

WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES

Minutes of the second May meeting

May 31, 2022

**Members Present**

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

**Township Personnel Present**

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

Brian Dunn, Board of Supervisors

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman 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 May 17, 2022. (McKeeman/Wright)

ACTION: Passed, 6-0

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

**IV. PLANS**

**1. Commerce Pursuit Capital (Westrum)**

**Address: 50-70 W. Boot Rd.**

**First Review: Conditional Use**

**Request: Construction of a 148-unit personal care facility**

In attendance on behalf of the Applicant were attorney John Jaros of Riley Riper; Michael Maier of Westrum Development Co.; and Steve Sauselein, PE, of E.B. Walsh & Associates.

The project requires conditional use review pursuant to the following sections of the Zoning:

- §325-71.B(2)(a) for the placement of a sanitary sewer line in an area of prohibitive slopes,
- §325-71.C(2)(a) for the construction of an otherwise allowed structure on precautionary slopes, and
- §325-124.A(1) for the construction of a non-residential building with more than 20,000 sq.ft. of floor area.

Mr. Jaros introduced the project, and Mr. Maier gave a brief PowerPoint. The project will include 150 units (175 to 180 total residents) divided among independent living, personal care, and memory care units. The presentation included floor plans for all three floors and the garage level.

The Historical Commission reviewed the plan and passed a motion supporting approval at the meeting of May 9, 2022.

Traffic impacts are still under review.

There are two options for connecting to public sewerage: either north to Boot Rd. and Pottstown Pk. or southeast directly to Pottstown Pk. Both cross prohibitive slopes.

Stormwater facilities were discussed. Soil testing indicates that infiltration is feasible. The design will be finalized during the land development process.

There was discussion on the landscaping issues noted by Theurkauf, during which the Applicant showed photosimulations of the project with the proposed plantings. The plan provides the 25-foot buffer required along the west side, but not the 50-foot buffer from Banbury Shops along the east side. The Applicant completed a tree survey, which determined that 127 compensatory plantings are required; they will be exploring different options to meet the requirement, as provided in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Pedestrian accommodations consist of a sidewalk along Boot Rd. with accesses to the historic Greenway Cottage, the State Farm office building, and the proposed main building, along the emergency access. Another sidewalk along Darlington Dr. will connect to the existing pedestrian network in Boot Road Park. Steep slopes prevent a safe pedestrian connection to the Banbury Shops.

The Applicant will reach out to Good Fellowship Ambulance regarding memberships for each unit.

John Weller stated that, in his opinion, the plan does not meet three of the conditional use criteria:

- Traffic congestion - McMahon is not satisfied with the traffic analysis provided by the Applicant. The Applicant will work directly with McMahon to provide additional analysis.
- Impact on ambulance and emergency service providers - The Applicant will reach out to Good Fellowship to resolve this matter.
- Impact on natural features - Mr. Weller cited outstanding concerns with stormwater management and compensatory planting.

The Applicant will address remaining concerns and submit revised plans for Planning Commission review at the July 19 meeting.

**2. 296 Boot Rd.**

**Address: 296 Boot Rd.**

**First Review: Subdivision**

**Request: Creation of four new lots to accommodate an existing house on Boot Rd. and three new single-family detached houses along Burke Rd.**

Property owner Brian Troupe was in attendance along with Denny Howell and Amanda Schneider of D.L. Howell Associates.

Mr. Howell presented the plan, noting that they were not expecting a recommendation tonight: they will revise the plan to address the consultant concerns and re-submit them for review. The Commission offered the following comments:

- The Township Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan does not show sidewalk along this section of Burke Rd. The Commission agreed that sidewalks may be impractical here due to slopes.

- The Applicant does not intend to build the three new houses immediately; he acknowledged that he would need to return for conditional use approval before building a house on precautionary slopes, as shown on Lot 4. The alignment of the Lot 4 driveway will be adjusted to avoid Lot 3.
- The existing house on Lot 1 is a historic resource and is connected to public sewerage and water supply; all the proposed lots will also be connected to both services. In discussion about the low-pressure force main, Township Engineer Ted Otteni said that he was not opposed to such a provision in principle, but he had concerns about responsibility for long-term maintenance. Mr. Howell said that maintenance would be shared by the owners of the three lots and that such responsibility would be recorded in the deeds for those properties. Mr. Otteni responded that it be more useful in the long term to have a gravity connection down Burke Rd., but he would need to explore that further with the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Weller reminded the Applicant of the Township's sprinkler requirement necessitating two water lines, a traffic impact fee of \$5,796, and an open space fee just under \$12,000.

The Applicant will revise the plans and return to the Commission for further review.

### 3. **Cross Gables Estate**

**Address: 701 Old Valley Rd.**

**First Review: Conditional Use**

**Request: Recommendation to allow historic resource at 701 Old Valley Rd. to be adaptively reused into a wedding/special events venue**

Applicants Joe and Theresa Conahan were in attendance. Mr. Weller summarized the plan, noting that while "special events venue" is not a use defined in the Zoning Ordinance, what is proposed meets the definition of an "inn" found in the Zoning Ordinance: "A commercial facility for the housing and feeding of guests." Inns are allowed in the R-1 district by conditional use under §325-86.A of the Zoning Ordinance since the property is a historic resource. The Historical Commission reviewed the plan and passed a motion supporting approval on May 9, 2022.

The site lacks sufficient parking. The Applicants contacted Valley Creek Corporate Center about using their lots, but they declined citing liability issues. Mr. Conahan said they are currently looking at area hotels that could shuttle people to the site. There is room to park 20 to 25 vehicles at the Tenant House, and they are considering turf pavers to avoid adding macadam to the site.

Mrs. Conahan described three areas where tents will be used when needed. The Colfelt House will be used for smaller weddings and cocktail events with a tent as needed. A tasting room at the barn could hold 140 to 160 people with a tent. A remaining tent area can hold 300 if needed.

Commission members expressed concern about the safety of the intersection of Old Valley Rd. and Ship Rd. and about deliveries and trash collection on Old Valley Rd. Mrs. Conahan confirmed that trash collection is only needed for the residential use as the caterers will take all event-related trash with them. She also noted that Krapf Bus has viewed the site and said they could make it work. Delivery trucks drop off items and leave with no need to park. To comply with ADA bathroom requirements, luxury porta-potty trailers could be parked close to the house.

McMahon has requested additional information regarding traffic, and the Applicants are working to provide this. It was suggested that the traffic consultants talk first and agree on the scope of the work: a full traffic study may not be needed. Mr. Otteni added that Old Valley Rd. is a low-volume, low-use road. Public Works will trim the vegetation to provide better sight distance.

Commission members were comfortable issuing a motion conditioned on the traffic analysis being completed and reviewed to McMahon's satisfaction. Mr. Weller said the conditional use hearing would not

be scheduled until this has been accomplished. He noted that there is no traffic impact fee for this project since the site is outside of the Transportation Service Area.

**MOTION:** To recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the conditional use application for 701-703 Old Valley Road with the following conditions:

- The Applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Township as advised by McMahon Associates that traffic generated by this use will not adversely affect congestion or public safety, as described in the McMahon review dated May 10, 2022.
- The Planning Commission finds the provision of off-site parking to be acceptable such that the parking required for this use need not be fully accommodated on the site, pursuant to §325-39.H(3) of the Zoning.
- Any revisions or alterations to the structures on the site shall be reviewed by the Township Historical Commission and shall be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, pursuant to §325-90 of the Zoning.

(Glisson/Cote)

**ACTION:** Passed, 6-0

## **V. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. East Whiteland Twp - Act 537 Special Study**

Mr. Weller explained that East Whiteland Township is in the process of selling their sanitary sewerage system, a portion of which runs through West Whiteland. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection requires West Whiteland to approve and adopt the Special Study prepared by East Whiteland pursuant to the pending sale. Staff has reviewed the Special Study and has determined that it does not conflict in any way with the regulations or ordinances of West Whiteland Township, nor does it commit West Whiteland to any financial responsibility.

Bernadette Kearney and Charles Faulkner of Pennoni Associates, Inc. were in attendance on behalf of East Whiteland Township. In response to a question from the Commission, Ms. Kearny said that the anticipated sale date is August 9, 2022.

**MOTION:** To recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution approving and adopting the "Act 537 Special Study: Transfer of Sanitary Sewerage Facilities" prepared by Pennoni Associates, Inc. for East Whiteland Township. (McKeeman/Glisson)

**ACTION:** Passed, 6-0

### **2. Property Maintenance Code: Public Meeting June 23 - 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

The Board of Supervisors is considering adoption of the Property Maintenance Code and has scheduled a public meeting on June 23 at the Township building to receive feedback from residents and answer their questions. Mr. Gordon encouraged everyone to attend adding that adoption is needed and long overdue.

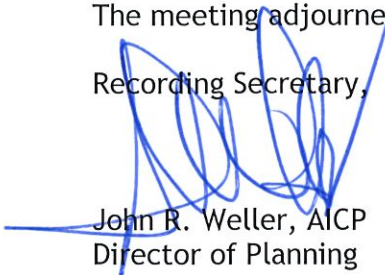
## **VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

There are no plans ready for review at this time for the June 21 and July 5 Planning Commission meetings. The next meeting with plan reviews will be July 19.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Recording Secretary,



John R. Weller, AICP  
Director of Planning