

**EAST PIKELAND PLANNING COMMISSION
AUGUST 10, 2020 MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting was held electronically through the Zoom application via internet and telephone access. Chairman John Colarusso, Vice Chair John Schott, members Helena Van Vliet, Ron Hoinowski, Leo Kaercher and Kersten Appler participated electronically. The township engineer, the zoning officer, and the township manager also participated online. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE JULY 13, 2020 MINUTES

MOTION MADE BY LEO KAERCHER TO APPROVE THE JULY 13, 2020 MEETING MINUTES; MOTION SECONDED BY RON HOINOWSKI. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Hunsberger Tract Subdivision – Spring City Borough

The township engineer issued a review letter dated 08-07-2020 for a residential development of 30 twins on Hunsberger Road in Spring City Borough: 20 of the units are on a new street to intersect with Hunsberger Road, the other 10 will access Hunsberger Road directly. In addition to this project. He added that there is development with 170 dwelling units also proposed in the Borough (Spring Hill Village) that would take access from Hunsberger Road. As outlined in the review letter, Hunsberger Road is a local country road that bisects East Pikeland and Spring City Borough with East Pikeland currently maintaining the entire roadway. Some improvements on the Spring City side are proposed, but with the increased traffic generated from this development and the future Spring Hill Village, Hunsberger Road will become a borough thoroughfare. Ed Latshaw is recommending if be discussed with the Borough for them to take over the maintenance responsibility for Hunsberger Road. The planning commission agreed.

A copy of the 08-07-2020 letter was sent to the Borough. John Schott suggested it be followed up with a letter from the East Pikeland Board of Supervisors. In the meantime, the township manager will have EPT's public works director reach out to SCB's public works director for an informal discussion.

LOW IMPACT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Kimberton Low Impact Development Overlay

John Colarusso stated that gradual steps have been taken by the planning commission over the years to relax many provisions and add new uses in the Kimberton districts to stimulate organic growth consistent with the comprehensive plan. He asked each member if they had any new thoughts on the proposed overlay.

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Leo Kaercher – 2 years later and not much further along; the overlay seems ideal for 1 specific project and it does not seem achievable township-wide.

Ron Hoinowski – Not convinced that the 30% density bonus is a benefit to the township if the project is conceived to be low-impact; the remedies and guarantees to ensure continued compliance are questionable; how will this overlay impact future age-restricted developments? He encouraged focusing on provisions for conservation development.

Kersten Appler – Likes the spirit and purpose of the overlay and believes the positive impact on resources is beneficial; but if the heart of the matter is about the environment, a density bonus in order to make it financially sound is contradicts the idea of it being low impact.

Ezra Brett – Not present but provided the chairman with emailed comments supporting the overall goal to promote positive low impact residential development in Kimberton; a 30% bonus is not excessive considering the offsets in open space and green building principles; the planning commission should continue its efforts on this ordinance.

Helena Van Vliet – It is a contradiction of low impact principles to allow increased density; higher density development should focus on areas that are already disturbed; increased density impacts the objective of living lightly on the land; traffic calming and sidewalks in the village are still needed.

John Colarusso – Referenced the planning exercise in 2019 rating the township's provisions for low impact development and sustainability (current ordinance has 26 of the 51 regulatory items); the objective was to draft something that would be a benefit township-wide; this overlay is not a good balance of reward to the township.

John Schott – Multiple amendments to the Kimberton zoning in the last 2 years have given enough incentives; the planning commission continued to work with Altair at the direction of the Board of Supervisors; density has always been the sticking point; this overlay seems to benefit 1 development. When asked the opinion of several developers, we were told that a much higher density bonus is needed in order to make the low impact and sustainability options financially feasible. He wants the planning commission to spend time on the priorities outlined in Ed Latshaw's 01-23-20 letter and believes the solar and wind ordinance is a big step toward sustainability township-wide.

Ed Latshaw – Referred to the existing conservation development provisions, and the by-right options for residential development in the Kimberton districts. As directed by the commission, he pursued the goals and objectives put before him to come up with tangible sustainable attributes with reasonable density offsets; he believes this overlay achieves those goals.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

While the commission members were giving their views on the matter, comments from Joel Bartlett, Jane D., Dave, and an unidentified person supporting the proposed ordinance, the Altair project, and growth in the Kimberton district, sporadically popped up via the chat function.

Adam Suplee spoke in support of the overlay and asserted that Kimberton Village is an ideal location for a development like Altair, and that it could be a model for Chester County.

Tom Schmitt asked for an explanation of spot zoning. Ed Latshaw responded that an overlay is an elective option with a boundary encompassing multiple tracts of land in the KR and Kv districts, not just 1 property. Mr. Schmitt also believes that the increased density is too much for the village. Linda Schmitt said the concept is admirable but was concerned about the future of this type of development as ownership changes.

Joel Bartlett made reference to the benefits of sites v2 guidelines for a community like Altair.

John Schott suggested tonight's discussion and comments be incorporated into the planning commission's report/presentation at the September 1st Board of Supervisors meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION MADE BY RON HOINOWSKI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING; MOTION SECONDED BY LEO KAERCHER. ALL IN FAVOR, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:10 PM.