

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
July 21, 2022

Members: Vice Chairman Garrett Weaver, Jim Nagle, Matt Parido, Andy Toms and Matt Warfel.

Staff: Amanda Hickman, Assistant Township Manager; DeeDee McGuire, Township Manager; Geoff Beers, Township Supervisor; Chuck Haley, ELA Township Engineer; Kim Yepremian, Recording Secretary.

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

Minutes Approval: Jim Nagle made a motion, seconded by Matt Warfel, to approve the May 19, 2022 minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

Public Comment: none

Willow Valley Southpointe Expansion – Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan Revision: Craig Smith of RGS Associates, presented an overview of the Willow Valley Southpointe expansion Prelim/Final land development plan. The former Witmer residence and office will be renovated into two spaces. The north end will serve as an office for Willow Valley, and the south end will become a clubhouse for Southpointe residents. A newly constructed amenities/recreational area will include a patio, pavilion, bocce ball and pickleball courts, gardens, barbeque area and a fire pit. There will be a parking area for the office and for the clubhouse and rec area. The plan also includes the construction of nine cottages around a new access drive, similar to those already existing in the Southpointe development. There are several walkways planned to connect the recreational area to the rest of the campus. The conditional use for the expansion was approved by the Board of Supervisors on May 9, 2022.

In accordance with the discussions during the conditional use hearing, the entrance into the former Witmer tax office parking lot will be removed. The entrance to the dual parking lot for the office and Clubhouse will be relocated off Cultural Center Drive. The sidewalk along the front of the Witmer property will be extended to connect with the Cultural Center Drive sidewalk. The plan also includes a new crosswalk, as well as landscaping and buffers. In accordance with the recent conditional use decision, the Cultural Center Drive entrance will be converted into a full turn movement intersection, with the removal of the right turn in, right turn out median. As a result of these changes, a re-alignment of Main Street will be unnecessary.

Discussion of modification and waiver requests - based on ELA review letters and RGS response letters dated July 8, June 24 and May 31, 2022:

Item #1:Waiver of the preliminary plan application to submit a single combined Preliminary/Final Plan application

- scope and scale of project is limited
- no new public streets or improvements for dedication to the Township are being offered
- to avoid duplication of the process since a Final Plan would look exactly like the Preliminary Plan

Item #2:Waiver of the requirement to widen Peach Bottom Road (36-ft wide cartway required; currently 29-ft)

- curbing and sidewalk improvements were already installed along Peach Bottom Road during the original Southpointe land development phase
- the new plan affects only one-half of the property frontage in the area across from Main Street
- some roadway improvements are included in this plan such as crosswalks, the elimination of an entrance, and the conversion of the right turn in, right turn out entrance to a full turn movement intersection
- Township Engineer recommended this waiver be conditioned upon the Roadmaster's inspection for roadway and sidewalk improvements, which has not yet occurred

Item #3:Modification requiring a 100-ft by 100-ft intersection clear sight triangle

- 50-ft by 100-ft clear sight triangles are proposed for the internal Access Drive A, parking lot entrance, and Cultural Center Drive and Peach Bottom Road intersections
- the traffic is controlled with stop signs and stop bars, and the extra 50 feet provides little benefit
- same modification was approved for the rest of the Southpointe development with no issues

Item #4:Waiver requiring curbs to be provided wherever sidewalks are installed

- the grading differential and boulder wall already provide protection from vehicular traffic
- most of the planned sidewalks are not adjacent to travel lanes or parking spaces
- sidewalks adjacent to the two accessory parking areas on Access Drive A are being installed to provide safe passage to the recreational area, and very little vehicular traffic will occur in this area
- curbing would create a tripping hazard

Item #5:Modification of stormwater volume control requirement that there be no increase of the post development total runoff volume for all storms equal or less than the 2-yr 24-hr storm event

- propose to meet water quality/pollutant reduction standards as permitted by PADEP and the LCCD under NPDES permit requirements
- previous geological studies for Southpointe recommend that stormwater management focus on water quality due to the limited infiltration caused by the underlying carbonate rock formation
- same waiver request and approval was granted for the first Southpointe land development plan
- SWMF3 to the east, will handle the stormwater runoff from this expansion project
- RGS is providing additional filters, at the recommendation of ELA

Further clarification of Item#4: if the waiver is not granted and curbs are installed for the short sidewalk areas adjacent to the two parking areas along the Access Drive A, the concern is they would create a trip/fall hazard because the short curbs would be “floating” with no continuation or connection; guests or residents may not expect them; the sidewalks will be graded for easy and ADA accessible pathway to the amenities area; the curbing is not standard anywhere else in the Willow Valley Retirement Community.

Public Comment - Jim Whitehead, resident and elected council member of Southpointe: Mentioned the need for more sidewalks along Cultural Center Drive to the amenities area, in order to prevent residents from having to walk in the street - particularly residents who use walkers; he raised concern over the Peach Bottom Road stacking that occurs when vehicles without security gate clearance need to back up out of the Cultural Center Drive entrance, as there is no room to turn around; he believes that the large speed bump adds to the hazard at this intersection. His solution involves making the Witmer Office entrance (with a slight re-alignment to Main Street) the new entrance for Willow Valley; this would create a four-way intersection, and vehicles would have ample room to turn around if they can't get through the gate; to make up for the parking lot that will be lost, the unused portion of Cultural Center Drive could be converted into a parking area; this will eliminate hazards, be more convenient if needing to turn around and give everyone better access.

Craig was asked if there were sidewalks throughout the rest of the Willow Valley community. There are sidewalks along the main drives, but not among residences. Craig confirmed that proposed connections and sidewalks are consistent with the rest of the Southpointe campus. Craig stated that everything will be built to ADA grading and accessibility standards. Additionally, there are two extra parking areas off Access Drive A, which are for residents wishing to access the amenities area or for resident guests. The cottages will have off-street parking with garages, so there is no need for on-street parking. People won't need to walk down the roadway to access the new recreational area.

Discussion centered around vehicle stacking at the security gate:

- The commission asked if stacking at the other security gates was a concern, or is it particular to this location? And what happens when a vehicle can't get through a security gate and has to back out of the line? Bill Koch of CCS stated that there are call boxes and security cameras at all of the unmanned gates. Security personnel can open a gate remotely and require a visitor to turn around at the next intersection and go to the main gate to gain approved access, or they can verify with a resident that the visitor is expected and allow them to pass, or they may deny admittance altogether.
- The placement of the Cultural Center Drive gate is consistent with other locations, but most of the other locations have the width to pull to the side or to turn around, without blocking traffic. It was asked how many cars could wait at the Cultural Center Drive gate, before stacking on Peach Bottom Road would occur? Craig gave an estimation of three vehicles. The commission wondered how many times a day does someone need to back away from that gate because they can't gain entry? There is no count available. Guests and contractors who can't get through the gate can use the call box to possibly gain entry, but there is a delay.
- During the conditional use application review, the planning commission did discuss other locations for the security gate, such as sliding it up towards the east. There was also a question about moving the parking lot entrance up off of Access Drive A, but the difference in grade is too steep. A second gate between the parking lots had also been discussed.
- The BOS has not yet to discuss this current gate location with the full vehicle movement configuration. There are other concerns such as emergency vehicle access/egress clearance, and being able to restrict access to the amenities area. Moving the gate to the east of the parking lot entrance would prevent stacking and allow visitors into the lot for the Willow Valley office, however, it would create a security issue for the recreational area and Willow Valley.
- The Township only has concern over the location of the security gate to the degree that it could affect the traffic flow along Peach Bottom Road. The gate at the other Southpointe entrance off Peach Bottom Road is located much further in than the gate on Cultural Center Drive, so stacking at that location is not an issue.

- Mr. Parido explains the location of the gate on a private road in a private community is not the purview of tonight's Planning Commission recommendation. It will be noted in the minutes and should be a topic of future discussion for the BOS.

Motion: Jim Nagle moved to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors of West Lampeter Township the Willow Valley Southpointe Expansion preliminary/final land development and subdivision plan as presented, conditioned upon compliance with the Township engineer's letter dated July 8, 2022, the LCPC comment letter dated April 4, 2022, and any additional comments received this evening. Andy Toms seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

It was clarified that the aforementioned motion included the approval of waivers and modifications through referral of ELA's July 8, 2022 letter, except for Item #1, which is based on the recommendation of Township staff. Amanda Hickman stated that staff was in favor of a combined Preliminary/Final land development plan for the Southpointe expansion.

Motion: Matt Parido motioned to recommend the request for modification of the Preliminary Plan application per Section 204-10.A, be submitted as a single combined Preliminary/Final application. The motion was seconded by Matt Warfel. Motion approved 5-0.

Community Development Report- Amanda gave a status update on current projects:

MSL Overlay District Text Amendment – BOS denied the amendment after two hearings.

Zoning Ordinance Table of Uses – Draft of a combined Table of Uses for all zoning districts is under review. No change in ordinance is being proposed at this time, just the formatting for ease of use and the correction of past printing mistakes; looking for recommendations before it goes before the BOS. Commission is also to consider adding uses such as air-b-n-bs and accessory apartments.

Adjournment: Matt Parido made a motion, seconded by Andy Toms, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved 5-0.
Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.