

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission Meeting
February 19, 2013 7:00 pm

Present: Danelle Del Corso, Bob Eberhart, Sam Evans, Jordan Finkelstein, Lorin Nauman, Allen Wilson
Absent: John Stevens
Others present: D. J. Liggett, CRPA; Susan Steele, Township Manager; Fred Henry, Mease Engineering; Melissa Gartner, recording secretary

1. Call To Order

Chair Ms. Del Corso called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Approval of February 5, 2013 Minutes

Motion. Mr. Nauman moved to approve the minutes of February 5, 2013. Mr. Eberhart seconded. Vote: 5-0.

4. Reports

a. BOS Update

Ms. Steele reported that the BOS met on February 14. They approved the public hearing on March 28 for the shared driveway/private road ordinance changes. On February 25, Ms. Steele and Ms. Liggett will meet with Ms. Kathleen Yurchak, Township Solicitor, to review the shared driveway ordinance language; if anyone would like to give further input or discuss concerns on this issue, he/she should contact Ms. Steele prior to the 25th. The BOS will hold a strategic planning session on February 28. On March 5, the Upper Bald Eagle/Halfmoon COG will hold a presentation on fire company agreements at the Port Matilda Elementary School. On March 28, the state, federal, and CCMPO Transportation representatives will meet with the BOS to discuss widening the berms on several local roads. There will also be a presentation by CATA.

b. Zoning Officer's Report

Mr. Piper was not present.

c. CRPC Update

Ms. Del Corso reported that the CRPC met on the first Thursday in a work session to discuss the implementation strategy for the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Liggett said the implementation strategy will be distributed to the municipalities for comment. Ms. Del Corso was elected CRPC Chair at the reorganization meeting.

d. Open Space Board Update

Mr. Eberhart said that the OSP is on hold, waiting for some legal issues to be resolved.

5. Kristie and Richard Weiss – Preliminary/Final Plan and Planning Module

Ms. Liggett said the PC has received a preliminary/final subdivision plan for the Kristie and Richard Weiss property off of Beckwith Road. The property is 16.44 acres, and is being subdivided to create two lots. Lot #1 is 14.86 acres and Lot #2 is 1.58 acres. Both lots would be served by private wells and on-lot sewage. Ms. Liggett, Mr. Piper, and Mr. Franson have reviewed the plan and planning module.

Ms. Liggett noted that a few sections of the planning module need to be completed by Mr. Piper, as SEO. She also noted that since the soil testing had been done in 2006, the testing sites should be verified to assure they have not been disturbed and will still accommodate on-lot disposal service. Mr. Henry said Mr. Piper was on site at the property, but had not yet completed the paperwork needed for the planning module. He said Mr. Piper told him that the test pits were still viable. Mr. Piper's review comments recommend that the PC conditionally approve the planning module, pending completion of his sections.

Motion. Mr. Eberhart moved to conditionally approve the planning module as stated above. Mr. Finkelstein seconded. Vote: 6-0.

Mr. Eberhart observed that Mr. Franson's comments indicated that this plan is exempt from the Storm Water regulations. Mr. Henry noted that the proposed development is not expected to result in land disturbance of more than 5,000 square feet, which is the threshold for compliance with the Storm Water regulations.

Ms. Liggett reviewed her comments on the plan, including:

- Indicate the location of the front setback for both proposed lots, and note that setbacks are 30 feet, and
- Indicate the location and construction details of the water storage tank for fire protection or include a note that the house will have a fire suppression sprinkler system installed.

Ms. Liggett said that the subdivision would be subject to the current fire protection regulations, requiring an outside cistern or sprinkler system in the house. While the PC has prepared recommendations to remove the requirement for water storage tanks, the ordinance has not been considered or approved by the BOS, so the requirement is still on the books. Mr. Henry said that he has identified a site for a water storage tank so it would service 2-3 homes which will lower the cost. The property owners understand that the regulation might change but until it does, they need to provide this water storage tank.

Ms. Liggett and Mr. Franson noted the existing gravel driveway must provide adequate room for turn-outs for fire apparatus use.

In addition, Ms. Liggett said the plan needs to indicate how many lots are currently being served and proposed to be served by the existing gravel driveway off of Beckwith Road. Shared driveways are permitted to serve up to four lots. Mr. Henry said he has already made that note on the plan and has contacted Mr. Edgar Jodon for access to the upper portion of the four lots listed.

Ms. Liggett said that if there is any intention of naming the lane the plan will need a note stating that the lane is a shared driveway and is being named for 9-1-1 purposes, but it is not a private road.

Ms. Liggett said the plan should also include the length of the gravel driveway. Mr. Henry said that it would be 606 feet to the first house and 750 feet to the second house.

Mr. Franson's review letter asked to add a note to the plan indicating the parcel numbers that will have access to the driveway. He also commented that the description of the easement in the access agreement referenced on the plan does not match the bearing and distances shown.

In Mr. Piper's comments, he noted that the isolation distances around the wells should be labeled on the plan. He also said that the plan needs to correct Edger Jordan's name to Edgar Jodon.

Mr. Nauman asked if Mr. Henry knew where Mr. Jodon's spring was located, and asked about the proximity of the septic sites to the spring. Mr. Henry showed off-paper where the spring would be. Ms. Liggett suggested showing the spring location on the plot plan for the planning module so DEP could verify that the septic sites would not compromise the spring.

Mr. Henry noted that he was not seeking plan approval tonight, but was looking for PC comments on the plan.

6. Fire Protection Regulations

Ms. Del Corso reviewed that the PC was tasked with reviewing the proposed changes to the fire protection regulations before they are forwarded to the BOS. Ms. Liggett said she spoke with Sam Connor, Port Matilda Volunteer Fire Company, regarding the fire company's comments on the proposed changes. He said he wanted the fire company's solicitor to review the requirement that the chief must review and provide written comments to the PC on land development plans as they are submitted with regard to fire protection. No response from the fire company within a specified period of time is taken as approval by the fire chief.

Ms. Liggett said the PC could wait for Mr. Connor's comments, or it could forward the fire protection regulations to the BOS and let the BOS handle the fire company's solicitor comments when they review the proposed changes.

Mr. Eberhart asked to have the language "as applicable" removed from the fire chief approval section. The language currently states the fire chief will provide comment to the applicant and the Township, in writing, if applicable. The PC wanted the fire chief to provide written comments with a definite approval or disapproval. Ms. Steele noted that based on the PC's recommendation, Ms. Yurchak will prepare the changes to the ordinance language for consideration by the BOS.

Motion. Mr. Finkelstein moved to recommend forwarding the PC's changes to the fire protection regulations to the BOS. Mr. Nauman seconded. Vote 6-0.

7. Matters of Record

- The next PC meeting will be held on March 5. Agenda items may include discussion of the Kristie and Richard Weiss preliminary/final plan, and the 2013 PC work program.

- Currently, Ferguson and Harris Townships are reorganizing their zoning ordinances.
- A copy of the PC comments to the BOS regarding the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan was provided to the PC on the web page.

8. Discussion

Mr. Nauman asked about spot zoning. Ms. Steele said one example would be changing a single property in the middle of an ag district to commercial. Essentially, spot zoning is customizing or changing existing zoning to suit one property owner.

Mr. Evans asked about the white light on the cell tower located near Beckwith Road. He thought it was brighter. Ms. Steele clarified that it is a 9-1-1 tower and the electronic timer has been malfunctioning. Currently, it is running on daylight settings, which are brighter than night settings. The 9-1-1 center will address it.

9. Adjournment

Motion. Mr. Nauman moved to adjourn. Mr. Evans seconded. Vote: 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Gartner
Recording Secretary