

**MUNICIPALITY OF MT. LEBANON
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY**

DATE: Tuesday, May 18, 2021

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Mt. Lebanon Municipality – Commission Chambers

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew George (chair), Rebecca Griffith, Clint Rounsfull, David Hornicak, Suzanne Sieber

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Municipal Planner Ian McMeans, Municipal Engineer Sean Donnelly

Meeting Procedures and Outline – The Pennsylvania Office of Open Records has advised that to ensure continued compliance with the Sunshine Act, the procedures for online meetings should be stated at the beginning of the meeting. There are three applicants appearing before the board tonight. I will read the agenda item and then the applicant will have the opportunity to make remarks. After that, the Planning Board will provide their comments and feedback followed by members of the public. Finally, we will play and read any public comments related to the application that were received prior to the meeting. Any public comments received not relating to the application before the board will be read at the end of the meeting. The applicants have agreed to these procedures, including conducting the meeting virtually.

1. Meeting Minutes

- a. Approval of minutes from April 20, 2021, meeting. Mr. Rounsfull moved and Ms Griffith seconded to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2021, planning board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Old Business

- a. Request for recommendation for final approval of the Cedar Place land development plan. Flash Point Partners, LLC owns the property at 62 Cedar Boulevard and is requesting approval of a land development plan to construct a Two-family Dwelling with associated grading, landscaping, and stormwater management. The property is zoned as R-4 Residential. Two-Family Dwellings are a Use by Right in the R-4 District.

Matt Cramer, Flash Point Partners, said the property is permitted to have several units built on it, they are only building two townhomes, which he feels better fits with the neighborhood. They will raze the current structure and are proposing to build two three-bedroom homes, containing a loft area in the attic space, one-car garage with one parking space in the driveway. The roofing will have 30-year shingles, siding, black-trimmed windows, and brick for the basement level. They will need to grade the area where the current structure is because the proposed building will be wider. There will be a small retaining wall in the back and one next to the driveway that will be approximately three feet high, at its highest. There will be underground stormwater detention under the driveways with a valve system, that will go to the

street. The biggest challenge will be the utilities. The sanitary will need to be tied into the sewer in Cedar Boulevard, so there will need to be some traffic control during that process.

Mr. Rounsfull asked if the rear of the building will have the same construction materials as the front.

Mr. Cramer said there would be brick to grade, then everything the same.

Mr. George asked if the developer had side or rear elevation drawings available to view.

Mr. Cramer said he did not.

Ms Griffith asked if there are windows on the sides of the structure.

Mr. Cramer said yes there would be.

Ms Sieber asked if there is a landscaping plan.

Mr. Cramer said they are not required to submit one, but there will be an area that is mulched with some shrubs, and two street trees by Cedar, within the property line.

Mr. George asked if the siding would be painted or if they will use the natural finish.

Mr. Cramer said they will pick a color from the manufacturer, and they are leaning toward light grey with white trim and black windows, although those decisions are not yet finalized.

Mr. George said one of his comments from the last meeting was regarding having a redundant drain in the back of the property. He asked if there was a possibility of having a second drain.

Mr. Cramer said the proposed drain will slope down to the cleanout and around the property.

Mr. Hornicak said the back area is a "bathtub" with the low point with the drain, and a slight rise up to the corner of the building, which is the high point. He said the cleanout would be approximately six to six-and-a-half feet deep. He recommends putting in a drain to provide easier maintenance.

Ms Sieber said the board had asked for architectural drawings to see what the sides and back would look like.

Mr. Cramer said there really is not much to show from the side point of view. The sides will have siding and windows.

Ms Sieber asked how many windows they were planning for the sides.

Mr. Cramer said there would be approximately four windows on the side. They are still working on the interior space layout, which determines the window location.

Mr. George asked how far away for the neighboring houses this building will be.

Mr. Cramer said they would be approximately 22 feet from the house on the right, and 60 feet from the house on the left, facing the structure.

Mr. Horniack said if the project is approved by the planning board tonight, and goes to the Commission next month, when do they think they will shut down Cedar Boulevard for the utility work.

Mr. Cramer said from a staging perspective, they would raze the house then go right into the utility work.

Mr. Hornicak asked if they would try to do the street work within a week's time and during the summer months.

Mr. Cramer said they will be consulting with a traffic control firm to handle the traffic conditions.

Mr. McMeans said the developer will need to go through the municipality for a street opening permit, so the municipality will be reviewing their traffic control plans.

Mr. Donnelly read into the record a letter dated May 12, 2021, from Gateway Engineers.

Ms Sieber asked if the developer had fulfilled all the comments from previous review letters.

Mr. Donnelly said that is correct.

Citizen Comments

Steve Glenn, 60 Cedar Boulevard, asked how close to the property line a building can be constructed.

Mr. Cramer said the side yard to the property line will be 11 feet.

Mr. McMeans said this is an R-4 zoned district. For two-family homes, the two side yards on either side of a property line have to total 15 feet, but not less than five feet.

Mr. Glenn asked about the measurement from the back of the building to the retaining wall.

Mr. Cramer said the wall will be about two feet, and 10 feet off the back of the building.

Myrona Little, 61 Cedar Boulevard, asked if the building would be centered.

Mr. Cramer said within the lot the building will be centered. There is a paper street to the left of the proposed building, which makes it seem off-center.

Ms Little asked if the driveways will be directly across from her property.

Mr. Glenn asked if the grade off the back of the house and the retaining wall would be higher where the steps come down to the front. He asked if the front patio and the back of the yard are at the same height.

Mr. Cramer said the backyard is five feet higher than the front landing pad.

Ms Sieber moved and Mr. Rounsfull seconded to recommend final approval to the Cedar Place Land Development Plan, conditioned upon the applicant addressing the comments in the engineer's review letter dated May 12, 2021, conditioned on adding a yard drain, the commission granting any requested waivers or modifications, and any additional comments from the planning board. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Request for recommendation for final approval of the Castlegate Green land development plan. The Community Builders, Inc. has an equitable interest in the property located at 2904 Castlegate Avenue. The developer is proposing a multi-family development with 51 residential units on the parcel. There will be seven structures with residential units along with a building to serve as a management office. The developer will also construct associated parking, utilities, and stormwater management infrastructure to serve the development. The property is zoned R-4 Residential with a Continuing Care overlay.

Mr. Donnelly read into the record a letter dated May 13, 2021, from Gateway Engineers.

Vanessa Murphy, senior project manager, Community Builders, Inc., stated Castlegate Green will be mixed income development. They received financing through the Pennsylvania Finance Housing Agency in August of 2020 and they've been submitting the civil and architectural designs since then. They have been working to receive their land entitlements and are hoping to begin construction in late summer with occupancy in the third and fourth quarter of 2022. They are proposing seven residential buildings and a stand-alone management building on the site, for a total of eight buildings. The apartments will be located in seven multi-family buildings – four rowhouse buildings, two garden-style apartment buildings, and one triplex building. The former DePaul Institute site was subdivided in 2017 with senior housing built on the lower parcel. They are proposing 51 units of family housing on the upper site. The project abuts a Brookline neighborhood, and Dorchester Avenue is at the front of their property. She showed photos of the neighborhood to give context for the project. The site had three structures and an impervious parking lot; the structures have been razed and the parking lot will be redeveloped for the site. The zoning ordinances mandates 99 parking spots which is how many they are proposing, as well as 10 bicycle parking spaces. She showed drawings and described each of the buildings. The rowhouse buildings are two- and three-story structures, the two garden-style buildings are three stories, the triplex is two stories, and the management building with a maintenance shed. Out of the 51 units there will be 11 one-bedroom, 29 two-bedroom, and 11 three-bedroom apartments. The two- and three-bedroom apartments will be in the rowhouse structures, the garden-style apartments will have one- and two-bedroom apartments with most of the accessible units being in those buildings. They provide proximity to the common green and the amenities provided in the management building. One of the accessible units will be on the ground floor of the triplex. She showed renderings of each of the buildings. They will use masonry, hardy plank, and smooth surface panels for the elevation materials. The triplex and the rowhouses will have doors fronting Dorchester. The garden buildings at

the rear of the site have similar plans, but they are not identical. Each of the units in these buildings are single-story, therefore most of the accessible units are in these two buildings. The management building will be located on the common green, with a lawn in front of the patio space, a greenhouse adjacent to the building with a breezeway between the management building and the greenhouse, and a community garden. They are proposing raised garden beds closer to the garden apartment buildings, which would be well-suited for those with disabilities. One of the concepts that drives their imagery is the idea of an agri-hood, to give residents an exterior space that allows them to garden with produce or flowers, and to encourage socialization and participation in their community. The management building will have the management suite, a multi-purposed room, and an exterior patio space with integral grill. Grilling will not be permitted anywhere else on the site. There will be a central mail kiosk for the internal buildings and a separate kiosk for the outlying buildings.

Bernard Lamm, Common Ground, the entrance to the development will be directly across from Castlegate with a loop through the site that was coordinated with the fire department. There are street tree and sidewalk improvements proposed, as well as widening Dorchester Avenue. They are also proposing some on-street parking on Dorchester that is not included in their parking count for the interior of the site. By widening the road and providing on-street parking they are hoping to improve traffic flow in the area. They are also proposing improved sidewalks to encourage pedestrian flow between the proposed development and the Brookline community. There are ADA accessible routes within the entire development site, and they will add sidewalks along Dorchester, to the Salvation Army site, and connecting to the sidewalk on Midland Avenue. The previously mentioned raised garden beds will be ADA accessible, between the two garden-style apartments, and with a solid surface. There will be a small play area near the common green, close to the management building, and then some informal gardens with berry patches, and fruit and nut trees in the southern part of the site. There will be fencing around the interior community gardens to help with deer control. There are three proposed walls, one on the northwest side, one on the south side, and one on the east side. The east side wall, which abuts the Salvation Army site, will have screening. There will also be fencing along the same areas as the walls, and a guide rail by the parking areas in the south section of the site. There will be plantings throughout the development, fulfilling requirements of the zoning ordinance, and providing privacy between some of the buildings. He described the various utilities with connections to Pennsylvania American Water, PWSA, and Duquesne Light; there will be no gas service. The electric connection will be to a pole adjacent to the Salvation Army site and then will go underground. Within the community there are separate storm and sanitary connections to each of the units. The garden apartments will have the single unit with fire protection. All of the units, including the rowhouses, will have fire protection. The sanitary, sewer, and water service will be private. They met with Gateway Engineers to review stormwater management, and they have been able to address the issues mentioned in the letter from Gateway. He showed a drawing indicating where the utilities would be placed throughout the site. There are three large areas providing subsurface infiltration in limestone beds which will help with the acidity and temperature of the runoff, to help meet water quality requirements. There is also a small amount of infiltration which is why the proposed beds are long and wide because their infiltration rates were fairly low. The water then eventually makes its way down to Midland where a new storm sewer will be added from Dorchester. There are single-phased transformers for the rowhouses; the garden apartment buildings were the only

ones that needed three-phased transformers. He described Dorchester where they will be widening the road, adding parking, and adding or fixing sidewalks.

Mr. McMeans asked if they could add a handicapped ramp to the sidewalk at the corner of Midland and Dorchester continuing up Midland.

Mr. Lamm said they could incorporate that into the section of sidewalk they will be replacing.

Ms Griffith asked about widening Dorchester and the proposed eight on-street parking spaces.

Mr. Lamm explained that they stopped the parking at that point so that busses coming up Castlegate and turning left onto Dorchester have more space to turn.

Ms Griffith asked about the landscaping plan at the small pieces of land at the crosswalks across Dorchester to Castlegate. She is concerned the natural walking path would be directly across those strips of land and would like to know what type of plantings they are proposing to keep people from doing that.

Mr. Lamm explained Mt. Lebanon has a requirement for the entrance drive to be concrete, but they wanted to make sure the sidewalk crossing from their side of Dorchester to the Castlegate side of Dorchester was not as much of a slope, and ADA compatible. There are some plantings proposed, but they do not want to interfere with sight triangle.

Ms Griffith asked about the yard waste that would be created from the community gardens and the greenspaces.

Ms Murphy said they have not yet worked through all of the plans for composting.

Mr. Lamm said they may be able to use some of the composting from the gardens in the lower area where the proposed nut trees and fruit trees will be.

Mr. McMeans noted the development would not be eligible to be part of the municipal garbage collection program and would need to contract with a private hauler for all waste and recycling removal.

Ms Griffith asked about the placement for water for the common area.

Mr. Lamm said there are plans to have hose bed connections from two of the buildings to frost-proof in-ground vault, and also between the two garden apartments.

Mr. George asked if there was opportunity for rainwater harvesting off the maintenance building.

Mr. Lamm said they could try to harvest water from the stormwater system however they do discourage that if the water has been in contact with parking lots. Rainwater off roofs is cleaner. Nothing has been formalized at this time.

Ms Murphy said this project will be certified under Enterprise Green Communities 2015.

Mr. George asked if electrical vehicle charging would be available.

Ms Murphy said they do not have that at this point.

Mr. McMeans said charging stations are not part of the required zoning code.

Mr. Hornicak asked if **DOMI** had reviewed those crosswalks, keeping the traditional 90 degrees to keep it at the lowest distance to travel.

Mr. Lamm said they have had a number of discussions, and they are fine with what is proposed.

Mr. Hornicak said the wall design and the soil remediation beneath the walls that also needs to be assessed as part of the design, and also the construction. There are areas that are identified in the KU resources Geotech report in which the soils are not conducive to wall construction and the soils will have no risk of excavation of a foot-and-a-half to eight feet that will be part of the overall infrastructure of that retaining system.

Mr. Lamm said where that is happening is mostly around the rowhouse building, known as Building 1. That area of the site was used as a topsoil stockpile, so some of the original borings did not go deep enough. This would explain why the soil was identified as not suitable. That side of Building 1 will need to be graded to reach competent building material. They are aware that there will be high foundations on that end of the site because of the topography of Dorchester.

Mr. Hornicak asked about the site lighting. He said this is a critical area for lighting the site.

Mr. Lamm said they made some design changes because the previously submitted design had 16-foot mounting heights, but they were too close to the units. They have changed to 12-foot mounting heights, but the foot-candles are too low in some areas, so they are still working on getting the lighting levels back up. There is no light spillage off the sight.

Mr. Hornicak is concerned about possibly approving the plan tonight without a lighting plan.

Mr. George asked if they have decided on the material for the interior garden fencing.

Ms Murphy said they are proposing a nice frame with an inset of wire.

Mr. George said he likes the design of lower buildings fronting Dorchester then going to higher buildings at the back of the site. He feels that is a nice scale coming from the Brookline neighborhood.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Mr. Hornicak moved and Ms Sieber seconded to recommend final approval to the Castlegate Green Land Development Plan, conditioned upon the applicant addressing the comments in the engineer's review letter dated May 13, 2021, the commission granting any requested waivers or modifications, and any additional comments from the planning board including specific and expedited submittal wall designs and soil remediation in accordance with the approved geotechnical report, as well as lighting and photometric plans meeting municipal code. In addition, the board would like to make a recommendation for a specific management of compost and yard waste. The motion carried unanimously.

3. New Business

- a. Request for preliminary approval of the Mt. Lebanon Platform Tennis Hut Site Plan. The Municipality of Mt. Lebanon owns the existing platform tennis courts and warming hut in Main Park. The Mt. Lebanon Platform Tennis Association proposes to renovate the existing warming hut with the addition of a second floor, bathrooms, and an outdoor seating deck. The property is zoned OS-A Open Space-Active. Facilities incidental to the operation of public recreational uses are a conditional use in the OS-A District.

Mr. Donnelly read into the record a letter dated May 13, 2021, from Gateway Engineers.

Mr. McMeans said this proposal has been discussed with Recreation Director David Donnellan, who is in favor of the plan, and Public Works Director Rudy Sukal. There is an existing sidewalk near the platform tennis hut the public works crews use occasionally for maintenance trucks to access the tennis center. Through the conversations a plan has been devised to still allow access to the tennis center by the public works crews. As part of the final approval of the land development once it gets to the Commission we will be executing an agreement for on-going maintenance, and use of the building with the Platform Tennis Association which the municipality's solicitor has been working on.

Dan Caste, Mt. Lebanon Platform Tennis Association (MLPTA), gave a history of the association. The association started in the 1970s by Barbara and Bob Gavett, Don Gavett's mother and father. It has grown from four teams to 18 teams, and Mt. Lebanon is the largest single municipal organization in the Western Pennsylvania Platform Tennis Association. There are more than 200 people in the association playing, and they play Monday through Thursday, both morning and evenings. General play is opened to the public on weekends. This is a wonderful winter activity that continues to grow. While it is mostly a winter sport, the season is usually October to March, there are some die-hard players that will play in the warmer months. Because this is a winter activity that plays during inclement weather a warming hut was needed and constructed by the MLPTA at no cost to the municipality. The original warming hut was built in 1995 with minor renovations in 2012, again at no cost to the municipality. The current hut is in very poor condition, and is without handicap accessibility, running water, restroom facilities, operable windows, temporary heaters, and is significantly undersized for the amount of play. The building is approximately 300 square feet on the interior, and on any given night there could be up to 32 people who use the facility. There has been a big movement throughout Western Pennsylvania to upgrade these huts because they are in high demand. The application is being submitted by the MLPTA on behalf of the municipality because MLPTA has standing to submit the application, but the municipality owns the property and the building. There will be an agreement with the municipality that will

give the MLPTA the right to do the improvements and build the facility. They have asked the municipality for a \$30,000 investment to bring water and sewer to the facility, which was approved for the 2021 municipal budget. The remaining funds for the project will be collected through dues from the past several years, donations from local businesses, and other contributions in-kind by members of the MLPTA.

Mr. Caste then gave a presentation. The original platform tennis facility consisted of two courts and the warming hut built in the mid '70s. Because of the collaborative relationship with the municipality two more courts were added in 2005, with the MLPTA contributing approximately \$75,000 to build them. The lower two courts were rebuilt approximately three years ago, with MLPTA contributing \$100,000. The MLPTA works closely with the municipality with improvements to its own projects. On the preliminary site plan, he indicated where the current hut is, and where the proposed hut will be. They are proposing squaring up the building, adding an interior/exterior stairwell, two ADA compliant restrooms, and ADA entry point from the sidewalk adding water, and a connection to the sanitary sewers. The second floor will be built above the current sidewalk, with a partially covered outside deck. The proposed hut will have viewing windows on both floors, and a second form of egress is required per municipal code which will be on the outside of the building but with a secure door into the facility at the top of the stairs. The clearance height of the building over the sidewalk is between eight and nine feet. The material construction is hardy plank fiber cement board pre-painted, with pre-painted trim pieces. The roof shingles will be asphalt, slate-looking with a minimum 30-year life. The decks will be composed of a synthetic material requiring no maintenance, the railings will have some areas with cabling for easier viewing. The second floor will have a small kitchen area with a sink and refrigerator, but no oven or stove. The size of the deck may change based on cost of materials. He said they had to consult with Duquesne Light to get permission to build underneath the powerlines. Duquesne Light did a study and submitted an approval letter indicating as long as they are below elevation 1076 they can build. Mr. Caste said they have achieved that mark. The MLPTA members are very excited for the project and have raised 80-90% of the funds necessary for the project. The balance will be collected from dues over the summer. They are hoping to get preliminary approval for the site plan and for the conditional use at tonight's meeting.

Ms Sieber said she thinks this will be a great addition to the community.

Mr. Rounsfull asked if the MLPTA would be responsible for locking and unlocking the facility.

Mr. Caste said they currently have a four-digit punch code which is periodically changed by the municipality, but only given the MLPTA members. They will follow the municipality's lead for security.

Mr. Gavett said the association maintains the buildings and cleans the facility and will continue to do that with the new facility.

Mr. McMeans said security and maintenance issues will be finalized for the agreement as part of the final approval of the land development plan.

Mr. George asked if they could change the horizontal cable to another material because it can be a safety hazard for small children.

Mr. Caste said Building Inspector Rodney Sarver would have the final say on whether the cabling meets building code standards, but they are open to other options.

Mr. George asked if there is a way to get rid of the single step from the lower-level floor of the hut to the courts.

Mr. Caste the topography prohibits changing the step to a ramp.

Mr. George asked about the heating.

Mr. Caste said the heating is to melt snow off the courts, not to keep people warm and that the municipality had upsized the gas line to the courts during the recent renovations.

Mr. George asked if they looked into solar heating.

Mr. Caste said not at this time.

Mr. George asked about the grinder pump.

Mr. McMeans said the municipality is OK with grinder pumps for single-family homes, whereas a previous request for a pump was for multiple homes. This grinder pump is for the lateral line and would only be for this building. The municipal engineer has reviewed this.

Mr. Hornicak asked about lighting around the building.

Mr. Caste said they will submit a lighting plan when they submit for final approval. There will be a light on the outside at the lower-level entry door, lights on the deck. He is not sure what lights would be proposed under the canopy of the deck over the sidewalk.

Mr. Hornicak asked if they had consulted the fire department and access they might need.

Mr. McMeans said the structure will be close to the turn-around circle in Main Park, therefore they should have adequate access. He said regarding the lighting there are many lights throughout the tennis center area, and with the converging sidewalks in that area, some extra lighting there could be helpful.

Mr. Hornicak asked if there were any stormwater management concerns.

Mr. Donnelly said there is no significant change in impervious coverage that would affect stormwater management.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Ms Sieber moved and Ms Griffith seconded to grant preliminary approval to the Platform Tennis Hut Site Plan, conditioned upon the applicant addressing the comments in the engineer's review letter dated May 13, 2021, the commission granting any requested waivers or modifications, and any additional comments from the planning board. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Request for recommendation for approval of the Mt. Lebanon Platform Tennis Hut Conditional Use Plan. The Mt. Lebanon Platform Tennis Association is proposing to renovate the existing warming hut with the addition of a second story, bathrooms, and outdoor seating deck. The platform tennis hut is located in Main Park which is part of the OS-A Open Space Active zoning district. Facilities incidental to the operation of public recreational uses are a conditional use in the OS-A District.

Citizen Comments

Mr. Caste thanked the board for the preliminary approval. Their timeline is to start in the second half of July and have it completed before the end of the year.

Ms Sieber moved and Ms Griffith seconded to recommend approval of the Platform Tennis Hut Conditional Use Plan, conditioned upon the applicant addressing the comments in the engineer's review letter dated May 13, 2021, and any additional comments from the planning board. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

5. **Next Meeting** — The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Mt. Lebanon Planning Board is **Tuesday, June 15, 2021**, at 7:00 p.m.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.