

**MINUTES
SCOTT TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
301 LINDSAY ROAD, MAIN MEETING ROOM
SCOTT TOWNSHIP, PA 15106
August 3, 2022**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Mox at 7:33 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Robert Berner	Present
Donald Kaminski	Present
Kenneth Lee, Vice Chairman	Present
Todd Tulowitzki	Present
Jane Sorcan, Secretary	Absent
Mark Mox, Chairman	Present

Present – 5

Absent – 1

Also, Present: Mark Mox, Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer
Ashley Puchalski, Tucker Arensberg, PC; Township Solicitor
Emily Palmer, Lennon, Smith, Souleret; Township Engineer
Stephanie Wilshire, Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS LISTED ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments on items for review and consideration.

ITEMS FOR REVIEW & CONSIDERATION

Motion to approve the Minutes for the July 6, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting

Motion by Lee, second by Mox to approve the Minutes for the July 6, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting

All in favor

Motion Carries (4-0-Berner Abstained)

Review and Recommendation of the Subdivision and Preliminary Major Land Development Application for the development of the former Nixon Elementary School at 1000 Lindsay Road, Carnegie PA 15106.

Applicant:

Matt Cramer – Owner/Developer
1 Cedar Blvd, Ste 100
Pittsburgh PA 15228

Tyson Miller – Engineer
22 S. Linden St.
Duquesne PA 15110

Mox explained that the Chartiers Valley School District consolidation resulted in the Nixon Elementary School at 1000 Lindsay Road no longer being needed and the parcel was sold to a church. The church was there for a time and the parcel was sold last year to a developer who wants to build 26 homes. He said that due to the extensive Engineer Review Letter dated August 2, 2022 he would like to concentrate on questions the Planning Commission may have, anyone in the public may have and then any clarifications the applicant and his engineer may have, rather than going line by line from the Review Letter.

Mox commented on Zoning Comment #1 regarding the proposed relocation of a Peoples Natural Gas building as part of the development. The engineer letter referred to the “building” as a principal structure. Our Zoning Ordinance refers to these kinds of buildings as Accessory Use rather than Principal Use.

Palmer clarified that even if the building use is called Accessory rather than Principal, setbacks may still be an issue.

Mox said that there’s a dimensional setback exception for Accessory structures in the Zoning Ordinance that could reduce the side setback to five feet. He added that we should allow the exception because it’s a utility.

Mox commented on the Zoning Comment #3 regarding the minimum lot area. The COA (Consent Order and Agreement) allowed for reduced lot sizes for Lots 15, 16 and 17 provided the square footage is “substantially” the same – this was written so that the plan could be tweaked as long as it wasn’t a substantial change. Lots 16 & 17 are nineteen (19) square feet smaller than the approved 6,600 square feet and should be allowed as 6,591 square feet is substantially the same.

Puchalski agreed that the language of the COA is there so that if the lot size is substantially the same then that would be acceptable.

Mox commented on the COA requiring no additional Variances. Lot 20 was not part of the Variance for lot size and therefore its lot size of just under the required 7,200 square feet should be modified by slightly reducing the size of Lot 19 in order to comply.

Puchalski agreed, stating that it’s very important to pay close attention to the COA and make modifications where necessary.

Mox commented on Zoning Comment #4 regarding minimum lot width that was included in the Variance, specifically for Lots 20 through 25, allowing the width to be 59 feet. The lots sizes are currently roughly 58.84 feet which is substantially the same.

Puchalski agreed that the "substantially" language applies when describing these lot widths.

Mox commented on Zoning Comment #8 regarding sloped areas in excess of 25% to be included in the lot size calculations. The COA would allow slopes in excess of 25% to be included in the lot size calculations.

Palmer clarified that she was aware of what the COA said but had not seen any calculations and that was why there were comments. Based on the discussion of substantial changes she doesn't anticipate any problems.

Miller asked if the calculations would still be needed for the minimum lot area, maximum lot coverage or maximum dwelling unit density.

Palmer said it is a requirement and these calculations would be needed.

Lee asked for comments from the developer regarding the disposal of asbestos when demolishing the building.

Mox said that the developers would be required to adhere to the Demolition Ordinance regarding the demolition of the building.

Lee commented on the elevation specification and asked to see all four sides of the home. He suggested the side of the homes facing Cherrytree and Peachtree be addressed in the elevations provided. In looking at the contours it was understood that each of the homes would be single-story with a front door and back patio door and one level of living space. But there are seven lots with cross slopes or the front elevation is different from the back. There will need to be retaining walls installed in order to work out the slopes. Four parcels on Lindsay Road have elevation differences from front to back of about eight (8) feet.

Cramer commented that the four lots on Lindsay Road will have walk-out basements. The intention is to building first floor master patio homes.

Mox commented on the elevations, specifically the lot with the side facing Claireview. The side will be very visible and he recommended modifying the side elevation to make it look somewhat different and nicer.

Lee commented on the retaining wall as you come in on Claireview. He thinks the developer should consider eliminating the retaining walls altogether but if that's not possible then push them out further so they match the sidewalks.

Cramer said they haven't discussed with the current property owner on Claireview the possibility of having a grading easement so the possibility still exists that the retaining wall won't be there but if they do have it, it would be incorporated into an entrance into the community.

Palmer has concerns with the retaining wall being in the public right of way. What would be the proposal for who's going to own it? Who's going to replace it if it fails?

Cramer said they would push a retaining wall back so that it wasn't in the public right of way.

Lee commented on the street names and wanted to ensure they were spelled and identified correctly.

Mox commented on "extension" being used in the street names and would like that word removed and the plans changed to simply Claireview Drive and Peachtree Drive. Mox has looked into numbering the residences once approved.

Lee commented on the ADA crosswalk markings. He thought the township might have a standard detail that differs from the one provided.

Miller said he would use the detail that the township provides.

Mox said we would want to speak with the Department of Public works to see what they're using as the Township will eventually take over the maintenance of the streets. He believes that ramps at corners would be required. He commented that the sidewalks need to be extended the full length of the property along Lindsay and Cherrytree.

Lee brought attention to Detail #28 regarding sidewalks that does not match the plans. He also commented on the Stormwater Management area and asked if the emergency spillway area is going to be visible and will it need to be serviced and maintained. He believes it should be addressed in a way that's maintenance free for the parcels that abutt it.

Mox agreed that the developer needs to address the landscaping at the area on Cherrytree and also the slope areas around the stormwater basin and then also behind where the trees have been planted. He asked Cramer if the HOA would be responsible for the maintenance of these area. He said that the developer should add more details about the landscaping onto the plans.

Cramer said yes that the HOA would be responsible for landscape maintenance. He said that the area needs to be cleared and then re-landscaped. He would address the landscaping.

Lee suggested not using Sycamore trees as they're dirty, very large and more suitable for a larger space.

Mox suggested adding trees to double-frontage lots #1, #4 and #10.

Kaminski asked how the builder would ensure that mud and soil won't wash into the street if lands are cleared on Cherrytree.

Miller said that the standard controls are silt socks and protection on the inlets but likely the contractor will have to monitor that on a daily basis especially before and after heavy rains. There will be plans that are reviewed both by the Township and the Conservation District.

Tulowitzki asked where would Claireview end and Peachtree start.

Mox answered that up to where the cul-de-sac ends will be Peachtree. He anticipates that only three of the homes will have a Claireview address. The rest will be Peachtree.

Lee commented that he believed the goal was to have as much cut as fill but was surprised why one of the high points at the end of the cul-de-sac wasn't lower. He felt like the high point could be lowered a foot or so.

Miller answered that the plan that was in the COA had quite a bit of "net export" in it. From a cost consideration for the developer and a nuisance consideration of having trucks with material coming in and out, every effort was made to balance the site.

Mox commented on the bench that the neighborhood expected on the corner of Cherrytree and Lindsay. The Township will provide a standard detail for a bench and trash receptacle.

Mox asked that a clause be added to the Subdivision Plan stating the date that the plat was handed to the Applicant for recording. The county will use the date the plat was received rather than the date approved to verify compliance with the 90-Day recording period.

Mox asked for more details regarding street lights and post lights and who would be responsible for the maintenance.

Miller said there will be a mix of post lights and street light poles to satisfy the minimum illumination requirements. He said it was the intention that the street lights would be in the publicly dedicated roadway and therefore would be the responsibility of the Township. The post lights would be the responsibility of each home owner.

Mox said that Duquesne Light takes care of the street lights and had been upgrading them in Scott Township where needed. It might be prudent to speak with Duquesne Light to see what they're using. The Township shouldn't have multiple kinds of fixtures if possible. Mox asked for clarification on how the lights were powered.

Miller answered that the street lights would be powered by a common panel and the post lights were to be powered by each residence.

Cramer added that they've used post lights with sensors on them so that they would come on at dusk. They would consider having the maintenance of the individual light posts be taken care of by the HOA. It would keep the visual consistent in the neighborhood as well as ensure that bad bulbs are changed out.

Palmer suggested revising the light plan calculations using the illumination of the street lights only because there's no guarantee the individual residents will consistently use their yard lamps.

Miller asked for clarification on Zoning Comment #10 relative to Zoning Ordinance Section 3-107.10.7 with grading behind the proposed building pad. There was grading behind many of those lots shown on the COA concept plan so they thought that would also be a question of substantially similar to the items that were included as part of the COA.

Mox answered that it would not as it wasn't included in the Variance.

Miller asked for clarification on Subdivision and Land Development (Preliminary Plat) Comment #3 which states that the required cul-de-sac radius should be 60 feet but the plan shows a radius of 50 feet. Revising that would affect the lots width, areas and setback lines for all units on the cul-de-sac which would substantially affect the COA.

Palmer said this requirement was in the Township Construction Standards.

Miller said the road right-of-way is 50 ft, but the cul-de-sac right-of-way is a 60 ft radius. He added they would like to seek a modification to this requirement to avoid having to amend the COA.

Palmer said she would support that as long as the Department of Public Works had no issues with maintenance.

Mox said that they would have to make a formal request for a waiver from this requirement.

Miller asked for another clarification regarding the right of way. The ordinance states that the cul-de-sac shall not have an interior island but the Standard Detail shows an interior island.

Palmer doesn't see that there's a requirement for an island just because the Standard Detail shows it.

Miller asked for clarification of Subdivision and Land Development (Design Standards) Comment #3 which requires that the maximum grade within 100 feet of the intersection measured from the centerline of the roadway be 5%. This is primarily regarding the intersection of Cherrytree and Peachtree. They currently have about 45 feet that less than 5% and then it climbs to around 11%. This was done to balance the site. They are looking for a modification of the requirement and will revise the plans to provide 50 feet at the intersection.

Palmer is concerned with emergency vehicles being able to get through without bottoming out. She would like to see a narrative with justification before it would be considered.

Miller said he would provide analysis using different sized large vehicles as examples.

Mox said that if a waiver is sought, they should use the largest vehicle possible as an example in their analysis.

Miller asked for clarification of Grading Ordinance Comment #5 which states that all excavations of greater than eight (8) feet vertical height have a bench equal to half the height of the excavation with the bench graded back at 5% to minimize downslope runoff. Adding those benches would significantly alter the buildable areas of the lots. They would ask for a modification using engineering analysis that would meet the intent of the ordinance.

Palmer agreed and added that there wasn't a Slope Stability Analysis and this could be incorporated in that using well detailed engineered analysis before it would be considered.

Puchalski said we would have to look into whether there are provisions within the Grading Ordinance for modifications.

Palmer asked for clarification regarding what looks like a retaining wall in between the lots at Lindsay Road and Peachtree. She asked if it was rather a toe drain.

Miller answered that it's currently a toe drain but was a retaining wall on the conceptual drawings. They won't rule out a retaining wall after the benching issues are clarified.

Miller asked for clarification of Stormwater Management Ordinance Comment #12 which states that the discharge of runoff be to a well-defined drainage course. The emergency spillway for the detention basin is directed onto Cherrytree but cannot be directed to the roadway right of way. Rather than directing any overflow of the spillway to a neighboring house they thought directing the overflow to Cherrytree would be more prudent and would only be used if there was a catastrophic event.

Palmer said that the Township would need to look at this closer. She asked if they could install an inlet that would attach to other Stormwater improvements.

Miller said that they would like to discuss any available options.

Palmer said that the developer needs to provide more information regarding the steep slopes to demonstrate compliance with the ordinance.

Miller said they are working on the exhibits to demonstrate that.

Palmer added there's a fair bit of work needed regarding Stormwater, specifically the area along Claireview that was discussed at the pre-application meeting.

Lee commented on fire hydrants and would the two nearby be enough to support the new neighborhood.

Miller said they would review that question with the Fire Marshall.

Public Comments

Mary Grace Yochum
8 Fieldstone Drive
Pittsburgh PA 15220

Yochum, resident of Scott Township since 1979, lived on Claireview from 1989 to 2004 and identifies herself as a senior who is looking to downsize. She spoke in favor of the development and hopes the Planning Commission can work with the developers to get this plan in place. It would mean 26 additional tax revenues coming in from the new plan plus Yochum will be able to sell to someone else wanting to live in Scott Township.

Motion by Lee, second by Kaminski to Table the Review and Recommendation of the Subdivision and Preliminary Major Land Development Application for the development of the former Nixon Elementary School at 1000 Lindsay Road, Carnegie PA 15106.

All in favor
Motion Carries (5-0)

Adjournment

Motion by Berner, second by Kaminski to adjourn the meeting

All in Favor
Motion Carries (5-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01pm

Attest:  _____

