

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

DATE: Tuesday, July 20, 2021

TIME: 7 p.m.

PLACE: Mt. Lebanon Municipality – Commission Chambers

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

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Municipal Planner Ian McMeans, Municipal Engineer Dan Deiseroth

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 two 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 the June 15, 2021, meeting. Ms. Sieber moved and Ms Griffith seconded to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2021, Planning Board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Old Business

- a. None

3. New Business

- a. Request for preliminary approval and recommendation for final approval for a minor subdivision plan. Flash Point Partners, LLC owns the property located at 1100 Washington Road. The property is currently divided into two parcels with a total acreage of 2.5615 acres. The minor subdivision plan seeks to remove the existing lot lines and create three parcels on the site. The new parcels will be 18,420 square feet, 18,465 square feet, and 74,702.80 square feet. The property is zoned as R-1 residential.

Mr. Deiseroth read into the record a letter from Gateway Engineers dated July 16, 2021.

Mr. Hornicak asked if the largest of the three properties would be landlocked from the sanitary sewers.

Mr. Deiseroth said they discussed a grinder pump for just that one lot.

Mr. George said asked if the initial proposal with five lots was cancelled because of the sewage and the objector aspect was being shared by a couple of lots.

Mr. Deiseroth said there were going to be multiple properties tied into a pumping system, but there are no pumping systems within the municipality other than those owned by private individuals. The municipality did not want to start maintaining it, so the developer was requested to achieve gravity connection, and they were unable to achieve an easement through the other properties.

Mr. George asked if the driveway that will square off and rectangle through is part of lot 2.

Mr. Deiseroth said that was correct.

Mr. George asked how the buildings would be laid out.

Mr. Deiseroth said the to front lots would be facing the street.

Mr. Cramer said lots 1 and 3 would have homes that fit within the neighborhood, with a 50-foot setback, and the houses facing Washington Road. He said that lot 2 is a bit deceiving on the plot plan because the topography of the back of the lot has a steep grade down to Bird Park. That lot is very wide and will have more room.

Ms Griffith asked about the buildable area on lot 2.

Mr. Cramer said the intent is to set the house 30 feet behind the rear property lines of lots 1 and 3. The front part of lot 2 would only be an access, and no structures would be built there.

Mr. George asked if the building could be constructed on the lot line.

Mr. Cramer said a building could be built there but would most like affect the marketability of that home. They plan to build 30 feet behind the property lines.

Mr. Hornicak asked where the gas and water meters would be located for lot 2.

Mr. Cramer said they would be located closer to Washington Road.

Ms Griffith asked how wide the access drive is.

Mr. Cramer said approximately 30 feet.

Mr. Cramer said there is still 60 feet of frontage on Washington Road for lot 2.

Mr. Deiseroth asked if Mr. Cramer would put a building line behind lots 1 and 3 to protect the integrity of those lots.

Mr. Cramer said they could add a 20-foot building line as an offset of those rear property lines.

Mr. Deiseroth said they would need to check with the municipal zoning officer to determine where the building line should go and how much setback is needed.

Mr. McMeans said a letter was received on Friday from Allegheny County indicating there are separate signature clauses on the plans for individuals vs LLCs, and they would like the LLC landowner clauses to be placed on the plan. He will send a copy of the letter to Mr. Cramer.

Mr. Rounsfull asked if all of the rights-of-way for the utilities that will serve lot 2 would run through the driveway area and stay off the properties of lots 1 and 3.

Mr. Cramer said that is correct.

Mr. Rounsfull asked for verification that there is no gravity fall for sewage to lot 2 therefore there will be a grinder pump.

Mr. Cramer said that is correct.

Mr. Deiseroth said until the house is actually built, they will not know for sure if a grinder pump is needed.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Mr. Rounsfull moved, and Mr. George seconded to grant preliminary approval and recommend final approval for the minor subdivision plan to create three lots at 1100 Washington Road, conditioned upon the applicant addressing the comments in the engineer's review letter dated July 15, 2021, and any additional comments from the Planning Board, the addition of a building line on lot 2, and the addition of the appropriate LLC signature clauses. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Consideration of an amendment to the zoning ordinance. Section 104.5 of Chapter XX of the Municipal Code (Zoning) currently restricts property in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning districts to only one principal building per lot. The proposed amendment would remove the R-3 zoning district from Section 104.5 of Chapter XX.

Mr. McMeans showed a map indicating all of the R-3 districts and commercial districts in Mt. Lebanon. There are seven difference residential districts ranging from R-1 and R-2, which are single-family homes, R-3 districts allow for duplexes, apartments, townhouses, and single-family attached, then R-4, R-5, R-6, and R-7 allow for high-density residential which consist of high-rises. There are three commercial districts within the zoning code, C-1 is Beverly Road, and Castle Shannon Boulevard. Then there is C-2 which is the highway commercial which is the Galleria, the area around the CVS Pharmacy on Cochran Road, Virginia Manor Shops, and McFarland Road and have larger setbacks, and more on-site parking. Then the Central Business District (CBD) on Washington Road. The R-3 districts are generally clustered around either commercial districts or transit routes, such as the LRT that runs through the Pennsylvania

Boulevard area, and the buses which run on Bower Hill Road, Cochran Road, Painters Run Road/Gilkeson Road/Connor Road. From TOD studies that he has read or participated in it is desirable to have high-density residences around transit routes. This zoning ordinance came up because in the last year there have been four different development projects submitted to municipal staff where there were sites that had deeper properties, such as the Baptist Homes where there is limited street frontage. There is a clause in the ordinance that requires all properties have frontage on a public street. With the new stormwater management ordinance developers are less willing to, after they construct, subdivide a property, and sell them as fee-simple units, townhouse units being sold as fee-simple, or duplex units being sold as fee-simple. The trend now is developers want to build units and sell them as condos and have an HOA share all the common land and common assets including the stormwater management asset that the municipality now requires the builder to put in on the development sites. Having HOAs in place is a good thing for the municipality because the municipality knows who will be taking care of the stormwater assets over time. When the municipality receives variance requests for the same variance to the ordinance then the staff looks at the code to determine if the requirement within the zoning ordinance makes sense. This was an unintended consequence to the stormwater management ordinance passed a few years ago. For all of these reasons: multiple requests, simplification of stormwater management, good practices around transit-oriented development, it makes sense to remove the R-3 district from this section of the code.

Mr. Rounsfull asked if there are unintended consequences that may result if the decision carries.

Mr. McMeans said any development project would still need to come before the planning board for approval, but there may be more creative developments similar to the Dorchester Castlegate Green project where they proposed to build seven different-sized buildings, instead of one large building.

Mr. George said he is concerned with over-densifying some of the lots. He is specifically concerned with the woods behind the Baptist Homes that if they were to construct another building in that area this would change the character of the abutting R-2 neighborhood and make an already busy lot busier.

Mr. McMeans said there are lot requirements that still need to be considered, plus there are setback requirements need to be adhered to. There are sections of the municipal code that indicate where there are two zoning districts abutting there are setback requirements.

Mr. George said he would prefer to keep the ordinance as is so that a request for a variance would be needed, and abutting property owners would be notified. He feels the developers would be able to install a street and put in new stormwater management systems.

Mr. McMeans showed an example on Old Gilkeson Road where the property is a non-conforming use, but should someone decide to subdivide the property, one property could be responsible for a larger portion of the stormwater system than the other properties, which could create a hardship.

Ms Griffith asked if this ordinance passes, would it change the density.

Mr. McMeans said they would be allowed to build multiple primary structures, so it would change the density.

Mr. Hornicak asked if they made it easier to develop would the density requirements change, which could have a negative effect on the adjacent properties. He agrees with the stormwater management side of changing the ordinance in order not to cause undue hardships on property owners.

Ms Sieber thanked Mr. McMeans for his presentation. She said she would propose tabling the motion in order to give the board time to consider the amendment.

Citizen Comments

Historic Preservation liaison said she would encourage the planning board to keep in mind the historic nature of the municipality especially when considering new construction of townhouses.

Ms Sieber moved, and Mr. Rounsfull seconded to table consideration of the zoning ordinance amendment until the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizen Comments

Mr. McMeans said the municipality has engaged with a consultant to conduct the parks master plan, and for a few more days the master plan survey is still available on-line. He would encourage people to take the survey, both residents and non-residents. There have been over 900 responses to the survey.

5. Next Meeting — The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Mt. Lebanon Planning Board is **Tuesday, August 17, 2021**, at 7:00 p.m. This meeting will be conducted virtually.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.