

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**July 20, 2023**

**Members:** Vice Chairman Garrett Weaver, Jim Nagle, Andy Toms, Matt Warfel, Mary Stoltzfus and Scott Riekers.

**Staff:** DeeDee McGuire, Township Manager; Geoffrey Beers, Township Supervisor; Michele Neckermann, Planning/Zoning Officer; Kim Yepremian, Planning/Zoning Officer & Recording Secretary.

**Call to Order:** Vice Chairman Weaver called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes Approval:** Scott Riekers made a motion, seconded by Mary Stoltzfus, to approve the June 15, 2023 minutes as submitted. Motion passed 6-0.

**Public Comment:** none

**Zoning Text Amendment – Medical Residential Campus:** Craig Smith, RGS Associates, presented a text amendment for Applicant Willow Valley Communities, that would allow an increase in building height in the R-1 zoning district of a Medical Residential Campus.

- An amendment is proposed to §285-43A(29)(j) of a Medical Residential Campus (MRC).
- Requesting additional building height in the R-1 zoning district of an MCR.
- Willow Valley's Southpointe campus is split between the R-1 and R-3 zoning districts.
- The building height in the R-3 district is allowed to be 60-ft, but in the R-1 district is only allowed a maximum height of 35-ft.
- The Applicant is requesting an increase in allowable building height in the R-1 portion of an MCR, with additional setbacks and parameters.
- A sketch plan was presented showing the layout of apartments and buildings per the previously approved Southpointe Plan. The two apartment buildings that have been constructed were shown in yellow, and the three buildings that have not been constructed were shown in pink.
- The intent of the proposed text amendment is to allow a revision in apartment complex design in Southpointe.
- Applicant would like to eliminate one of the five approved apartment buildings – the northern most building.
- Applicant would like to build the two remaining apartment buildings to a height of four stories and five stories, rather than the approved three stories. The total number of dwelling units will be the same as the currently approved Plan, which is 120 units.
- The efficiency of construction and the maintenance of one less building are reasons for the proposal, additionally, there will be a substantial addition of green space where the fifth building had been sited.
- The required parking has been adequately planned for and will not change.
- Commissioner Matt Warfel requested and received confirmation that the proposed amendment would affect only buildings in a Medical Residential Campus, and not all buildings in the R-1 zoning district.
- Peach Bottom Road and Wynwood Drive R-1 residents are currently buffered by a 150-ft setback requirement in the MCR for dwellings more dense than single family dwelling. The setback for a single family dwelling in the MCR is 50-ft from other residential lot lines.
- There is an Agricultural setback of 75 feet from a dwelling unit, which affects the Vo-Tech property to the east.
- The text amendment proposes a setback of 300 feet from adjacent residentially zoned parcels, which effectively doubles the current setback of 150 feet. Also, for every 1-foot of building height that exceeds 35 feet, there will be 3 feet of additional setback required in the R-1 district of an MRC.
- The result is that a 60-ft tall building would have a required setback of 375 feet from the adjacent residentially zoned parcels and 150 feet from the Agricultural district.
- This building height would be consistent with the existing buildings in Meadow Ridge and Spring Run to the north.
- Cross Section Plan was presented, showing the elevations along the tops of the buildings from Wynwood Drive towards the north across Southpointe, to the tallest proposed apartment building. There is a 24 to 25-ft elevation drop across the site from south to north.
- If you anywhere along Wynwood Drive looking towards the north, even looking between properties, all you can see/will be able to see, are the existing cottages.
- If the amendment goes forward, the Conditional Use approval for Southpointe will have to be amended for the new apartment building configuration. Additionally, there will be configuration changes for the memory care center and modification to the former Witmer office portion of the plan including a realignment of Main Street with Cultural Center Drive.

- The Applicant and RGS is accepting of the small wording change suggested by the Township, that would clarify how the extra setback would be measured, which is per each foot of building height between 35 and 60 feet.
- The space where the fifth building would have been built will be kept as some type of open green space, with a net impervious credit.
- Commissioner Stoltzfus commented on the amendment being site specific, and asked for clarification that the amendment would apply universally to all R-1 districts of all Medical Residential Campus, existing and created in the future. Zoning Officers confirmed this was correct. Craig Smith did state that the R-1 zone in the Southpointe campus was a unique situation.
- Commissioner Warfel asked if this amendment would set a precedent for requesting revisions for other uses with height restrictions; Zoning Officers confirmed it theoretically could, but it is ultimately up to the Board of Supervisors to accept and ultimately approve a proposed change to the ordinance.
- Commissioner Toms questioned the difference between height of a flat roof building and the measurement to the highest point of a peaked roof. Because building height is a measurement of the *average of the tallest roof surface*, a peaked roof with an average roof surface height of 60 feet would have a peak measurement that was higher than 60-ft and still meet the ordinance requirement.

**Motion:** Andy Toms made a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the proposed text amendment regulating building height and setbacks in the R-1 zoning district of a Medical Residential Campus, with the edit proposed by the Planning / Zoning Officer in the review letter dated July 14, 2023. Matt Warfel seconded the motion. Motion was approved 6-0.

#### **Community Development Updates:**

- Zoning Ordinance Amendment Work Session – August 2nd - the Committee will review the draft zoning map and new ordinance requirements for short-term rentals and solar fields.
- Lampeter Meadows – Conditional Use hearing was July 10<sup>th</sup>, and the decision will be rendered at the August meeting; Hay Lot Add-On Plan was approved; Agreements for 1891 Windy Hill Road were also approved.
- Tommy's & Mavis – waiting on Planning Module approval and SLSA agreement so they can record agreements and plans.
- Parkside Preliminary Plans – waiting for Final Plan submission.
- Applications for a 30-acre Solar Field Special Exception and a 1-acre Solar Field Special Exception will be heard at the August 8th ZHB meeting – both for a use not listed. Solar uses in the new ordinance will be split out into three categories: residential roof-top panels, principal use ground or roof mounted panels, and large scale solar uses.
- We did receive a Preliminary LD plan submission for Dunkin Donuts at the triangle. It should come to the Planning Commission in August.
- SDLD Plan came in for Smucker's Welding (Strasburg Pike). The Conditional Use approval granted in 2020 has expired, so they will be pursuing zoning approval and LD, concurrently. That will be before the Planning Commission next month.
- DWD Landscaping will be going before the Board of Supervisors in August for a non-material change regarding the width of their Riparian Buffer Easement. They won't be appearing before the Planning Commission as they had not yet recorded the previously approved plan.
- Andy Toms requested the Planning Commission receive a copy of the Draft Zoning Map. DeeDee McGuire approved the distribution of the map to the members.
- Mr. Jivani has made inquiries regarding obtaining a drive-through at his Sunoco station on the southern end of the Township at Willow Street Pike & Penn Grant Road. His Attorney submitted a Right-to-Know request, to see records regarding a previous variance denial for a drive-thru at this same location.
- Jim Nagle brought up the Sheetz land development plan and the exit onto Beaver Valley Pike that was installed alongside the old farmhouse. He wondered if we have evaluated how well or how poorly that access drive has functioned. He asked if we had any observations or follow-up to this approval or decision. DeeDee stated that it is working as we had expected – it's a difficult exit at times, but we have not received any complaints. The Township has received complaints and even witnessed people turning left out of Sheetz onto the Willow Street Pike, heading the wrong way in one-way traffic. Several Commissioners have witnessed the same thing.
- DeeDee McGuire answered questions regarding the re-opening of the Gypsy Hill Road/Long Rifle Road/Eshelman Mill Road construction project. Some PPL poles have to be re-located prior to the re-opening of the Gypsy Hill Road section of roadway. It will be at least another two weeks.

**Adjournment:** Jim Nagle made a motion, seconded by Scott Riekers, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved 6-0.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.