

Planning Commission
Wednesday, February 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The February 24, 2021 public meeting of the Upper Makefield Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Kathleen Pisauro at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were the following members of the Planning Commission: Chair Kathleen Pisauro, Vice Chair Phil Feig, Member Bud Baldwin, Member Harry Barfoot, Member Jack Wiseman. Member Ken Rubin was absent. Also, in attendance were Mr. Edward Murphy, Richard Zaveta, Travis Hutchinson, Megan Hutchinson, Anand Bhatt, Township Solicitor Mary Eberle, Zoning Director Dave Kuhns, Zoning Administrative Assistant Denise Burmester.

Public Comment: No public comment presented.

Confirmation of a Quorum: Chair Kathleen Pisauro confirmed a quorum.

Planning Commission 2021 Reorganization:

Mr. Baldwin made a motion to nominate Kathleen Pisauro as Chair and Phil Feig as Vice Chair for 2021. Mr. Barfoot seconded. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes:

A. October 28, 2020:

Mr. Feig made a motion to approve the minutes of August 26, 2020. Mr. Barfoot seconded the motion. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Discussion Items:

I. Land Development

A. Brownsburg Estates Concept Plan, 386 Brownsburg Road East:

Mr. Murphy opened the discussion of the Concept Plan for 386 Brownsburg Road East with an introduction of Richard Zaveta, Owner and Contractor, Travis Hutchinson, Contractor and Anand Bhatt, Engineer. The Concept Plan was presented to the Board of Supervisors February 2, 2021. Mr. Murphy explained that Mid-February 2020 the Board of Supervisors approved a five-lot subdivision plan, known as Phase 11 (eleven) of Brownsburg Estates. The Planning Commission reviewed the approved five-lot subdivision plan in January 2020. The five-lot plan was part of a master plan and conditional use agreement approved twenty-five years ago. Richard Zaveta signed an agreement with Karobots to purchase the five lots. Richard Zaveta's plans for the five-lot subdivision are different from the plans that were approved 25 years ago. Mr. Murphy explained that the intent for this meeting was for Richard Zaveta to present the revised plans and packet, identical to what was shared with the Board of Supervisors on February 2, 2021, allowing the Planning Commission an introduction to the re-engineered plans so when they are formally presented they will be familiar with the concept. Mr. Murphy noted that this plan still requires re-engineering and that Mr. Bhatt was currently working on this. The revised plan, once fully engineered, will be reviewed and approved by the Township Engineer, reviewed by the Planning Commission and Approved by the Board of Supervisors for a fully amended plan approval.

Mr. Zaveta and Mr. Bhatt then presented the plans starting with the following overview. Mr. Zaveta would like to modify the plans to preserve the features of the original property, to include the sycamore trees and old specimen trees that reside on the 10-acre property. Mr. Zaveta noted that the plan that was approved 25 years ago would not be a plan he would be interested in building due to the lack of unique characteristics that are Zaveta's aesthetic. Mr. Zaveta believes that the new plan incorporates 'natural common sense' taking into account the property's natural resource assets and preserving the 85 sycamore trees. Mr. Zaveta presented the overall aerial plan and new plan rendering to illustrate the following features of the new plan:

- Trees will be preserved.
- Road and lot configuration will remain as originally planned.
- Roadway will be narrowed to 18 feet and cul-de-sac reduced to a more manageable size, similar to the other Zaveta communities in Upper Makefield. This configuration will reduce the impervious surface of the subdivision by 9,000 sq.ft.
- Stormwater basins have been configured in large sycamore groves and the Stormwater Management System has been altered to subsurface trenches along the road, along the pond and discharge into the pond used for golf course irrigation. This will reduce water draw for the golf course and obtain full water recharge. Mr. Zaveta is also suggesting the addition of another trench along the pond to provide another level of filtration. The Golf Course has provided Mr. Zaveta with their approval of this plan and an easement for the discharge. This revised Stormwater Management System is much easier for the residents to maintain.
- Elevated sand mounds, that need to be configured at 4 to 1, have been replaced with at grade denitrification onsite wastewater treatment systems. The original plan sand mound systems would have required removal of additional trees that were not shown on the original plan.
- Home placement has also been reconfigured to fit in the topography of the trees.

Discussion of Planning Commission Members included the following:

- Members questioned lot size and Mr. Zaveta explained the lot size is the same as the original plan. Lot 1 is 2.3 acres; Lot 2 is 1.7 acres, Lot 3 is 1.8 acres, Lot 4 is 1.7 acres and Lot 5 is 1.5 acres.
- It was confirmed that the Subdivision entrance will remain in the same location and the roadway will remain the same but be more conservative in width.
- It was confirmed by Mr. Zaveta that there will be a Home Owners Association that will maintain the Stormwater Systems and the private roads. A maintenance enunciator that will notify the HOA Management when there is something that needs attention. This will be a 24/7 overseer to the community.
- It was confirmed that the cul-de-sac will be paved in cobblestone for a high-end road surface, with the driveway aprons having the same cobblestone. Guest pull overs have been designed for each driveway with cobblestone to reduce on street parking. Any costs for repairs to the cobblestone would be the HOA's responsibility.
- Members offered history of how this subdivision was part of the Clark estate that was subdivided between this new subdivision and the golf course.

- Emergency Service access was compared to other Zaveta developments via a question from the Planning Commission Members. Mr. Zaveta referenced other Upper Makefield communities Zaveta has designed. The Schwartz Track roadway is far narrower than 18 feet and over 1,000 feet in length. The Windrows Edge, a.k.a. the Yates Preserve, roadway is 710 feet in length and 18 feet in width. This new Brownsburg Estates community's roadway is 490 feet in length with the 18 feet in width, with golf cart perimeter along the road. This new project is the shortest community Zaveta has done in the Township and the roadway is the same width or wider than the others. The road is wide enough to allow two trucks to pass each other. Mr. Murphy offered that there is a draft pipe off the pond for water access and the turning radius in the cul-de-sac.
- The members clarified with Mr. Zaveta that the approved plan was to remove 85 trees, but the new plan Zaveta is putting forth will remove approximately 30 trees. Mr. Zaveta also showed that additional specimen trees will be added to the entrance for a hedgerow behind the site line. Mr. Kuhns did clarify that through the re-engineering efforts the trees that are removed will be replaced with like size and caliber.

Ms. Pisauro closed the discussion and thanked Mr. Zaveta and Mr. Murphy for the presentation.

II. Sign Review:

A. Barone, 1118 Taylorsville Road

Mr. Kuhns represented Mr. Barone, the owner at 1118 Taylorsville Road. Mr. Barone has installed a sign for his new business 'Tommy's Burgers'. Mr. Barone is using the original Gabriel's sign structure, inserting a new sign insert for the new business. Mr. Kuhns explained that Mr. Barone is open to accommodating reasonable visual improvements to the sign.

Discussion of Planning Commission Members included the following:

- Approval of the original Gabriel's sign was installed before the Washington Crossing Overlay ordinance put in place in 1980's. This sign was grandfathered in at that time. This grandfather clause would allow Mr. Barone to use the old structure as long as it remained in place, replacing the insert. Transfer of property does not require compliance with the Washington Crossing Overlay ordinance. If the sign deteriorates to the point of requiring replacement, then the new sign would be required to be compliant with the Washington Crossing Overlay.
- Lighting requirements in the ordinance were published in 2006 and include shielding the light as to not impede the vision of drivers of vehicles on the roadway. There are several signs that currently may be impeding drivers by the light shining in the line of sight, but those signs were put in prior to 2006. Safety issues can be investigated by Zoning.
- There was a safety concern that the electrical box is exposed which needs to be resolved to cover any live wires.
- Suggested sign improvements to include finials, painting, a monument base and plantings to conceal electrical components to add conformity to the other businesses in the area.

- There is recognition that Mr. Barone is a small business owner and that he is starting a business in difficult times, but the overlay ordinance does require signs to be submitted to the Planning Commission for approval prior to installing the sign to avoid nonconformity that might incur a cost for reworking the sign to meet regulations of the property.

The Planning Commission members recommended that sign improvements should include finials, painting, a monument base and plants, all to be overseen by Mr. Kuhns granting Mr. Kuhns authority to approve the final design.

Liaison Report:

No Report.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mr. Baldwin to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mr. Feig. Motion carried by a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Approved: March 24, 2021