

The regular meeting of the Souderton Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm on the above date by Chairman Edward Huber. Other Commission members present included Jeffrey Gross, Thomas Rosenberger and Andrew Schlosser. The meeting was attended virtually through Zoom by Commission Member Laurie Reynolds, and Chloe Mohr, Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission. The meeting was also attended by Borough Engineer Jon Tresslar of Boucher and James, Inc., Borough Manager P. Michael Coll, and Borough Councillors Julie Munden, Daryl Littlefield and Donna Rogers.

Chairman Huber asked for consideration of the minutes from the October 7, 2020 Planning Commission meeting. A motion was made by Thomas Rosenberger and seconded by Andrew Schlosser, to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2020 meeting of the Souderton Planning Commission as presented. The motion was approved.

Chairman Edward Huber first recognized Zachary Sivertson, Esquire with the firm of Eastburn and Gray, PC, representing 61 Franklin Avenue, LLC and the proposed minor subdivision plan for the property at 61 Franklin Avenue in Souderton Borough. Following comments from the October 7, 2020 Planning Commission meeting, the applicant has revised the minor plan of subdivision to locate 2 off street parking spaces for each lot off of the rear alley. Landscaping was added to the plan and Cowan Associates prepared a list of waivers dated October 28, 2020. The applicant is proposing the following waivers due to existing conditions and limited yard area to install plant materials:

- Section 406.2- Lot Depth to Lot Width Ratio
- Section 418.2A- Submission of landscape plan
- Section 418.2.B- Planting requirements along streets
- Section 418.4.A.1- Street trees along Highland Avenue
- Section 418.4.4- Street trees along entire frontage of property
- Section 418.7- Additional landscaping

The Borough Engineer issued a second review letter dated October 30, 2020. With respect to this recent review letter the applicant will add a general blanket easement on the plan for utility maintenance. Each dwelling unit appears to have separate sewer and water connections. The Applicant will add spot elevations to the record plan to show appropriate drainage for the parking spaces. A chart will be added to the record plan showing required landscaping and the amount requested to be waived. Planning Commission members expressed a desire to add more trees to the rear of the interior lot. They also expressed a preference towards smaller trees given the constraints with utilities and overall lot size. The proposed shrubbery added around the parking lot is heavily maintenance dependent and may ultimately become too massive. Commission members expressed a desire to look at alternative plantings that will have slower growth and less maintenance. Planning Commission members recommended an easement for the maintenance of the shared front stairs to the dwellings and suggested the removal of two sets of unused stairs to the rear yard of the corner lot.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Andrew Schlosser, seconded by Jeffrey Gross to recommend conditional final approval of the minor plan of subdivision for 61 Franklin Avenue, LLC subject to revisions to address comments of the Borough Engineer by letter dated October 30, 2020; revisions to address the Planning Commission comments concerning landscaping, additional maintenance easements and the removal of the abandoned stairways from the corner lot; approval of the requested waivers and the addition of a table detailing the requested landscaping waivers. The motion was approved.

Chairman Edward Huber next recognized representatives from School Lane Development, LLC to review the Berkeley Court Phase 2 land development. School Lane Development was represented by Brian Grant and Rachel Sclan Vahey of InFocus Planning who was retained to assist with the development of the plaza, park and other site amenities for the development.

Following discussion and recommendations from the October 7, 2020 Planning Commission meeting, Rachel Sclan Vahey of InFocus Planning presented Sketch Plans #5, dated October 16, 2020, for the public plaza. One sketch plan includes a ramp with a gazebo and outdoor fireplace on the upper level. The second version of the sketch plan provides for a mechanical lift in place of the ramp, which provides opportunity for a terraced landscape. The grade change from the lower level to the upper level of the plaza area is 12 to 13 feet. Both versions of the sketch plan show a gazebo with an adjacent outdoor fireplace. The sketch plans include a mural wall with expanding seating area above. A fountain is shown on the lower level with seating around the mural wall. Planning Commission members expressed interest in the sketch version with the lift to provide for more terraced landscaping, however, feasibility of the lift needs further evaluation.

Rachel Sclan Vahey then reviewed a subsequent sketch plan and cross section for the neighborhood park area. She is refining the conceptual plans to provide for an amphitheater with terraced seating along with a flatter area designed for passive recreational activities.

School Lane Development expressed an interest in returning to the next Planning Commission meeting on December 2, 2020 to discuss revised engineering plans and to discuss any further updates on site amenities.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Michael Coll,
Recording Secretary