

Reading Township Planning Commission
Regular meeting

May 7, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Reading Township Planning Commission was held at the Reading Township Municipal Building and called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman John Biese. Planning Commission members in attendance were Gerald Shank, Alicia Wooters, William Bowen and Dana Shuman with Chairman Biese presiding.

Others in attendance included P. Eric Mains, P.E. of Gannett Fleming, Inc.; Andrew Merkel, Senior Planner for Adams County Office of Planning & Development; Attorney Victor Neubaum, Solicitor; Bony Dawood representing Chesterfield/Musket Ridge Development; Charles McCubbin representing East Berlin Fish & Game; Randall Hoover, Jack Black, Jacqueline King, Emmert Hartzell, Chris Myers, Nancy Zumbrum and Clarence Wooters.

The April 2, 2018 minutes were approved as written on a motion by Mr. Shank and seconded by Mr. Bowen; motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT

Jack Black

1000 Round Hill Road
Sketch Plan Presentation

Mr. Black presented the Planning Commission with a sketch plan proposing to subdivide 15 acres from the 97.92-acre parcel located at 1000 Round Hill Road. Because a 10-acre parcel was subdivided from the main parcel in 2013, the main parcel has only three development allotments remaining, thus limiting any future subdivisions to a maximum of 9-acres using the large-lot consolidation option. After giving a verbal presentation Mr. Black asked for input on how to proceed and what concerns the Planning Commission may have on this type of subdivision. Attorney Neubaum emphasized that the Reading Township Ordinance clearly limits any subdivision be limited to 9-acre maximum based on the remaining development allotments. If Mr. Black desires to proceed, a Zoning Hearing Board application would need to be submitted explaining the reason for a hardship at which time the Planning Commission would review the application prior to the Zoning Hearing Board having a hearing. Based on general discussion the Planning Commission expressed concern that based on the previous 10-acre subdivision and subsequent Zoning Hearing Board request to have a duplex home on that parcel, the Planning Commission understood the remaining parcel of 97.92 acres would remain farmland. It is recommended that the family and heirs to this parcel discuss what options each member is planning with the remaining acreage and come to a consensus, so each member is not applying for a variance.

Musket Ridge Development

East Berlin Road - Carlisle Pike
Sketch Plan Presentation

Mr. Dawood presented the Planning Commission with a sketch plan and an entirely new concept for the parcel currently known as “Chesterfield”. The new concept is to forego the cluster development option currently being reviewed and consider using the conventional development option. The new proposal would be for 37 lots ranging in various sizes of 1-acre to 2+ acres. Each home would connect to public sewer and utilize individual wells on each property and the homes would be approximately 2,000 square foot in size to allow first time buyers the opportunity to find something in a price range of \$300,000.00. This new plan would begin at the preliminary plan level and continue through the normal review process in accordance with the Township Ordinance regulating Subdivision and Land Development Plans. Mr. Merkel emphasized that this type of development requires Zoning Hearing Board approval. After giving a verbal presentation of his reasoning to switch from the cluster development to the conventional development, Mr. Dawood asked for input or concerns from the Planning Commission and those in attendance. Some of the concerns expressed for Mr. Dawood to take into consideration before proceeding include:

1. The impact 37 individual wells will have on the water supply and to consider an actual cost analysis to determine how much more it would cost to use York Water Company before making any hasty decisions. With the potential depth required to access water, it would appear beneficial to a potential buyer to have access to public water supply.
2. The Ordinance states that based on the size of the lots, some type of public/central water supply would be required and does not allow for individual wells.
3. A Homeowners Association would still be required in either type development to handle specific issues as Stormwater Management, wetlands, common areas and/or recreation areas, etc. and these details would need to be provided.
4. While each type development has it’s benefits and drawbacks and each type of water supply system does as well, the Planning Commission would prefer to see more details that align with the Township Ordinance before engaging in future discussion and using a community water source.
5. The name “Musket Ridge” is presently in use and may not be used for the name of this new development.
6. This new plan is not consistent with the growth areas designated in the County Comprehensive Plan and the Township has previously desired the use of a cluster development at this location.
7. The run-off issues presently being experienced at the parcel due to the early stages of construction that are presently on-hold. This issue is currently being resolved and will be monitored.

East Berlin Fish & Game

Proposed Pistol Range
Preliminary Discussion

Mr. McCubbin presented the Planning Commission with a sketch plan indicating where a proposed pistol range is to be constructed. Before engaging in discussion, Chairman Biese and Mr. Shank stated they are members of the East Berlin Fish and Game so everyone present is aware of their involvement. Following a time of general discussion and after receiving input from Mr. Mains and Attorney Neubaum, the Planning Commission has requested another sketch plan be drafted and presented that aligns with the proper zoning set-back established by the Township Ordinances as this present plan does not comply. Based on the rough sketch plan presented and the approximate measurements provided, it would appear a move farther from the road may get the pistol range into wetland areas and that also needs to be considered. Some options that may help resolve this issue as well as the issue with noise and the close proximity to the road would be to move the pistol range to the other side of the road. The Planning Commission will await a new sketch plan with additional details.

ZONING HEARING

No agenda items this month.

MISCELLANEOUS

Expanding Commercial Districts

Mr. Holtzinger, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, has requested the Planning Commission consider enlarging the Commercial/Industrial district in Reading Township by expanding north and east of the present zoning districts to include some of the land currently zoned as Land Conservation. Chairman Biese mentioned that Route 234 has very little commercial growth along this highway except at major intersections and this presently aligns with the Township Zoning Districts. Since the Township has only had two requests for a commercial enterprise outside of the existing Commercial/Industrial district it would be premature to begin a discussion at this time. Mr. Merkel stated that just beyond the boundaries of Reading Township there already exists some areas zoned commercial and there has been no demand for construction. Using the County Comprehensive Plan and taking into consideration potential growth areas, Mr. Merkel stated it may be more advantageous to consider expanding the Commercial/Industrial district west and south of the existing district. Another question raised by Mr. Holtzinger and residents in attendance is how the rezoning process works. Mr. Merkel explained briefly it depends on the type of change. To implement a new ordinance requires a public hearing and advertising requirements established by the PA Municipal Planning Code while to amend the existing map also entails notifying residents being impacted and posting notices on the properties of upcoming public hearings. Based on the limited demand by any commercial entities and several residential developments presently on hold, the consensus of the Planning Commission is to engage in this discussion again in January 2019.

Recreation plan/Fee-in-lieu-of Ordinance

Mr. Merkel distributed and explained the Facility Inventory Sheet at the April Planning Commission meeting. In order to allow adequate time for discussion, this agenda item is postponed until the June Planning Commission meeting.

Intersection Safety Study

The Planning Commission received a copy from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation responding to a request from the Reading Township Board of Supervisors to conduct an intersection safety study at the East Berlin Road (SR0234) and Peepytown Road (SR1018) due to a recent fatality. The letter is informational only and concerns the safety study as PennDOT will forward the results of the study upon completion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Bowen and a second by Ms. Shuman; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Garry R. Wilt
Administrative Assistant