



LOWER NAZARETH TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION

623 MUNICIPAL DRIVE
NAZARETH, PA 18064
TELEPHONE: 610-759-7434
FAX: 610-746-3317

Planning Commission

Linda Crook, Chairperson
Hugh Harris, Vice Chairperson
Tara Capecci, Secretary
Bert Smalley
Travis Gerould

Planning Commission Minutes January 21, 2019

Acting Chairperson, Linda Crook, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Also in attendance: Commission Members Tara Capecci, Travis Gerould, Hugh Harris and Bert Smalley; Township Engineer Albert Kortze, and Lori Seese, Planning & Zoning Administrator.

REORGANIZATION

The motion to nominate Linda Crook as Chairman, Hugh Harris as Vice Chairman, and Tara Capecci as Secretary, was moved by Hugh Harris and seconded by Tara Capecci. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2018 meeting was moved by Hugh Harris and seconded by Travis Gerould. The motion carried unanimously.

SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT

LVHN Lower Nazareth Campus – Preliminary/Final Land Development

Present for the Application: Timothy Siegfried, Esq.; Rachel Lefebvre and Robert Kaplan for Lehigh Valley Hospital Network; James Rothdeutsch, P.E., and John McRoberts, P.E., The Pidcock Company.

Jim Rothdeutsch reviewed the history of approvals to date and the current proposed project. The site will be served by public sewer, which has already been extended to Newburg Road from Palmer Township. Public water will be provided as well. The site has a ± 3.5-acre detention pond with permanent storage, approximately 4 foot deep. The pond will be aerated. Off-site road improvements will be provided, on Hecktown and Newburg Roads, along with traffic signal and lane improvements on the Route 33 ramps.

Al Kortze reviewed the requested deferral/waivers and recommended approval as requested.

Tara Capecci expressed concern about people using the hospital driveway as a thoroughfare. The western driveway access should be designed in consideration of the natural intent for this to happen. Tara stated that it would also be helpful to know what is planned for the whole campus. Jim Rothdeutsch stated they don't want outside traffic travelling thru the campus and do not want to encourage that traffic pattern.

Travis Gerould asked if the traffic study triggered a requirement for a traffic signal. Jim Rothdeutsch stated that the development does not meet the requirements right now. Future development could trigger the traffic signal. Rachel Lefebvre stated they will have approximately 250 employees to start but this number will continue to increase over time. Jim Rothdeutsch also confirmed that the hospital will be one floor and is not designed for vertical expansion. They will start off with 20 beds with the ability to expand to 50 beds. They are not planning to use this facility as trauma center.

Tara inquired about improvements to the bridge over Route 33. Jim Rothdeutsch stated they are adding turn lanes - striping another lane on the bridge. It is possible that the bridge could be expanded in the future but not with this phase of development.

Al reviewed his letter, highlighting the need for a future revision to the traffic study. The access easement between the LVHN lot and Lot 2 needs to be addressed. Regarding Tara's comments about that western driveway, Al stated that the road needed to either be private road or designed as a public road. The current layout is not conducive for a public road. Jim Rothdeutsch stated they submitted a Karst Hazard Study with the previous subdivision plan; however, Al requested they review and update. Al recommended tabling the plan, cleaning up the outstanding items and resubmitting a fresh plan.

Lori Seese reviewed her letter, noted that phasing needs to be added to the plan, submission of a lighting plan and compliance with the Fire Chief's letter.

The Planning Commission outlined their concerns:

1. Sidewalk all along Hecktown Road.
2. Architectural rendering to be provided.
3. Township dedicated road between Hecktown and Newburg Roads, and LVHN access off that road.
4. No future access points between the easterly driveway and property line.

Anthony Pollicelli, 3145 Val Vista Drive inquired if there would be a berm to screen their property from the hospital use as they currently see the lights from the dealership to the west. Mr. Pollicelli also inquired about an easement that currently allows the water to run into the field. Jim Rothdeutsch stated that at present they are not doing any development along that side of the property and the water will continue to flow as it currently does. Regarding the berm, there is no plan for a berm. Al Kortze explained that the berm was part of the Conditional Use for the IDI warehouse. Mr. Pollicelli stated they would still like to have a berm if possible.

Hugh Harris stated the Planning Commission would add Mr. Pollicelli's request to their list of comments to be addressed by the Applicant.

The motion to table the plan was moved by Hugh Harris and seconded by Tara Capecci. The motion carried unanimously.

The motion to recommend approval of the waivers/deferrals as requested was moved by Hugh Harris and seconded by Travis Gerould. The motion carried unanimously.

Estates at Green Pond Zoning Map Amendment and Preliminary Major Subdivision

Present for the Application: Ronald DelSerro, Applicant; Joseph Piperato, Esq., and Lewis Rauch, Lehigh Engineering

Attorney Piperato reviewed the project history and proposed development. The project includes the relocation and construction of approximately 1000 feet of road east of the current Green Pond Road location. All lots are proposed as 1 acre and larger. An offer to maintain the stub of Green Pond Road as a private lane has been provided to Pat Fuisz, 206 Green Pond Road. The rezoning request is for both tracts, changing the zoning from Agricultural to Low Density Residential.

Tara Capecci inquired about the other lots that are included in the rezoning request. They are not depicted on the subdivision plans for "Estates at Green Pond Road".

Tara asked what the Applicant would do with the property if the zoning change was not approved. Attorney Piperato stated the property would be developed under current 1.5-acre zoning, Green Pond Road would stay in its present location and only half of the road will be widened. The 22 additional lots created with the LDR zoning help offset the cost to relocate the road.

Al Kortze reviewed his letter highlighting the Met-Ed easement relocation, sidewalks, and tree preservation. Al also noted the stormwater report is currently under review.

Attorney Tom Elliot addressed the board on behalf of Patricia Fuisz. Attorney Elliott stated abandoning Green Pond will be an inconvenience to Ms. Fuisz forcing her to go all the way around if she wants to travel south to Bethlehem Township. No improvement of the Green Pond Road/Hecktown Road intersection is proposed. Attorney Elliott stated Mr. DelSerro should be encouraged to improve the frontage of Pat Fuisz property in addition to the other road improvements included with the project. Discussion followed regarding access and response time for emergency personnel. Joe Piperato suggested adding a gated access with a Knox Box. The Fire Chief will be consulted regarding response time and his preference on this suggested gate.

Beverly Fuisz, 180 Green Pond Road, stated her opposition to closing Green Pond Road, concerned that all traffic will be forced through the housing development. Mrs. Fuisz also stated concerns for accidents and speeding. Mrs. Fuisz also believes this devalues her property because when she goes to sell her property there will be so much traffic. Mrs. Fuisz does not want sidewalks in front of her house and does not want to lose her treeline. The road will be widened within the township right-of-way, an approximate 8 feet on her side of the road. Mrs. Fuisz requested that the road be widened without taking her trees. Attorney Piperato stated they would have to verify and come to back the Planning Commission on that request.

Pat Fuisz also noted there is a bus stop where the development will meet Bethlehem Township and that is not a good portion of the road.

Hugh Harris noted the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission comment letter on the subdivision and the fact that they are in favor of the road relocation. Hugh also noted that the properties to the east are also zoned LDR; therefore, it would not be considered a case of spot zoning because the LDR zoning district would be continuous.

Regarding the Rezoning Request:

Tara Capecci likes the original zoning but with future development south in Bethlehem Township who will be using the road as well, the plan to straighten the road is better solution.

Linda Crook would prefer to see few houses but is also in favor of the road relocation.

Bert Smalley agreed that the road should be straightened out. Traffic problems in Bethlehem Township are beyond Lower Nazareth Township's control.

Travis Gerould does not like the elimination of Green Pond Road in its entirety. He would like the road to continue because it would provide another access point.

In summary, the Planning Commission is not thrilled with the zoning change but would support the development as proposed with the inclusion of the road relocation.

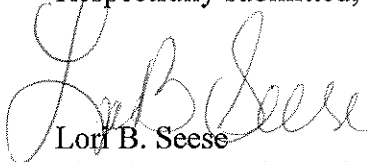
The motion to table the Preliminary Major Subdivision Plan for Estates at Green Pond was moved by Hugh Harris and seconded by Travis Gerould. The motion carried unanimously.

Sue Rumer, 4184 Hecktown Road (corner of Hecktown Road and Frank Street), inquired about the widening of Hecktown Road on her side. She was advised no widening would occur on the north side of Hecktown Road. Mrs. Rumer also suggested adding stop signs at the intersection with Cobblestone Lane. Al Kortze advised it would be discussed to determine if a 4-way stop would be warranted.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was moved by Tara Capecci and seconded by Hugh Harris. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori B. Seese
Planning & Zoning Administrator