

The stated meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Chairperson, Ms. Lucy Strackhouse presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: COOPER, ROBINSON, WEGGEL, SPEARMAN, RUSSELL, GAUTHIER, STRACKHOUSE
Excused: DiCELLO, ROSEN

Also Present: Planning & Zoning Official PENECALE
Director of W.W.T.P. WRIGLEY
County Planner NARCOWICH

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Agenda Item PC1:

Metropolitan Properties of America, Inc. – Planning Module Revision:

Ms. Strackhouse read agenda item PC1 into the record and called on Director of W.W.T.P. Mr. Wrigley.

Mr. Wrigley said he has been involved with sanitary sewer review for the Manor Building located at 101 Washington Lane, Jenkintown, PA., which is a portion of the Colonade. This planning module was requested by DEP because of renovations proposed onsite. Metropolitan Properties of America, Inc. hired Ebert Engineering who developed this planning module.

Included in the planning module is a narrative of what is projected to be renovated of the existing building. Proposed renovation is to use the space that was occupied by a restaurant and convert it to 11 apartment units. So the entire building is proposed for residential apartments.

DEP requested this planning module, and following review of the 2009 water use records that Ebert Engineering obtained, he confirmed the numbers through his records that they are correct. The average gallons per day is 51,541 and Ebert Engineering worked with their numbers and projected a sewer flow table that includes 246 existing apartment units and 11 proposed apartment units that will be built in the space where the restaurant use used to be located for a total projected sewer flows of 51,400 gallons. That is an average of 200 gallons per day per EDU and 200 gallons per day is more than sufficient per apartment.

In comparing the two numbers, they are proposing a slight reduction in flows and that is what triggered DEP to ask for a full planning module because it is a change in sewer flows. This building is connected to the sanitary sewer located on Washington Lane and that sewer line is owned and operated by Jenkintown Borough. From Jenkintown Borough, the sewer flows into Cheltenham Township in which both municipalities have this planning module to review. Because Cheltenham Township is currently under corrective action plan per DEP regulations, a full planning module is required. So even though this is a reduction in flows, DEP requires a full planning module to be submitted.

This also will go to the Philadelphia Water Department as they do final treatment and each entity needs to fill out a table indicating capacity of sewer treatment plant.

Ms. Strackhouse asked for any comments from members of the Planning Commission.

Ms. Gauthier referring to Cheltenham's connection management plan; she questioned whether these 11 additional EDU's are already in reserve for the Colonade?

Mr. Penecale replied they are not additional EDU's. There is a reduction in sanitary sewer flow.

Mr. Wrigley added that it is new apartments versus former commercial retail space.

Mr. Weggel asked how many EDU's were associated with the restaurant use?

Mr. Penecale replied he does not know, but they went strictly by flow or usage records.

Ms Gauthier questioned whether 200 gallons per day is a standard average that DEP uses per apartment use.

Mr. Wrigley replied it varies. DEP does not have an apartment average rate that they document.

Mr. Russell asked when the facility was in full operation back in 2009 was that the correct amount of water usage?

Mr. Wrigley replied that was the actual water usage recorded by the meters. Metropolitan Properties of America has occupancy records and these flows are for the entire year, so there is a fluctuation in residents throughout the year.

Ms. Strackhouse asked for any public comments.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, said Metropolitan Properties of America, Inc., submitted application for the planning module, but usually applications are submitted by the owner and not the property manager. Is that correct?

Mr. Russell replied there is nothing preventing the property manager from filling out applications on behalf of the owner.

Ms. Lehmann expressed concern about Township staff providing the presentation as opposed to their engineer and questioned whether that is a regular or irregular feature and she feels she is “paying for the labor that is doing the presentation.”

Mr. Weggel made a MOTION, seconded by Ms. Robinson to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve a planning module revision for the proposed alterations to the Manor Building located at 101 Washington Lane, Jenkintown, PA.

MOTION was ADOPTED 7-0.

Agenda Item PC2:

Montgomery County Planning Commission presentation of an overview of proposed updates to Jenkintown Borough’s Comprehensive Plan:

Ms. Strackhouse read agenda item PC2 into the record and called on County Planner, Mr. Michael Narcowich.

Mr. Narcowich said he is conveying a request from the Community Planner for Jenkintown Borough of the MCPC to coordinate with Abington Township on their Comprehensive Plan. The MPC (Municipality Planning Code) requires through the comprehensive planning process that the community respond to surrounding communities prior to adoption to work towards greater planning consistency.

After discussion with Township Manager and Commissioner Sanchez, it was recommended that we omit discussion of Alverthorpe Park; however, it will be discussed in the future.

So first discussion item is the bike connections to and through Jenkintown and there is a bike plan underway and he recommended that Abington support the bike plan.

Mr. Penecale said there are existing wood trails through Abington, but there is nothing physical that connects to Jenkintown Borough, and Jenkintown Road is a narrow winding road. It would be a great idea if it was not on a main thoroughfare.

Mr. Narcowich continued that the County's Steering Committee for the bike plan has just begun and they plan to overhaul the countywide bike plan in which the previous plan was completed in the late 90's. They will be looking for existing unsafe conditions and try and find more practical routes.

The next item for discussion is finish sidewalks between Alverthorpe Park and Jenkintown as there are gaps and there are initiatives for improving pedestrian safety.

Mr. Penecale replied that is fairly completed. It is not sidewalk, but there is a macadam walking trail that runs along side of Alverthorpe and there is existing sidewalk along Abington Friends.

Mr. Narcowich continued another item for discussion is a trail along Tookany/Tacony Creek, which would require a partnership between Abington and Cheltenham Township. Has anyone been involved with the planning of that trail?

Ms. Gauthier referring to the map and noted there is a blockage on Baeder Road, but there are formal trails there now.

Mr. Penecale replied the issue is getting across Baeder Road and getting across Jenkintown Road. Across Jenkintown Road, there is a stream there and railroad right-of-way and ample room for a trail, but at that point, a connection could be made to the road at Jenkintown and Cheltenham.

Mr. Narcowich said it would advantageous to having a connection there because Hallowell Park is not far away.

Another theme element was health having access to food and they were looking at the crosswalk near the Acme grocery store and what improvements could be made at the intersection of Old York Road and Washington Lane. Safety could be enhanced by pavement markings, potentially a refuge island for pedestrians and signage.

Mr. Penecale said the only corner of that intersection located in Abington Township is the corner where the Acme is and the opposite three corners are located in Jenkintown Borough.

Mr. Russell suggested a crosswalk be done in two such as crossing one road at a time because it is a difficult area for motorists to navigate.

Mr. Narcowich continued that regarding industrial land uses; there is interest in partnering with Abington Township to monitor and address potential pollution issues.

Mr. Penecale replied copies of tests of air-quality that are filed quarterly by SPS are sent to the Fire Marshal's Office by the Federal government

Ms. Strackhouse commented that water contamination has been an issue due to contamination found in the water in Horsham from the Willow Grove Naval Air Base and there has been questions as to whether or not it has been found in the water in Abington.

Mr. Penecale noted that Commissioners Spiegelman and Hecker have been attending meetings on water-quality held by Aqua and there are reps from municipalities meeting to discuss the migration of groundwater pollutants.

Mr. Narcowich said another item for discussion was vehicular transportation and traffic calming and beautification along Old York Road within the context of current traffic volume and four-land configuration. Their ideas for intersection realignment are more intense pavement markings, permanent digital signs showing what the motorists speed is, landscaping, bollards, complete streetscape improvements that were started on West Avenue/Greenwood Avenue area.

Also, realign intersection of Old York Road, Rydal Road and Cloverly Avenue, so that the side roads do not create an off-set intersection. This would require right-of-way acquisition on either side of Old York Road to create a more perpendicular, four-way stop. This could reduce traffic signal cycle times, reduce pedestrian crossing distances, and create green space, therefore somewhat of a gateway, on all four corners of this important intersection.

Mr. Cooper commented that the traffic light is set up as a split phase.

Mr. Russell added that the split phase should be removed and any improvements to that intersection would be good.

Mr. Cooper added that the traffic lights are not in sync on Rt. 611.

Mr. Narcowich replied he will look into that.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary

