

WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

December 17, 2009 7:30 PM

Attendance: Vice Chairperson Jean Warrick, Sara Shick, Barb Mueller, Kate Damsgaard, Bob Kaiser, David Brown, Township Manager Jim Wendelgass and Township Secretary Tammy Swavely

Vice Chairperson Jean Warrick called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

The minutes of November 2009 were tabled for further review.

SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT:

Burch/Woodstone: There is nothing new with this Application. Mr. Wendelgass has contacted Valley Forge Sewer Authority on behalf of the Applicant several times and has now written a letter, but has not heard back at this time. Many years ago the Applicant wanted to have a Valley Forge Sewer hookup but was denied. The thought is now with the economic climate change, they might accept another hook up. If they are denied again, they might have to change the plan to onsite sewer systems. This is not what the Planning Commission wanted several years ago. The Applicant is asking the Board of Supervisors for a three (3) month extension.

Duffield: There is nothing new with this Application.

Dunworth Subdivision: This plan came before the Board of Supervisors for Preliminary/Final Approval on December 14, 2009, but the engineer did not like the conditions, so he offered a six (6) week extension and is working with the Township to solve some of the issues.

Weyl: There is nothing new with this Application.

Birchrún Village LLC: A new Land Development Plan was submitted on December 11, 2009.

PLANNING/ZONING:

Ludwigs Square Sketch Plan: The December workshop was not held, so the Applicant could not come to discuss their ordinance proposal. They did send a reply to the Planning Commission's suggestions to their zoning ordinance amendment. Since the Commission members have just received this, they will discuss it at their January workshop. The Applicant will be invited to discuss the plan. Jean Warrick questioned if it would be possible to be proactive with this plan instead of responsive. Clare Quinn stated that she has had a few meetings with them and so has been proactive.

Kate Damsgaard stated that West Vincent needs something unique built at Ludwig's Corner to draw people from around the region to that intersection and not another Giant and CVS which is only be a replication of what is just south of Ludwig's Corner at Eagle or just east at Lionville. She explained a concept called a "destination marketplace" where "best- of- kind" businesses are used to draw people. She feels this would fit in with West Vincent Township's character. The Ludwig's Square development must be attractive to create sales and to make it profitable for other developments in the Ludwig's Corner area. The Ludwig's Square development will set the tone at the intersection.

The Applicant maintains that Giant is the only interested anchor tenant at this point. The Township should start looking for tenants, an anchor store to start like a Trader Joe's. It was determined not to rely on real estate brokers' advice when brokers might just be looking for easy commissions. If it is true that only Giant is interested, then the commission needs to find out how to make that work. Suzanne Roth from the audience suggested that there may be a gourmet store division of Giant that uses a smaller foot print and is more distinctive. When discussing the plan with the Applicant, the first thing to be discussed will be the anchor, and if the commission can accept a change in square footage. A land planner needs to be hired to assist the Applicant and the Planning Commission at the Applicant's expense. The Planning Commission is responsible for coordinating the development of scattered, individually owned parcels at Ludwig's Corner to make sure they are commercially successful as a whole village. Kate Damsgaard stated that the commission needs to keep in mind that the Township ordinances need to be flexible to a certain extent so applicants and the township can react to changes in the real estate market.

Weatherstone: The Weatherstone commercial was to be built a long time ago but the Hankin Group just informed the Township that they will not be building anything in the near future. Clare Quinn has asked for a letter memorializing the conversation.

Tosco Zoning Hearing Application: The Zoning Hearing is postponed; a revised plan was received today to the Township. The Board of Supervisors will be a party to this hearing.

Malenke Zoning Hearing Application: The Applicant is asking for relief in the side yard setback for an addition.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mrs. Damsgaard reported that at their November monthly meeting the Sustainability Task Force started drafting a wish list for the Township-- what they would like to see happen to make the community a more sustainable one. A few examples would be encouraging the construction of more energy efficient buildings, planting meadows instead of lawns (avoid monoculture lawns) and supporting local food production and distribution. The Task Force attended the Brandywine Conservancy's December 15, 2010 workshop and heard a presentation by Chris Duerksen, cofounder of the Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute, a national expert on Sustainability Zoning Codes. He has drafted a model

zoning ordinance available on www.law.du.edu/rmlui. Communities can pick and choose chapters that are appropriate to them. The task force will review West Vincent's ordinances to see how they support township sustainability goals. There may be hidden obstacles in the ordinances which should be removed. We also need both to creative incentives and to legislate changes to promote sustainability. However, before performing the ordinance audit, the task force must define the township's sustainability goals. Chester County Vision partnership grants are available to support township sustainability planning.

Mrs. Damsgaard stated that Chester County 20/20 is currently working on finishing a report on their findings from the "Community Conversation" meeting they held here in October.

Mr. Wendelgass reported that there is currently new legislature pending regarding the International Building Code which will require all new home construction to be individually sprinklered. Each new home will need a tank, if they aren't on public water, and a generator. This cost of the equipment alone to a new home will be approximately \$8,000-\$10,000. This is to be enacted in January 2011, but townhomes it will be immediate.

Warrick made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Shick, meeting adjourned 9:25 PM.