel Road. Mr. Canavan answered that the idea was to utilize the trail that WB was proposing for the interior of the community. Mrs. Younce said that she supported the addition of sidewalk along Kriebel stating how unsafe it was for pedestrian traffic. Mrs. Younce added that many people were looking to walk to the existing trail and wouldn't necessarily be interested in using the projects trails. Mrs. Becker added that the PC is no longer allowing waivers for sidewalks. Mr. Canavan agreed to re-look at the issue. Mr. Buonocore asked if the stormwater basins would be fenced; Mr. Canavan replied that they were not typically fenced unless required by the Township. Ms. Stover replied that our ordinance requires fence only if the basins are of a certain depth.

Discussion followed regarding the CKS comment that the proposed minimum development site area is 10 acres, and Mr. Canavan showed the PC open parcels in R-175 and R-180 districts and the PC agreed that 10 acres made sense rather than increasing to 20 acres.

Mr. Canavan next addressed the Montgomery County Planning Commission letter of March 27, 2025, in particular the requirement to preserve 35% of the property as open space. There was also discussion as to whether stormwater management facilities were included in the open space calculation. Mr. MacKay noted that his "R-14 Cluster Comments" memo dated April 1, 2025 addressed the need to limit the area of open space used for stormwater facilities to 15% or 20%. The PC felt that 20% would be appropriate. Mr. MacKay added that his suggested revisions to section 7, "Requirements for Open Space" apply to future uses as well as this property. He suggested that the R-14 Cluster standards be included in Section 502.F with the other special development requirements rather than in the R-175 district should these requirements be applied to other districts.

There being no additional questions from the PC, Mr. MacKay asked for questions/comments from the public:

Mrs. Cheryl Portman, resident, asked for clarification on the property location in relation to Sunnyside Pike. Mr. Canavan showed an aerial view of the property.

Mrs. Laura Tracy, resident, asked about the possibility of adding a bicycle path on Kriebel Road. Mr. Brown asked which side, given restraints, would be best. Mr. Canavan answered that WB would look at alternatives and added that before the plan was finalized, the neighbors would be consulted. Ms. Tracy added that the site line from Kriebel Road should be addressed.

Supervisor Osei noted the importance of considering any future development in this immediate area regarding connectivity and problems increased traffic will potentially cause.

Mrs. Kristin Warner, resident, asked what the stormwater basins would look like, and Mr. Canavan replied that they were not the large bowl-like structures of the past.

Mrs. Younce made the motion that the Planning Commission recommend that the Board advertise the ordinance subject to the revisions made tonight and recirculate to the Montgomery

County Planning Commission and the PC in time for the May meeting to be followed by a hearing in May. Mrs. Becker seconded the motion. All were in favor.

New Business

Appointment to America 250 Committee

Mrs. Younce nominated Mrs. Becker to the Committee and Mr. Vavra seconded the motion.

Mr. Vavra made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Becker seconded. All were in favor – 7:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Leach

Doug Leach
Assistant Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer