

APPROVED

**MUNICIPALITY OF MT. LEBANON
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

DATE: Tuesday, February 28, 2017

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Mt. Lebanon Municipality – Commission Chambers

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dennis Pitman, Rick Sabeh, Suzanne Sieber, Bill Pope, Jim Cannon

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Municipal Planner Ian McMeans, Municipal Engineer Matt Bagaley

1. Minutes

- a. January 24, 2017, meeting. Mr. Sabeh moved and Mr. Cannon seconded to approve the January 24, 2017, Planning Board minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Old Business

- a. Request for recommendation for final approval of a land development plan. Senior Apartments of Mt Lebanon, LP has an equitable interest in the property located at 2904 Castlegate Avenue. The developer is requesting final approval of a land development plan to construct a 60-unit multi-family building with parking and associated infrastructure.

Jeffrey Davis, FortyEighty Architecture, said there were several recommendations made by the planning board, at a previous meeting, that they have reviewed. They added accessible parking spaces at the front of the building to match the proposed number of accessible apartments. They looked again at adding a sidewalk to McNeilly Road, but this would require retaining walls – some of which would be six feet high – that would be cost prohibitive for their budget. The last recommendation was to add a sidewalk to the east side of the property parking lot, but they chose not to add it to the plan.

Matt Bagaley, read into the record a letter from Gateway Engineers dated February 23, 2017. He said there only minor issues that still need to be addressed, but everything else has been addressed.

Mr. Davis said they are in the process of modifying the parking lot lighting to accommodate the one-foot candle requirement.

Mr. Pope asked if they had investigated the ground water problems on Dorchester that were identified at the last planning board meeting.

Mr. Davis said his understanding of the water problem is that it is from a street above Dorchester, and is not related to this project, nor is it caused by the demolition happening on the property.

Mr. Pittman asked for a review for eligibility of tenants.

Mr. Davis said the apartments will be one- and two-bedrooms, for seniors at least 62 years old, and residents must be within the average per capita income range.

Mr. Pittman asked what the proposed schedule for construction of the building will be.

Mr. Davis said they would like to proceed with final approval and permit submissions so they may start building by June 1, 2017, and would like to be completed and ready for occupancy by the summer of 2018.

Citizen Comments

Karen Dorn, 100 Academy Avenue, asked if there would be any indoor parking.

Mr. Davis said all parking would be on the surface lot.

Mr. Pope moved and Mr. Sabeh seconded to grant recommendation for final approval for the Senior Apartments of Mt. Lebanon site development plan conditioned on the engineer's review comments in a letter dated February 23, 2017, comments from the planning board, and the commission granting any requested waivers or modifications.

Mr. Pittman added that he is disappointed that the developers have decided not to complete the sidewalk around the parking lot.

The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Pittman voting in the negative.

Paula Schultz, 597 Dorchester Avenue, is concerned about the affect this project will have on the nearby storm and sanitary sewers.

3. New Business

- a. Request for recommendation for final approval of the Uptown Place land development plan. Rolling Lambert Building Company, Inc. has an equitable interest in a property located at 770 Washington Road. The developer is requesting approval of a land development plan to construct five single-family attached dwellings.

Matt Cramer, Rolling Lambert Building Company, said they received preliminary plan approval in July 2016 and are now seeking a recommendation for final approval. They have reached an agreement with the property owners regarding running line down to Florida Avenue for storm water. They have addressed and met the other comments from the engineer and municipal staff.

Mr. Bagaley read into the record a letter from Gateway Engineers dated February 22, 2017. An easement has been secured to run the storm sewer to Florida Avenue. He said there were minor comments outstanding regarding building materials, details for fencing and landscaping. He said a subdivision plan is be required for each of the party walls with the development.

Mr. Pittman asked if the individual units would be for sale; if there would be a homeowners association, and if the developer would be retaining an interest in that role.

Mr. Cramer said the individual units would be for sale, there will be a homeowners association, but once the units have sold, they will no longer have an interest in the site.

Mr. Sabeh said the board would like to see more detail regarding the elevation of the project. He also requested a rendering of the materials to be used, and would like to see a formal application with details of colors.

Mr. Cramer said they would be using brick, limestone and hardy wood. He asked if drawings are required in order to get approval.

Mr. McMeans summarized Section 703 of the Zoning Ordinance, regarding Design Guidelines and Specifications.

Ms. Sieber said she would also like to see more information.

Citizen Comments

Ed Bognar, 800 White Oak Circle, said it is important for the board to know what a building will look like prior to it being built, especially when it is the gateway to the business district.

A representative of J.R.Gales, said they have addressed the engineers' comments, have provided details of the fence, and the cost estimates. The lighting they will provide is typical for residential homes. They do not feel that parking lot lighting would be appropriate for the neighborhood.

Mr. Pittman asked if the driveway behind leading to the back would be lit.

Mr. Cramer said they would be using landscaping lighting.

Mr. Bagaley said at a cursory review the fence detail looks fine, but it is conditioned on further review.

Mr. McMeans said within the list of final application content in the subdivision ordinance building height elevations and construction material details are required. It does not specifically say a color drawing required, however within section 703 of the zoning ordinance it is the purview of the planning board to review all façade designs.

Mr. Cramer said they have determined the materials, but not the colors for this project.

Maura Salib, 40 Standish Blvd., asked about the timeframe for construction.

Mr. Cramer said they have received a demolition permit from Mt. Lebanon, but won't proceed until they have received final approval. Once they have demolished the building on the site they expect construction to take approximately five months for construction.

Mr. Sabeh moved and Mr. Pope seconded to table approval for the Uptown Place land development plan conditioned on submission of items required by the engineer's review comments in a letter dated February 22, 2017, and comments from the planning board. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Request for preliminary approval of Beyond Self Storage land development plan. NorthPoint Development, LLC has an equitable interest in the property located at 512 Castle Shannon Boulevard. The developer received a variance for the use of a self-storage facility on the property and a variance that off-street parking requirements would comply with §817.5.1 of the Zoning Code. The developer is requesting approval of a land development plan to construct a self-storage facility.

Ben Hagedorn, NorthPoint Development, gave a brief presentation introducing Northpoint. They are from Kansas City, MO, and focus on four areas: industrial, assisted living senior living, multi-family units, and self-storage, which is a newer addition for them. NorthPoint would be the owner and operator of the facility; they will have a representative from the Kansas City team in once a month to audit the site and make sure it is up to standards. They are proposing a Class A facility with climate control, completely indoors with a drive-thru so the client enters the building, unload their belongings then exit out the other side on to Castle Shannon Boulevard. Traffic would be one-way.

Mr. Bagaley read into the record a letter from Gateway Engineers dated February 22, 2018. A use variance was provided for self-storage. There were a number of design guideline standard comments that need to be addressed. Although the owner submitted revised information, the engineer has not had time to review it. The stormwater management appears to be in compliance, but there are details that still need to be addressed. Because the property abuts Castle Shannon Boulevard, an HOP is needed.

Robert Bassett, Civil & Environmental Consultants, they did some calculations using the ITE parking generation data to tabulate the parking. They have submitted the HOP plan with sight distance, and the driveway triangle exhibit to the municipality, and feel there is adequate sight distance. Truck movements and turn-around through the facility were resubmitted to Gateway.

Mr. Bagaley said that information was received by Gateway, but the traffic engineer has not yet reviewed it.

Mr. Pittman asked how many storage units are proposed.

Mr. Hagedorn said 700 units are proposed, with an average size of 120 square feet. The unit size range will be from 5x5 up to 10x30. Business tenants will make up approximately 15% of the users. This newer design attracts service-based tenants, such as architects, lawyers and accountants, so they do not have construction-type businesses.

Mr. Pope asked how a Missouri business came to be involved in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Hagedorn said it was through one of their senior living facilities that hired consultants familiar with, and recommended, the Pittsburgh and Mt. Lebanon areas.

Mr. Pope asked who locally would be involved with the day-to-day operations.

Mr. Hagedorn said they would be a NorthPoint employee, but no one has been hired for that job yet.

Mr. Pope asked if the new rendering addressed the transparency item in the engineering letter.

Mr. Hagedorn said the 40% transparency has been addressed in their resubmission.

Mr. Pittman asked if there was additional commercial used in the front offices.

Mr. Hagedorn said there is 1,200 square feet of office space for merchandise related to storage such as moving boxes, packing tape, etc. There is also a conference room along the glass front of the building primarily for the business tenants.

Mr. Sabeah asked about the stormwater management being a “wet” pond, or retaining pond.

Mr. Bagaley said its a normal pool of water and with the new NPDES regulations and the DEP permit, this particular pond provides for a normal base foundation.

Mr. Bassett said that given the proximity to the stream they do not believe infiltration is feasible.

Ms. Seiber asked the property owner about the previous plan for townhouses.

Ed Bognar, 800 White Oak Circle, owner of the property, said they tried to bring townhouse plan to fruition, but could not provide funds.

Ms. Seiber voiced concern about whether this project will be an asset to the community.

Mr. Bogner said he feels NorthPoint provides quality work and believes there is a need within the community for this type of use, and has a nice façade for this area.

Mr McMeans said the municipality did receive the resubmission, but the municipality and the engineer have not had sufficient time for a full review.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Mr. Sabeh moved and Mr. Cannon seconded to table any action on the Beyond Self Storage land development plan to allow the applicant time to address the comments in the engineer’s review comments in a letter dated February 22, 2017, as well as comments from the planning board. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. Request for recommendation for an Ordinance Amendment. Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania, desires to amend Chapter XI of the Mt. Lebanon Code, entitled “Parks and Recreation,” and Chapter XX of the Mt Lebanon Code, entitled “Zoning,” to define neighborhood identification signs and to permit them within traffic islands.

Mr. McMeans said the planning board and commission reviewed a neighborhood entrance sign policy in September and October of 2016 because of requests received from some residents in these neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods have signs and others that do not have neighborhood signs but would like to. There is no official policy regarding neighborhood signs, so the process started with the Historic Preservation Board who then requested the municipal staff to draft and recommend a policy. This was presented to the planning board and the commission, and now needs to be drafted into a formal ordinance to change the Parks and Recreation and the Zoning Ordinance of the municipal code.

Mr. Cannon asked who would be responsible for the maintenance of the sign once it is installed.

Mr. McMeans said the proposed policy is written to reflect that. The current ordinance does not allow for structures in traffic islands, so the Commission must first adopt an ordinance allowing structures in traffic islands, then they can adopt the policy for neighborhood signs. The policy indicates the neighbors would be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the sign.

Citizen Comments

Brad Byrom, 245 Park Entrance Drive, Lebanon Hills neighborhood, asked for a copy of the draft changes.

Amy Pearce, 272 Park Entrance, said they would like to replicate the Mission Hills sign as much as possible with quality products and a tasteful design.

Mr. Pittman asked if once the ordinance is passed any neighborhood could have a sign, but it would not be required.

Mr. Sabeh asked if a certain percentage of people in the neighborhood would need to approve a sign before one could be installed.

Mr. McMeans said that funding would be completely up to the neighborhood.

Mr. Sabeh moved and Mr. Cannon seconded to grant recommendation for approval for the Ordinance amending Part 1, Section 102.17 of Chapter XI of the Mt Lebanon Code, entitled "Parks and Recreation," and Chapter XX of the Mt Lebanon Code, entitled "Zoning," to define neighborhood identification signs and permit them within traffic islands. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizen Comments

There were no additional citizen comments.

5. Next Meeting — The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Mt. Lebanon Planning Board is **Tuesday, March 28, 2017**, at 7:00 p.m.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.