

Radnor Township Planning Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of November 2, 2020

Present: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

Absent:

The meeting started at 7:00pm

- John Lord, Chair, called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

- **Meeting Minutes for October 6, 2020** **Approved 7-0**
Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer;

- **360 Conestoga Road-Planning Module Approval**
Motion: **Approved 7-0**
Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

- **208 N Aberdeen – Planning Module Approval**
Motion: **Approved 7-0**
Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

- **Ardrossan -NATL Consolidation Plan**
 - **John Snyder represented applicant and reviewed plan**
 - **Plan is missing NRA 14 and should be included in NALT lot 2****Motion:** Approval of the final plans with the understanding that lot line and set-backs are shown on the plans as applicable. **Approved 7-0**
Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

- **Eastern University – Zoning Map Amendment**
 - **Dave Falcone from Saul Ewing represented the applicant**
 - **Rezone from PI to R2**
 - **Jonathan Alderson, Landscape Architect, reviewed landscaping plan****Motion:** Tabled **Table 7-0**
Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

- **Eastern University -Radnor & Eagle Roads**
 - **Devin Touhey reviewed plans****Motion:** Tabled **Table 7-0**
Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

Public Comment:

Richard Ranck, resident

- I was not contacted to meet with the developer nor were any of my neighbors on Walnut Ave. I received a letter from the developer saying they had met with neighbors explaining plans. Not true in our case. The 200 block of Walnut certainly would be effected along with our neighbors on parallel streets.
- Twenty homes on that size lot is excessive. The statement that 14 are there neglects to explain they are small and would be removed in favor of larger homes.
- The request for the variance from institutional to residential is not met by the acreage available. Besides which craning so many houses into this space is most certainly not in keeping with this neighborhood. Further, the design of these homes are neither in keeping with our homes nor for that matter interesting
- If houses are to be built they should be on larger tracts and laid out in keeping with what's here. To wit: a place we can walk through, not around like a gated community.
- I object to so many pools and the havoc of annual drainage.
- I'm trying to find commonality with existing homes. I don't see it. Going to change the character of our historic neighborhood.
- Materials appear antithetical.
- The architects who developed this area of N Wayne created three models of homes, different sizes, but homogeneous in appearance. Their planning and foresight resulted in our wonderful neighborhood. The tenor of the developer seems to be to synthesize instead of differentiate.

Kevin Blackney, Resident at 211 Walnut Ave

- was not notified of any residential meetings.
- Why aren't they saving the trees at Walnut and Radnor Street Road
- The size of the lots along Walnut Avenue are not in congruity with the size of the lots across Walnut Avenue
- The zoning change should not be tied into the number of units. Could the zoning be changed to 15 units to match the number that are being removed.
- As a Walnut Avenue resident I think there should be less homes along Walnut Avenue. It will be more in scale with the street. This should be not approved for 20 units. Rezoning would work for 15 units to match what is there.
- From the aerial view the houses along Walnut avenue are not set back as far as the house on the other side of walnut Avenue

William Marino, resident- 2 Paul Road-

- With the springing deed restriction, I have no objections.
- I am generally supportive of the development and have found the developers to be very transparent. I wish, however, to raise an issue with the change of zoning to R-2.
- I understand that this zoning change request is submitted together with a land use plan that calls for 20 new homes (the "Plan"). My concern, however, is whether the change to R-2 is conditioned on the Plan, and whether it would bind any subsequent purchaser. Specifically, I am concerned that if the Plan is not binding on any subsequent purchaser, the change to R-2 would allow any subsequent developer to add many more homes than currently proposed by CG Wayne, if CG Wayne decided for any reason not to move forward with the project. Without conditioning the zoning change to the Plan, I object to the change in zoning.
- Barbara Kraus Blackney, resident- This is a gross misrepresentation of neighbor buy-in. Many on the 100 block were not aware of this at all till the notice of this meeting and do not find R-1 zoning as necessarily preferable
- He is ignoring all of the institutions that it borders on three sides. That is what we found attractive when we moved to this neighborhood 20 years ago.

- Never received any notice of any meeting until this one and live within 100 yards of this property and have been involved in the past.
- Property taxes vs. contributions of a nonprofit institution to a local and larger community and the open space afforded by PI zoning needs to be balanced consideration. Increased demand on our local streets, especially current taxpayer on Walnut and Beechtree Aves., and community services of 20 home needs to be considered carefully.
- The developer only met with residents who always were on record for preferring a housing development and zoning change to RI or R2 as opposed to PI zoning. The agreement struck with two neighbors in order for VFMAC to sell to Eastern should be disclosed. It was not in the interest of all neighbors. (One of those parties has now moved out of the neighborhood).
- Again, I don't understand why a proposed zoning change is not before the Zoning commission.

Michael Kearney, resident 124 Walnut Ave –

- I live on Walnut Avenue, within 1,000 feet of the proposed development, and have not received any communication from the developer providing information or asking for feedback. I find this ironic as a recent *de-minimis* zoning variance application of mine required me to contact 110 of my "closest neighbors" to advise them of the zoning hearing.
- The site plan is unimaginative, using the cookie cutter, cul-de-sac model so common to (often bad) new residential development. It reflects neither the planning model for the immediately adjacent North Wayne Historic district -- a grid -- nor that of the St Davids neighborhood, which at least has many public streets with distinct entrances and exits, not dead ends. I would like to know if either of these alternatives was seriously considered and, if so, why they were rejected? If they were not considered, why not?
- I note that the proposed plan includes four or five private driveways each of which is nearly as long as the cul-de-sac itself. Wouldn't it be better to add an additional public street area to open up the development to the community around it? The cul-de-sac in the current plan simply serves as a shared driveway for 9 homes but would be maintained at public expense but adds little public benefit.
- One of the most attractive features of North Wayne is its walkability. While it is commendable that the proposal adds sidewalks, they only serve to direct pedestrian traffic around the development, not through it.

Ken Kearns, resident

- I am writing in support of the Applicant's proposed residential project at Eagle and Radnor Street Road. I feel that the plan and design that the applicant has submitted will enhance the North Wayne neighborhood and create a very reasonable development for this site.

Patrick Buckley resident- 306 Chamounix Road

- We purchased our home in 2011 and have been experiencing increased traffic congestion (with a noticeable increase in the past 3 years). There have been multiple incidents with pedestrians and vehicles, including a few situations where my children were forced off the road. Many children and students use the road to get to Fenimore Woods Park, Cabrini and Eastern University.
- Any proposed project should require the developer to provide a sidewalk the length of Chamounix Rd. We would also like to see increased measures to curb the current speed of travel on Chamounix Rd including speed bumps and the like. Increasing the number of vehicles utilizing Chamounix Rd by adding additional homes will only add to the current hazard if safety measures are not put in place.

Brian Johnson resident

- We do have a lot of questions in the neighborhood
- There is little open space. The set back on walnut does not match the other side of the street. And the number of houses seems high going down the street on walnut.
- how do we control the fences that will be put up and pools?? Is there any ordinance? There are no trees behind the first row of houses and of going up a hill all you will see is fences. And the houses are pretty close together.
- the houses seem large for the land that is there in the pictures. 4000 square feet for what looks like a half acre lot. So do we have an idea of the lot size for the houses? Is this commensurate to the North Wayne neighborhood?
- Any stone barrier on the corners and ornamental grasses makes the place “special”. Is that what we want?? I am talking about the entrance on beach tree and on the corner of ours. They envision “something special”. Doesn’t that make them elite? We want them to blend in and be consistent.
- How do we control the materials of construction and ensure the stone and cedar shingles as mandatory.
- How do we control -and ensure no more than 20 homes.
- The lot is very sloped. How do we understand the slope.

Douglas McCone resident

- I would like to participate this evening in the discussions about the Eastern property at Radnor Street Road and Walnut Avenue. This is the construction of 20 homes.
- My first comments is that no sidewalks have been included and they are essential to maintain congruency with the rest of the neighborhood. The most important sidewalks are ones that should be installed along Walnut Avenue from Radnor Street Road to the end of the property near the stream and from Walnut Avenue up to Eagle Road. While these will not connect to any sidewalks on the adjacent properties, they will allow students and other walker from the area around Eastern University to more safely walk from the campus up and into the middle of Wayne without walking in the street in one case and allow people who walk from the VFMA Campus into Wayne to walk safely. This is especially important at night when people walking with dark clothing cannot easily be seen by drivers of cars. SIDEWALKS are essential.
- My second comment is that Radnor does not generally permit flag lots and the houses 17, 18 and 19 all appear to be flag lots. This facilitates more density than would otherwise be permitted. I recognize that the terrain may make other entry routes nearly impossible, but we established a policy for the township for a reason and we ought to seriously consider the precedent that we are setting by allowing this.
- As a neighbor, I have the following the questions/ comments :
- I was not contacted by the developer. I wonder who was at the multiple meetings mentioned in the meeting. I only got the letter last week concerning this meeting.
- is there a guarantee that this is not a Toll-Brother-like development, ie is there an obligation to follow certain design proposals?
- construction period is said to be 4 years. What are the plans to limit noise from construction for the neighborhood? This will be a burden on neighbors over years.
- sidewalks: will there be streetlamps as well? Especially people walking to Wayne via Chamounix road are difficult to see at night. The township should take this project as a starting point to solve the sidewalk problem on Chamounix road, where children walk on the street to the playground in absence of a sidewalk.

- general comment: it would be better to skip the last house on Walnut to keep the open character of this part of the street.
- I was never invited to a consultation meeting, which I would have attended, I agree with one of the comments just made that a more appropriate development would be a continuation of the grid layout of North Wayne with a public street that would continue Beech Tree Lane and then add a street at right angle toward Walnut. This would be much more in keeping with the community than a cul de sac. The community and the new residents would be best served by doing this.
- Again, we want to incorporate this land into the local community and such a grid, including the sidewalks.

Matthew Marshall resident 228 Walnut

- I am a former 1st Ward Commissioner (interim) and prior member of the Planning Commission.
- I would like to propose that there is an interior (and dedicated) walking trail at this development. This trail would allow for Valley Forge Military Academy, Eastern University and Cabrini College students to traverse these +/-20 contiguous acres, currently zoned Planned Institutional.
- These 3 institutions have a long history of allowing access by their neighbors to their campuses. I would hope that the developer would provide reciprocal access to this development to neighboring residents (for both students and community members alike) This has been a long tradition for the campuses, so I would think that Eastern University (as seller of this property) would particularly want freedom of movement for their students and faculty.
- This development represents a significant “densification” of our neighborhood. Please consider a walking trail for the neighbors.
Thank you for your consideration

- **Radnor Township School District**

- Hugh Cadzow, represented the applicant and reviewed plans.
- Bill Dolan, RTSD and Steve Behrens, Architect gave a brief explanation of the project.

Motion: Tabled

Table 7-0

Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

- **200 S Ithan Ave**

- Nick Caniglia and Dave Fiorello, P.E. represented the applicant and reviewed the plans
- Commission has a concern of safety issues

Public Comment:

Michele Hunn, President of Trianon Homeowners Association

Bev Ornik, Trianon HOA Council Member/Lead on Mansion Development

- Dear Members:

Over the past five months the Trianon Homeowners Association (HOA) Council has been negotiating with GPX Realty regarding the proposed subdivision plan at 200 S. Ithan Avenue. GPX proposes 9 single family homes on this 6+ acre property which includes 3 Trianon lots subject to Trianon HOA’s Declaration and Bylaws regarding architectural design restrictions. While GPX did not want to build ‘Trianon houses’, they still expressed a desire to be part of our HOA. By creating a separate Class of lots for the GPX homes – which would have their own rules, including having entirely different architecture, having much larger lot sizes, allowing

pools and sheds and having a new common collector for stormwater management - we were able to draft revisions to our governing documents which both parties agreed to. Based on the information presented to us at the time, our homeowners voted to amend our Declaration and Bylaws to support this subdivision plan.

Today we just learned from the township engineer that GPX has requested a waiver for the modification density plan in order to build these 9 homes. We were not advised of this during our negotiations or before our vote, and would like a clarification on the waiver and what it means. We understand this waiver seeks to increase the number of homes allowed on this size parcel. We think this waiver seeks to leverage the inclusion of the new GPX homes into the Trianon HOA to ease the way to getting this waiver approved.

Please can you clarify what the current zoning rules allow for number of homes on the GPX parcel? Understanding this issue could very well impact our community.

Thank you.

Nan Lansinger, resident-249 S Ithan-

- I live directly across from the planned entrance to the new development proposed by GPX Realty. As a 43-year property owner on S. Ithan, I am keenly aware of the traffic and speed problems on S. Ithan. It has only become worse with the housing developments built over the past decades. Due to the tremendous increase in pedestrian, jogger and biker traffic, especially during Covid, it concerns me that 102 MORE cars are projected to be added to the traffic in a 24-hour period as a result of the proposed new homes. The safety of the proposed new road is a great concern, knowing the problems experienced in the past with cars and construction vehicles coming downhill on the current driveway, directly facing my property. I propose that the Commission require a safe design, with the potential for a relocated road.

Liz Springer, resident and Planning Commission member

- Concerns regarding Sidewalks, Stormwater issues, Lighting, Water pressure
- Who is maintaining frontage on Ithan Ave

Motion: Table

Table 7-0

Approved: Mr. John Lord; Mr. Steve Varenhorst; Ms. Megan Gonzales; Mr. Matt Golas; Mr. Lane Vines; Ms. Elizabeth Springer; Mr. David Natt

- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Next regular scheduled Planning Commission meeting is December 7, 2020