

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with law, was called to order by the Director of Community Development at 7:30 PM, Thursday, January 21, 2016, in the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room, Township Municipal Building, 1820 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, PA 15241.

PRESENT: Robert Stevenson  
Joel Helmrich  
Scott Slagle  
James E. Sekela  
Kevin Turkall  
David Wade  
Adam A. Benigni, AICP, Director of Planning & Community Development  
Ruthann L. Omer, P.E., Township Engineer  
Chris Cahillane, on behalf the Township Attorney  
Kristen Burch, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Todd Burlingame

PUBLIC: Eighteen (18)

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mr. Benigni requested nominations for Chairman. On motion by Mr. Slagle, seconded by Mr. Turkall, Mr. Stevenson was nominated and elected Chairman by unanimous voice vote, 6-0.

Mr. Benigni requested nominations for Vice Chairman. On motion by Mr. Sekela, seconded by Mr. Turkall, Mr. Slagle was nominated and elected Vice Chairman by unanimous voice vote, 6-0.

Mr. Benigni requested nominations for Secretary. On motion by Mr. Sekela, seconded by Mr. Slagle, Mr. Turkall was nominated and elected Secretary by unanimous voice vote, 6-0.

Mr. Benigni then turned the meeting over to Chairman Stevenson.

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE INFORMATIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF DECEMBER 17, 2015**

On motion by Mr. Slagle, seconded by Mr. Turkall, carried by unanimous voice vote, 6-0, the minutes were approved for filing as written.

**OLD BUSINESS**

NONE.

**NEW BUSINESS**

NONE.

**PREAPPLICATION CONFERENCE**

**DEERFIELD PLAZA – PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT**

John Baun was present for the applicant. Mr. Bound gave a brief history of the property and the proposed plan he then turned the presentation over to Eric Smith of Eric Smith Associates (ESA), architect for the applicant.

Mr. Smith gave a general overview of the proposed site plan. The property is located at the corner of Boyce Road and Washington Road (S.R. 19) and consists of 26.27 acres. The proposed development would be utilized for a pedestrian-oriented mixed use of retail, restaurant, single family residential, and senior living. The development would also offer approximately 5.5 acres of dedicated open space. The commercial buildings on the site would vary in height and be comprised of stone veneer, stucco, wood braces, and cement board siding. The northern portion of the property would maintain a fifty (50) foot landscape buffer and would require the construction of a retaining wall system for grade transition that would add to the existing 165 foot vegetation buffer adjacent to Boyce Park.

Mr. Smith discussed the ingress and egress of the development and stated that the overall parking requirements as outlined in the Township Code will be easily met.

There was a brief discussion with the Planning Commission regarding existing traffic conditions in the area as well as the potential increase in traffic as a result of the development. Mr. Smith explained that a traffic study will be completed in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). He indicated the ingress and egress of the development, the proposed addition of a signalized intersection at the main entrance located off of Boyce Road, as well as the proposed relocation of the entrance to Boyce Middle School.

Mr. Sekela asked for details regarding the natural drainage of the site. Mr. Smith indicated that all stormwater would be piped across Boyce Road to the southern portion of the site.

Mr. Wade and Mr. Helmrich asked for clarification on the number and type of units within the proposed Senior Living Center. Mr. Smith responded that the center will be an aged-in apartment complex and not a designated assisted living facility. The building would consist of approximately 150 units and would most likely be one to two bedroom apartments with a portion dedicated to memory-care or specialized care.

Mr. Stevenson asked why a signalized traffic light was proposed for the main entrance to the development. Mr. Smith stated that the developer has had numerous discussions with the School District and a signalized intersection was determined to be the safest option with regard to bus traffic.

Mr. Turkall asked if the developer would be responsible for payment and installation of the traffic signal. Mr. Smith confirmed that the developer would be installing the light as part of the overall construction of the development.

Mr. Slagle asked the applicant if he has discussed the proposed development with the landowner of the adjacent property with regard to vacating the rights to an existing easement. The applicant responded that those discussions have not yet occurred.

Mr. Slagle asked if the retail buildings would be facing Washington Road. Mr. Smith stated the buildings would, indeed, face Washington Road and would have a landscaped frontage. Mr. Slagle commented that this would be inconsistent with the current conditions along that portion of the Washington Road/Rt. 19 corridor.

There was another brief discussion regarding traffic in the area, deceleration lanes along Washington Road, the possibility of a left-hand turn lane on Boyce Road, and PennDot requirements for state-maintained roadways. Mr. Smith stated that all concerns would be address and discussed after the completion of a thorough traffic study.

Chairman Stevenson then asked the audience for comments.

Elena Petzold, 2489 Southvue Drive, presented the Planning Commission with a petition in opposition of the development consisting of thirty (30) signatures. Ms. Petzold listed five (5) reasons why she believes the development should not be given consideration for approval:

1. The area is zone R-1 – Single Family Residential. The residents in the area believe that this location should be developed into single family homes.
2. The proposal does not meet building requirement setbacks. Residents believe that no modifications should be granted in order to accommodate a mixed-use development.
3. The residents are opposed to a restaurant at this location due to the potential for increased odors, pests, garbage, and sewage. Residents are vehemently opposed to a potential restaurant with a liquor license located in such close proximity to a school.
4. Increased traffic at the Boyce Road/Washington Road intersection as a result of a mixed-use development will exacerbate current traffic conditions.
5. The residents in the area believe that increased traffic of a mixed-use development will compromise the integrity and safety of the existing School Zone.

Judy Kelly, 2624 Thorntree Drive, voiced her concerns with regard to increased traffic along Boyce Road and the potential effects on residents who live on Thorntree Drive. She asked the developer to consider providing a landscape buffer along Thorntree Drive to limit sight-lines between the residential properties and the proposed development.

Ralph McMormick, 2560 Partridge Drive, asked the Planning Commission to consider a landscape buffer between Partridge Drive and the proposed development as well as mitigation for the potential increase in stormwater run-off onto the abutting cul-de-sac on Partridge Drive.

Bethany Salmen, 2677 Thorntree Drive, expressed her concerns regarding traffic in the area. She discussed the current traffic conditions and difficulties of neighboring residents to access Thorntree Drive during times of high traffic. She also voiced her opposition to the proposed access to “Building 9” via Thorntree Drive.

Andrew Petzold, 2489 Southvue Drive, commented on the current traffic conditions of the area and stated that a mixed-use development would only worsen these conditions. He also voiced concerns about the construction of parking lots in such close proximity to wetlands and the possibility for unstable conditions for construction.

David Gates, 2553 Partridge Drive, asked the Planning Commission to consider the potential increase in traffic for north-bound travelers on Washington Road, particularly those turning onto or off of Chapelwood Drive. Mr. Gates then asked the Planning Commission what the process was for rezoning the proposed property.

Mr. Benigni explained that the rezoning process was complex and would require a Township Zoning Text and/or Map amendment. He stated that the process is legislative in nature and would need to occur prior to the approval of any development on the proposed site that does not comply with the current zoning requirements.

Joseph Newman, 1738 Grey Mill Drive, voiced his concerns with regard to increased traffic in the area as a result of the development as well as compromised safety for the children in the area. Mr. Newman expressed his opposition to the rezoning of the property and asked that the Planning Commission refrain from granting any modifications requested by the applicant for the development of the property. He asked that the Planning Commission be mindful of neighboring residents who will have to endure years of construction noise, traffic, and debris.

Elana Petzold, 2489 Southvue Drive, again approached the Planning Commission and asked that they walk the property in question to gain a sense of what the residents enjoy about the area and try to envision how it would look should the proposed development move forward.

Chairman Stevenson asked for additional comments or questions from the audience. There being none, he stated that no action was being taken at this time, as the presentation was a Preapplication Conference.

### **CONSIDERATION OF 2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

**MOTION:** That the Planning Commission approves the 2015 Annual Report as written.

Motion by Mr. Turkall, seconded by Mr. Wade, carried by unanimous voice vote, 6-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the meeting be adjourned at approximately 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristen Burch, Recording Secretary