

Washington Township Planning Board
APRIL 23, 2014

Vice Chairman Trevena called the regular meeting of April 23, 2014 of the Washington Township Planning Board to order at 7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

CLASS IV: Kathleen McGroarty, Lou Mont, William Leavens

ALTERNATES: Sam Akin, Howard Popper

CLASS I: Ken Short

CLASS II: Roger Read

CLASS III: Donald Babb

ABSENT: Mark Bauerlein, Charles DiSalvo, Eric Trevena

OTHERS PRESENT: Engineer Leon Hall, Attorney Tiena Cofoni, Planner David Banisch,
Clerk Barbara Margoese

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer-Tribune on January 13, 2014 and posted on the Bulletin Board on the same date. Notices were mailed as requested.

MINUTES

Minutes from the October 14, 2013 Regular Meeting

Mr. Mont made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Popper.

A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Ayes: Leavens, Mont, Akin, Babb, Popper

Nays: None Abstentions: Read, McGroarty, Short

Minutes from the February 10, 2014 Regular Meeting

Mayor Short made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Popper.

A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Ayes: Mont, McGroarty, Short, Akin, Babb, Popper, Leavens

Nays: None Abstentions: Read

Minutes from the March 10, 2014 Regular Meeting

Mayor Short made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Popper.

A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Ayes: Mont, McGroarty, Short, Akin, Babb, Popper

Nays: None Abstentions: Read, Leavens

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON AGENDA ITEMS

The meeting was opened to the public for items not on the agenda. There were no questions or comments from the public and the meeting was closed to the public.

PUBLIC HEARING/APPLICATIONS

1. Washington Township Board of Education – Block 34, Lot 49 & Block 34, Lot 46.04
R-5 Zone - Minor Subdivision - Representatives present: Peter Dubro (Sunlight General),
Attorney Jane Gallina Mecca, Land Surveyor Frederick Voss

Ms. McGroarty recused herself due to a conflict of interest. Attorney Jane Gallina Mecca, attorney for the Board of Education, introduced herself and Peter Dubro, representative from Sunlight General Corporation. Mr. Dubro was sworn-in. He explained that the purpose of this application is to receive approval for a lot line adjustment which will ultimately result in a land swap with Washington Township. Mr. Dubro referred to Exhibit "A-1", a plan sheet from the submitted minor subdivision plat dated August 2, 2013. He stated that parcel "A" shown on the map is to be broken-off to swap with the township and that this will benefit the school's proposed solar project. Mr. Dubro noted that a wetlands Letter of Interpretation has been received from the NJDEP.

The board reviewed Engineer Hall's review letter dated April 18, 2014. The applicant's Professional Land Surveyor, Frederick Voss, was accepted as a NJ licensed professional land surveyor and professional engineer and was sworn-in. Mr. Voss stated that the land area on the township property and the Board of Education's property will remain the same after the swap. He referred to Exhibit "A-2", the minor subdivision plat sheet 2, dated August 2, 2013. He referred to Exhibit "A-3, the minor subdivision plat, sheet 1 with color added and Exhibit "A-4", the minor subdivision plat, sheet 2 with color added.

Mr. Voss addressed Mr. Hall's review letter stating that checklist #6, road improvements need to be shown, by stating that no road improvements are being proposed. Mr. Voss stated that wetlands letter from NJDEP have been received for both lots now. Mr. Hall agreed that this checklist item, #9, has been addressed. Mr. Hall stated that checklist item #11, zoning table, needs to be submitted. It was noted by Attorney Cofoni that because the applicant is not asking for a variance, notice is not required. Mr. Voss stated that all of Mr. Hall's comments will be addressed as conditions of the approval.

Attorney Jane Mecca stated that the proposed configuration will result in a better situation for the school's solar array project. Mr. Popper asked if the lots have been appraised. Ms. Mecca stated that each of the lots involved were appraised for the exact same value. Mr. Popper noted that the Board of education lot is encumbered with the proposed by-pass. Mayor Short noted that Morris County has expressed that they are not interested in purchasing the land for the by-pass.

Mayor Short asked that the actual delineation maps for both lots' wetlands areas. Engineer Hall stated that the underlying title for the lot and the access easement will need to be reviewed by the township attorney. Attorney Cofoni stated that parcel "B" will have to simultaneously be moved with parcel "A" or otherwise there will be two isolated lots.

Mr. Dubro stated that Sunlight General is the developer for this application and that they designed the solar array. He stated that the roof was considered along with canopies in the parking areas for the solar array location.

The meeting was opened to the public. Mr. Phillip Berg, 10 Walden Road, asked if competitive bids were taken for the solar project. Mr. Dubro stated that this did go through a competitive bid process. Mr. Berg asked what the payback period is for the project. Mr. Dubro stated that it is a 15 year period. With no further public comments and questions, the public portion was closed.

A motion was made by Mayor Short, seconded by Mr. Popper to have the board's attorney draw-up a resolution of approval addressing this lot line adjustment with the following conditions: the wetlands map showing the delineated wetlands for both lots is to be submitted to the board, approval of this minor subdivision by the Morris County Planning Board if they require it, the list of property owners within 200 feet is to be shown on the plat, the lines for the secretary, engineer and chairman are to be added to the plat, and comments made by Engineer Hall in his April 18, 2014 letter are to be addressed by the applicant. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Ayes: Mont, McGroarty, Short, Babb, Popper, Read, Leavens
Nays: None Abstentions: Akin

Ms. McGroarty rejoined the board.

2. Jade Land, Inc. – Conceptual Plan – Schooley's Mountain Road & Fairmount Road
Representatives present: Ray Rice (Jade Land, Inc.), Richard Pellazoni, P.E.

Mr. Rice stated that three properties are involved in this application; one property is located on Schooley's Mountain Road and one property is on West Mill Road and the other property is located on Fairmount Road. He said that Jade Land Company is proposing to build as a part of this redevelopment plan a community building at Jade Land's cost. Mr. Rice stated that his company will provide a parcel that will be deeded to the town and eventually will be deeded to the township fire department.

Mr. Rice explained that the Ballantine site, which is located on Schooley's Mountain Road, will utilize an underutilized building. He stated that the plan proposes the creation of 13 apartment units with 12 providing a two car garage. He said that 9 of the units will be affordable housing units. Mr. Rice noted that first floor retail is proposed for the building directly located on Schooley's Mountain Road. Mr. Rice stated that he is hoping that Long Valley's downtown can be connected through walking paths because he anticipates that children will be living in these units. He stated that he believes the school system can handle the additional children because the ages of the children will be staggered. He noted that access to the site will be provided from Fairview Avenue.

Mr. Rice noted that the proposed plan does not account for the land swap with the Board of education that was previously discussed this evening. He said that they are now aware of it and can work with this change.

Mr. Richard Pellazoni, professional engineer for Jade Land, informed the board that the proposed plan for the Fairmount Road site is for 72 single family dwelling units and a 30,000 square foot community center. He stated that the architecture of the homes has been designed to have the garage doors to the rear of the homes. He stated that the total number of dwelling units is 116. Mr. Pellazoni stated that the West Mill Road site is to have 20 COAH units, 2 retail buildings and a 6-bay fire house. Mayor Short stated that the YMCA has stated that they are very interested in using the recreation center. The recreation center is to have a pool, basketball court, and multi-purpose rooms.

Mr. Rice addressed the proposed plans for the Ballantine site. He said that the concept plan shows a two-story profile with retail downstairs and residential upstairs. He said that these units would be townhouse rentals which will each have two bedrooms. He told the board that this property is bisected by a Category 1 stream. Mr. Rice noted that the proposal uses the existing building footprint and that the height limitation of 35 feet would not be exceeded.

Mr. Rice stated that the parking for the Ballantine site will use geotech blocks. He noted that they will be discussing their plans with the Historic preservation Commission. Mr. Rice stated that there will be a need to rezone this property for this to be considered as redevelopment.

The board briefly discussed the current situation with regard to the township's COAH obligation for housing. Mr. Banisch stated that the new COAH number will be made available to the municipalities on May 1st.

Mayor Short recommended that the board's engineer and planner, the township administrator and the Planning Board Chairman talk with the Highlands Council about this proposal. He noted that this area is approved for sewer and water. Mr. Popper stated that the downtown area of Long Valley is historically preserved and that this will have to be discussed with Eileen Stokes and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mayor Short asked if the Board of Education's solar project would impact this proposal. Mr. Rice stated that they will have to screen for the solar panels. Mr. Popper asked who will own the community center. Mr. Rice stated that Jade Land will build it and then it will be turned over to the township. Mr. Popper recommended that a traffic study be done because additional traffic is anticipated. Mr. Read asked if each of the three components can be considered separately. Mr. Rice stated that the various components are financially dependent upon one another. Ms. McGroarty stated that she likes the concept although she recommends that buffers be used near the school because of the density being proposed. She also recommended that a subcommittee be created later to consider this project. Mayor Short asked about the fire department location. Mr. Rice stated that the old location could be switched for the other. Mr. Akin noted that the traffic will be significant and that the proposed dwelling density will have an impact. He stated that he has concerns with the layout on the property known as the Swakhammer property. Mr. Akin stated that there are preserved farms surround this property and that buffers and setbacks will have to be considered. Mr. Leavens stated that this proposal will significantly alter the character of the downtown area. He stated that he likes the repurposing of the Ballantine buildings.

Mr. Banisch stated that an amendment to the Water Allocation Plan will be needed to increase the allocation. Chairman Mont stated that on the surface the proposal looks good. He agreed that a meeting with the Highlands Council is in order. Mayor Short stated that he will schedule a meeting the Highlands Council to discuss this proposal.

The meeting was opened to the public for comments and questions. Mr. Walt Cullen, 9 Laurel Drive, stated that in the past, a group in Long Valley raised \$30,000 for a YMCA. He said that the township needs this. He stated that the proposed by-pass should not be built.

Mr. Robert Craig, from the fire department, stated that the building being proposed is too tall for the fire department to get a ladder to. He stated that the water coming down will have an effect on the nearby brook. Mr. Phillip Berg, 10 Walden Road, stated that he sees some positives and some negatives regarding this proposal. He said he was not sure that Long Valley's downtown was really a downtown area like downtowns in Clinton or Chester. He said that he thought the proposed fire house being proposed is too big. Mr. Berg stated that he thought the Ballantine proposal to be an appropriate use of this property. He added that he thought a visioning process, as was used in Chester Borough, would be a suitable process for the township to use as they proceed with this proposal, particularly because it involves private and municipal property.

DISCUSSION / CORRESPONDENCE

1. Vouchers

Mr. Leavens made a motion to approve the vouchers reviewed by the Chairman and found in order and send them on for payment, seconded by Mayor Short. A voice vote was taken; all were in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Short made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Leavens. A voice vote was taken; all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Margolese, Clerk