

**EAST PIKELAND PLANNING COMMISSION
MAY 11, 2020 MINUTES**

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 Kearcher, Kersten Appler and Ezra Brett all participated online. Township manager Kimberly Moretti, zoning officer Kisha Tyler, and township engineer Ed Latshaw also participated online. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 10, 2010 MINUTES

MOTION MADE BY JOHN SCHOTT TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 10, 2020 MEETING MINUTES. MOTION SECONDED BY LEO KEARCHER. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

ZHB Appeal 2020-02: American Heritage Federal Credit Union

American Heritage FCU is requesting relief from §1008.3.F.1, §1008.10.B, §1706.1, §1706.5, §1706.11 and §1706.15 of the Zoning Ordinance as they relate to site improvements for construction of a financial institution at 401 Schuylkill Road. The property is located in the MU zoning district, and the use is permitted by-right. The hearing is scheduled for June 24, 2020

Rich Hasson from American Heritage, Justin Geonnotti from Dynamic Engineering, and the applicant's counsel Nate Fox, Esquire participated in the online discussion, and a site plan was displayed.

Ingress and egress, parking, vehicular circulation, and the outdoor pedestrian plaza were the main topics. Helena Van Vliet suggested adjusting the drive isle, but the irregularity of the lot makes it difficult without creating other nonconformities. The applicant is seeking guidance on the 626 square foot pedestrian plaza required by the ordinance. Helena Van Vliet discouraged having a pedestrian plaza at a major intersection. John Schott said he would rather see additional buffers as an alternative. John Schott also asked that they withdraw their request for relief from the vehicular cross access easement to the adjacent property; it is intended to limit the number of access points along the corridor. The applicant is hesitant to provide the easement at this time for an undetermined future use. The concern is the possibility of large trucks or tractor trailers sharing the access. They are willing to add a note to the plan that would address a "feasible" shared access.

John Colarusso believes the proposed use is low impact and it would be visually pleasing at the intersection. It is also consistent with the redevelopment vision for the corridor. John Schott added that development of this oddly shaped tract for any use will require some sort of zoning

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relief. The members agreed with both gentlemen. Pending the ZHB outcome, the plan will go through the land development process. PennDOT review will be required.

MOTION BY JOHN SCHOTT TO SUPPORT THE REQUESTED RELIEF, EXCEPT FOR THE VEHICULAR CROSS ACCESS EASEMENT – A NOTE MUST BE ADDED TO THE PLAN INDICATING OFFER FOR FUTURE USE AS FEASIBLE. MOTION SECONDED BY JOHN COLARUSSO, WITH AN ADDED COMMENT THAT THE PROPOSAL IS CONSISTENT WITH THE REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE ALONG THE ROUTE 23 CORRIDOR. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED. A WRITTEN RECOMMENDATION WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE ZONING HEARING BOARD.

LOW IMPACT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Alternative Energy – Solar and Wind Facilities Zoning Amendment

The township engineer provided a draft ordinance for solar and wind energy. John Colarusso expressed concern about the 100' height of the wind energy facilities on residential properties. Helena Van Vliet commented that noise and light patterns from the sun reflecting on the blades can be very disruptive. The members agreed that the residential height should be lowered to 50' and that language addressing noise be added. Kersten Appler asked about safety standards, specifically access by small children. Ed Latshaw responded that the ladder is at least 10'-15' above the base, and other safety measures are required by law and incorporated in the manufacturer's design.

Joel Bartlett spoke of a more efficient structure without blades and minimal noise in Europe; unfortunately, it is not available in the US.

Dennis Ray offered information on SolSmart, a US Department of Energy program that provides technical advice to municipalities on solar energy alternatives.

Rusty Strauss asked if there is a limited lot size for the wind generation facility. Ed Latshaw responded that the setbacks would be the determining factor, but it would need to be at least 1 acre. Roof mounted turbines are an option for smaller lots.

Ed Latshaw will provide a revised draft with a reduced residential height to 50', added noise language, and increasing the decommissioning bond to \$5M. Other considerations can be addressed during the public hearing.

MOTION MADE BY JOHN COLARUSSO TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT PROCESS. MOTION SECONDED BY JOHN SCHOTT. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

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MAY 11, 2020 MINUTES**

Kimberton Zoning Districts

Ed Latshaw is continuing to work on a draft ordinance incorporating low impact development and sustainability incentives for the KV, KR and KT districts. Joel Bartlett was assured that his team would be provided with the draft and be included in the planning commission discussion.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS, UPDATES AND OTHER GENERAL DISCUSSION

- The sidewalk project is making steady progress.
- Davis sketch plan – the property owner reached out to the township engineer for guidance regarding the continuing care facility. A professional services agreement is on file.
- Kimberton Square sketch plan – property owner submitted a draft overlay for residential uses in the C district as directed. The township engineer will provide a review letter for discussion at the June planning commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None of the online or telephone participants presented public comment

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION MADE BY LEO KEARCHER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING; MOTION SECONDED BY JOHN COLARUSSO. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:15 PM.