

MINUTES OF MEETING  
PERKASIE PLANNING COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 24, 2014

620 West Chestnut Street  
Perkasie, Pa. 18944

ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commission Members:

Earl Richard Hendricks  
John Cornelius  
Barbara Faust  
Ross Gardner  
Nelson Hollenbach  
Eileen Bradley  
Richard Packard (absent)

Borough of Perkasie:

Brandy Mckeever, Code Enforcement Admin.  
Nathan Fox, Borough Solicitor  
Doug Rossino, Borough Engineer  
Jim Ryder, Council Member  
James Purcell, Council Member  
Flo Ann Frei, Council Member

Bucks County Planning Commission Consultant: Maureen Wheatley

Richard Hendricks called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon a motion by Eileen Bradley, seconded by John Cornelius, the Planning Commission meeting minutes of the July 9, 2014 were unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Ordinance No. 978 Open Space Performance Subdivision I & II**

Nate Fox gave an overview of the discussions with Hallmark Homes who identified issues with utilizing the current requirements for cluster developments as they have unique site conditions on both the Church of the Nazarene site and the Kratz site. In response to the circumstances and direction from Borough Council two new zoning uses were prepared in order to develop the site. In exchange for addressing the issues in two new ordinances the applicant agreed to provide more

stringent open space and buffering. The Open Space Performance Subdivision I requires between 5.01-10 acres, a max density of 5.5 dwelling units per net acre, a 35% maximum impervious surface ratio, maximum lot coverage at 35%, minimum open space ratio at 45%, a minimum of 6,500 square foot lot area and a minimum lot width of 60 ft. The Open Space Performance Subdivision II requires a minimum site area of 10.01 acres, a max density of 5.5 dwelling units per net acre, a 35% maximum impervious surface ratio, maximum lot coverage at 35%, minimum open space at 45%, a minimum of 11,500 square foot lot area.

Mike Peters, Attorney; Richard Carroll and Jon Tresslar were also in attendance. It was commented that these Ordinances were a result of feedback from the Borough as to Hallmark Homes concerns and that they are in support of the Ordinance.

Jon Tresslar provided an overview of the new Ordinances. He explained the lot width was slightly reduced; the percentage of lot coverage, impervious surface coverage, open space percentage and the buffer class were all addressed which would allow development to commence.

Mike Peters acknowledged the old Ordinance would have actually allowed them to do more homes than they desire.

John Cornelius acknowledged that the Commission had just received the Bucks County Planning Commission review letter that evening.

Jon Tresslar noted that the existing cluster ordinance provides for a larger number of homes but restricts development in a way that isn't practical in the way of impervious surface and lot coverage for individual lots. Currently by right they could utilize larger lots but they prefer smaller lots to allow for more open space. It was noted that these proposed Ordinances would not only work for them but others.

Nate Fox commented that the Nazarene parcel has unique features and explained the intent of the proposed Ordinances. He then went on to describe the Kratz parcel and noted an overlay district wasn't proposed in order to avoid spot zoning but rather prepared these new districts to provide maximum open space with the needed relief in order for the parcels to be marketable while promoting economic development.

Richard Carroll noted the housing trends currently and that the desire is houses on small lots that back up to open space. This isn't so much a cluster ordinance as an open space preservation ordinance.

There was discussion on the existing cluster Ordinance and the importance of looking at the proposed Ordinances in general rather than specifically in relation to these projects. There was further discussion on the plan presented and how the proposed Ordinance came into fruition. It was noted that the Borough is proposing the Ordinance.

Jon Tresslar went over conceptual plans based on the proposed Ordinances. He then commented that the Nazarene site would have 18 units surrounded by open space and protecting existing nature features on the site. The Kratz site would be 48 lots concentrated on the northern side in order to avoid wetlands and natural features.

Nate Fox explained there would be an emergency access road off the existing cul-de-sac in the neighboring development for the Kratz site.

Maureen Wheatley went over the unofficial reviews from the Bucks County Planning Commission; she had questioned the need for additional development options and wondered whether the existing regulations could be amended to address the issues.

Nate Fox acknowledged that the Applicant had presented Council with this option and that this is the compromise decision that is desired rather than requesting zoning relief or an overlay zoning district.

Maureen Wheatley commented on a number of items the Bucks County Planning Commission was asked to address including lot width, impervious surface, lot coverage, stormwater facilities in the open space and access to the Kratz site. They were agreeable to decrease in lot width, increase in lot coverage and an increase in impervious surface, which were compared to other municipalities within the County as well as the Boroughs current regulations. It was noted that the proposed ordinances go beyond the issues they were asked to address. She was concerned with the concept of the stormwater management facilities within the open space and found it to be unacceptable as this wouldn't be considered open space. There could be amendments made to make the existing regulations better.

There was lengthy discussion on the concept of stormwater facilities being within the open space. There was concern in reference to how vague the allowance was and whether it would be appropriate to develop land for a required facility that's being utilized as open space. It was noted that various sections of the Ordinance would have to be altered to accommodate this allowance. It was discussed that over time some of these naturalized basins can be recognized by the Department of Environmental Protection which would be a natural resource and protected in the open space. There was further discussion in reference to DEP's desire for improvements to natural resources which advocate stormwater management facilities within the open space such as riparian buffers. It was acknowledged that clarification would have to be made to what the allowance would definitively be.

Maureen Wheatley commented on additional points including impervious surface, lot coverage, buffering and the need for clarifications. Overall she advocated altering the existing ordinance rather than create new ones.

Nate Fox explained Borough Council's position on the Ordinances and that he would take the comments back to Borough Council, it was noted that they would be considering the Ordinances at the October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ross Gardner commented that he felt the Commission has been rushed and not provided with information in a timely matter to make a comprehensive decision.

John Cornelius noted the Commission was not comfortable with making a recommendation on the proposed ordinances at this time.

Nate Fox stated that he would take the comments back to Council and more specifically the issue of the stormwater allowance in the open space and language associated with it.

### **Sugarbush Sidewalk Waiver**

Nate Fox provided an overview to the Commission, stating that there was sidewalk constructed on the side of Sugarbush where the homes are and that the waiver is being requested of the opposing side where the open space is. It was noted that in exchange for the waiver the developer agreed to repave a portion of Chestnut Court.

On a motion by John Cornelius, seconded by Eileen Bradley, the waiver request was unanimously recommended for approval.

**Ordinance No. 979 Park and Recreation Impact Fee**

Nate Fox explained that with the influx of development there is no fee in place to recoup costs for wear and tear on the existing playground equipment. He explained that it would be a onetime fee in lieu of placing new equipment and to compensate for new families.

Eileen Bradley note this provision is past due for the Borough and that the fee should be per dwelling unit. She commented that a fee of \$2,500 is a reasonable and standard number.

Maureen Wheatley acknowledged section 503.11 of the Municipal Planning Code which outlines Park and Recreation provisions.

The members discussed what approach should be taken when determining a fee.

John Cornelius expressed interest in moving this quickly in order to apply this to upcoming developments.

Maureen Wheatley discussed the review letter from the Bucks County Planning Commission.

On a motion by Eileen Bradley, seconded by John Cornelius, the discussion was unanimously tabled until a revised Ordinance addressing comments and with any additional information is reviewed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 PM.

Barbara P. Faust 22 Oct 2014  
Barbara Faust, Secretary