

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Minutes of the March meeting

March 15, 2022

Members Present

Mark Gordon, Chairman
Dan Cote
Ray McKeeman
Jeff Glisson
Mary Frances McGarrity
Andy Wright

Township Personnel Present

John Weller, Planning Director
Justin Smiley, Township Planner
Pam Gural-Bear, Interim Township Manager
Ted Otteni, Township Engineer

Rajesh Kumbhardare, Board of Supervisors

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mark Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Commission observed a moment of silence to honor our veterans and first responders.

II. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the minutes for the meeting of February 15, 2022. (McKeeman/Glisson)

ACTION: Passed, 5-0-1 (with Wright abstaining)

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment on items not on the agenda.

IV. PLANS

1. Whitford Property, Inc.

Address: 401 & 403 W. Lincoln Hwy.

Second Review: Conditional Use

Request: Construction of a Wawa gas station and convenience store

In attendance on behalf of the Applicant were attorney Michael Gil; Matthew Hammond from Traffic Planning & Design; Michael Spiegel from Wawa; Peter Carakillion of Whitford Properties; and Ryan Whitmore with Landcore Engineering.

John Weller explained that project is early in the review and approval process and described the two-step process of Conditional Use approval followed by a full Land Development review and approval.

Mr. Gill provided an overview of the project to demolish the existing Sunoco/Welsh Automotive building and a portion of the existing office building located on W. Lincoln Highway to accommodate construction of a 5,585 sq. ft. Wawa convenience store and gas station.

Mr. Gill advised that in a hearing before the Zoning Hearing Board, relief was granted to exceed the 50% limit on expansion of a non-conforming use. A portion of the office building will be removed, and a land condominium will be created. He further noted that while the Applicant will comply with all consultant concerns, two issues remain for discussion: internal circulation and landscaped islands.

Mr. Hammond described the access from Whitford Road. The plan proposes reducing seven current access points on Whitford Road down to three, two of which will be limited access. The only full access point will be on Waterloo Blvd. The reviews of both SSM Group and McMahon Associates identify issues with the design of the drive aisle on the east side of the Wawa building and suggested increasing the narrow throat with angled parking. Mr. Hammond maintained that there was no room to push the site further from Whitford Road and that Wawa has experienced lawsuits in the past with angled parking.

After discussing possible alternatives, Mr. Gordon expressed confidence that McMahon Associates, Traffic Planning & Design, and Staff will come to a resolution that is satisfactory to all. New options will be shown on the land development plan. Mr. Glisson still felt there was too much going with the site and the immediate surrounding area. There was some discussion of the need for traffic calming in the general area. Mr. Weller advised that the traffic signal at the intersection will calm traffic.

A suggestion was made to eliminate the right out turning movement onto Whitford Rd., but Mr. Hammond said such a change would force everyone to the Waterloo access point. He further maintained that the driveways will be self-regulating during peak hours.

The Applicant requested a waiver from the required parking lot islands in the northwest and southwest corners of the site noting that adding two more islands will create access problems and limit movements in the loading dock area. The Theurkauf review supported a waiver for the southwest corner if bollards were provided. Mr. Spiegel maintained that bollards can be a nuisance for trailers, plows, etc. After discussion, Mr. Gordon and Ms. McGarrity expressed that safety is more important than landscaping. This will be discussed more during the land development phase.

The Applicant confirmed that 6-8 spaces will be available for Electric Vehicle Chargers if Tesla decides to locate them at this site. The Applicant is not opposed to a bus shelter/pad at the location and will discuss further with Septa and PennDOT during the land development phase.

Mr. Gordon called for public comment on the plan, and there were none.

MOTION: To recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the conditional use plan for Whitford Property, Inc. as depicted on the 10-sheet plan set prepared by Landcore Engineering Consultant, P.C. dated August 6, 2021, and most recently revised February 11, 2022, with the following waivers and subject to the following conditions:

1. The design of the internal access drive running parallel to Whitford Rd., the adjacent parking area, and the related Whitford Rd. entrance shall be revised as agreed upon tonight to the satisfaction of the Township as advised by McMahon.
2. The Applicant shall discuss with SEPTA and the Township regarding improvements to the bus stop along the Lincoln Hwy. frontage, pursuant to comment #3 of the McMahon review dated March 8, 2021.
3. Resolution of all outstanding consultant concerns to the satisfaction of the Township as advised by our respective consultants.
4. No signage is approved as part of this application. All signage shall be in compliance with Article XVII of the Township Zoning Ordinance, except where relief to such provisions were granted by the June 24, 2021 action of the Zoning Hearing Board, in which case the signage shall be consistent with such relief.
5. Payment of a traffic impact fee in the amount of \$36,225 as described in the McMahon review dated March 8, 2022.
(McKeeman/Glisson)

ACTION: Passed 6-0

2. **WWT Public Works Facility**
Address: 215 Valley Creek Blvd.
First Review: Land Development
Request: Construction of a 39,200 sq. ft. Township Public Works Facility

Scott Deisher, of JMR Engineering, provided an overview of the plan to construct the Township's new Public Works facility at 215 Valley Creek Blvd. The site consists of approximately 25 acres and is zoned Office/Laboratory (O/L). Conditional Use approval was previously received on November 23, 2021.

The major outstanding issue is the entrance to the site from Valley Creek Blvd. to allow left turns in and out of the site. Mr. Otteni described the entrance that will be added to the land development plan. He explained that Valley Creek Blvd. currently consists of four lanes. Of the two through lanes going south, one lane will be striped out from Swedesford Rd. leaving only one lane going south. The existing "fast lane" will then be utilized as the left-turn lane into the site. A hole will be cut into the median to access the driveway. This design will not impact the Chester Valley Trail. Mr. Otteni maintained that the existing four lanes of Valley Creek will never be needed, and the Public Works facility is not a high-volume traffic generator.

Mr. Deisher noted that the requested waivers were supported by consultants with some minor amendments and additional recommendations that will be added to the plan.

Chris Garrity, of Glackin Thomas Panzak, said the Applicant will comply with all of the lighting consultant comments as well as Theurkauf's landscaping review. Four waivers related to buffers and parking lot screening are supported by Theurkauf.

There will be no access to the site from the Chester Valley Trail due to security and additional conflict point.

There was discussion about an emergency access with the proposed East Whiteland Township development. Mr. Kumbhardare said the Township will agree to allow staff from the East Whiteland project to use the Public Works driveway and vice-versa, but only after construction is completed, and only if the East Whiteland use remains a Data Center. The Township does not want construction vehicles for the East Whiteland project to use the Public Works driveway.

Regarding comment #60 of the SSM review letter, the Applicant will assess what is warranted to comply with the paving comment. A fence suggested by SSM will not be needed as the property will be monitored. The Applicant will comply with all remaining consultant comments.

Mr. Gordon asked for public comment on the project, and there were none.

MOTION: To recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the land development plan entitled "Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for West Whiteland Township Public Works" as depicted on the 21-sheet plan set prepared by JMR Engineering, LLC dated February 15, 2022 ("Plan") with the following waivers and subject to the following conditions:

1. The Plan is approved as a final plan pursuant to §281-10.H of the West Whiteland Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance ("S/LDO").
2. Waiver of §270-15.T(2)(b) of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow disturbance and grading within Riparian Buffer Area Zone 2, pursuant to comment #1 of the Spotts, Stevens and McCoy ("SSM") review dated March 9, 2022, and Condition #3a of the Conditional Use Decision and Order for this project approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 23, 2021 ("D&O").

3. Waiver of §270-15.T(2)(c) of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow disturbance and grading within Riparian Buffer Area Zone 3, pursuant to comment #2 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022, and Condition #3b of the D&O.
4. Waiver of §270-20 of the Stormwater Management Ordinance from the stormwater infiltration requirements, pursuant to comment #3 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
5. Waiver of §270-21.D of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow a smaller orifice than required, pursuant to comment #4 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
6. Waiver of §270-25.A of the Stormwater Management Ordinance such that a minimum freeboard of six (6) inches shall be allowed for BMP's 002 through 004, pursuant to comment #35 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
7. Waiver of §270-29.A(4)(a) of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow the top of the berm for the rain gardens to be not less than three (3) feet wide, pursuant to comment #36 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
8. Waiver of §270-29.B of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow a bottom slope of less than 3% in the detention basin, pursuant to comment #5 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
9. Waiver of §270-30.E of the Stormwater Management Ordinance to allow the detention basin to have side slopes steeper than 3:1, pursuant to comment #1 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
10. Waiver of §281-16.C(9)(a)[2] and §281-17.C(9)(a)[2] of the S/LDO such that individual mature trees larger than 6" DBH need not be identified and located, pursuant to comments #8 and #9 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
11. Waiver of §281-17.D(13) of the S/LDO such that the final design of the retaining wall shall be provided prior to the issuance of the building permit, pursuant to comment #10 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022.
12. Waiver of §281-31 of the S/LDO such that no sidewalks need be provided, pursuant to Condition #2a of the D&O.
13. Waiver of §281-32 of the S/LDO such that curbs need not be provided around all paved areas in the interest of facilitating stormwater management, pursuant to comment #7 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022, and Condition #2b of the D&O.
14. Waiver of §281-35.E of the S/LDO to allow the paving setback and landscaping as shown along the eastern property line, pursuant to comment #11 of the SSM review dated March 9, 2022, comment #1b of the Theurkauf Design and Planning ("Theurkauf") review dated February 24, 2022, and Condition #2c of the D&O.
15. Waiver of §281-35.F(4) of the S/LDO to allow a stormwater basin with side slopes in excess of 4:1 to be deemed a naturalistic basin, provided that native meadow vegetation is provided along the basin slopes, pursuant to comment #2 of the Theurkauf review dated February 24, 2022.
16. Waiver of §281-35.G(1)(a) of the S/LDO such that no parking lot screen need be provided, pursuant to comment #3c of the Theurkauf review dated February 24, 2022.
17. Partial waiver of §281-37.B(4) of the S/LDO to allow the parking lot island shade trees as shown, pursuant to comment #5 of the Theurkauf review dated February 24, 2022.
18. Pursuant to condition #4 of the D&O, the plan shall be revised prior to review by the Board of Supervisors to incorporate the revisions to Valley Creek Blvd. and the median as presented tonight to accommodate left turns into and out of the site.
19. All remaining consultant and Staff concerns shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the Township.
20. The Applicant shall execute and provide to the Township a recordable, notarized copy of a

memorandum containing a metes-and-bounds description of the tract approved for development, stipulating the terms and conditions of the D&O and shall consent to the recording of the said memorandum in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Chester County not later than the time of recording of the approved land development plan.

21. Execution and recording of the Township's Stormwater Facilities Maintenance Agreement and Landscaping Restrictive Covenant, pursuant to Township practice.
22. Execution of a Developer Agreement and a Financial Security Agreement pursuant to Township practice. The amount of such security shall be based upon construction cost estimates for the site improvements, including landscaping, to be provided by the Applicant, which shall be reviewed and deemed sufficient by SSM and Theurkauf.

(McKeeman/Wright)

ACTION: Passed 6-0

When asked what the Township plans to do with the existing Public Works facility located at 222 N. Pottstown Pike, Mr. Kumbhardare advised that nothing has been decided at this time, but an expansion of Miller Park is a consideration.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Weller announced that there will be a public hearing before the Board of Supervisors on March 23 to consider an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. He also reported that PREIT has sold the Exton Square Mall, but no further information is known at this time.

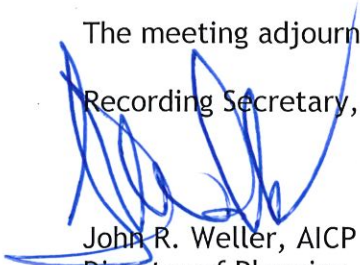
Mr. Smiley advised that students from West Chester University will be conducting a Planning Studio on the Exton Crossroads and would like to interview members of the Planning Commission. All members volunteered.

Mr. Kumbhardare explained that in response to a request from public, the recordings of the Board of Supervisors' meetings will now be made available on the Township's website. He asked if the Planning Commission is interested in doing the same. The Commission declined at this time until safety measures are more secure.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 p.m.

Recording Secretary,


John R. Weller, AICP
Director of Planning