

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION HYBRID MEETING

July 10, 2023

Minutes

Attendance: TJ Francisco, Gretchen Rice, Keith Deussing, John Deandrea (Alternate Member), Adrian Max (Alternate Member), Eric Cohen (Alternate Member) – via zoom, Curt Genner (Township Engineer) – via zoom, Maureen Carlton, (Township Solicitor), Jean Weiss (Planning Commission Administrator), John Francis (Supervisor Liaison)

Absent: Lesley Marino, Dan Fest, Peter Brussock, Amishi Castelli

I. **Call to Order**

At 7:03 p.m., the Solebury Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order.

II. **Approval of Minutes – June 12, 2023**

Upon a Motion made by TJ Francisco, seconded by Keith Deussing the Solebury Township Planning Commission approved the June 12, 2023 meeting minutes.

III. **Carversville Inn Land Co. – Preliminary/Final Land Development (6205 Fleecydale Rd – TMP #41-004-010)**

The applicant proposes to change the current use of a first-floor restaurant with (4) residential rental apartments back to a country inn with first floor 65-seat restaurant and no more than (6) inn rooms on the second and third floors, along with a 1-story addition.

Jenna Kasman, Esquire was present on behalf of the application.

Jenna Kasman gave a brief overview of the project and the partial waiver of section 22-520.1(I)(1b) for building area landscaping.

The commissioners briefly went through the landscape waiver request received June 15, 2023.

Curt Genner confirmed the waiver request was reviewed and supported by the Township Planner.

Upon a motion made by TJ Francisco and seconded by Adrian Max the Solebury Township Planning Commission recommended approval of the partial waiver request from Section 520.1.I.1b as indicated in the request memo dated June

15, 2023 by the applicant's attorney Fox Rothchild, LLP, also subject to the previous conditions as indicated in Wynn Associates memorandum dated June 6, 2023, and the Simone Collins memorandum dated July 8, 2023. Gretchen Rice abstained.

IV. **Hal Clark Park – Waiver of Land Development (2744 River Rd – TMP #41-028-057 & 41-028-057-001)**

The applicant proposes to construct a cable concrete boat ramp to the Delaware River with gravel access road and turn around area for use by Bucks County and Solebury Township Emergency Services.

Angie Nagle, Executive Director, Bucks County Parks & Recreation and Kevin Dougherty, Chief New Hope Eagle Fire Company were present on behalf of the application.

Angie Nagle gave a brief overview of the proposed project.

TJ Francisco asked why the County is requesting waivers from both Part 4 and Part 5 of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Curt Genner explained Bucks County is trying to expedite the process to accommodate the need for emergency response time. This application is strictly for use by Bucks County and Solebury Township Emergency Services, it is not for public access or public use. There may be a request in the future for approval of public use, but that is not a part of this application.

TJ Francisco asked will these improvements will be able to withstand the significant weather events, especially the amount of heavy rain and flooding we have been experiencing.

Curt Genner explained the waiver request is just from the process of Subdivision & Land Development, the applicant will still be required to go through the permitting process for federal, state and local agencies like stormwater management, FEMA floodplain.

TJ Francisco asked what is the urgency for this installation at this time, is there an increase need for emergency services down at the river at this time.

Angie Nagle answered yes there have been conversations with emergency services which they have expressed an urgent need for quicker access to the river, and we happen to have the funding secured for this phase of the project at this time.

Adrian Max asked how will the access be secured from public use, especially considering this is a public park.

Angie Nagle commented that those plans have not been finalized, but there will be signage and I am sure chains or even a gate.

Kevin Dougherty explained currently the only access to the river is leaving the fire house traveling through Bridge Street to the free bridge, making a right into the Lambertville Station through their parking lot approximately a quarter mile in there is a public boat ramp access. If there is no traffic on bridge street, the free bridge and no vehicles in line to launch their boats or water crafts they can get their rescue boat in the water in approximately 20 minutes. In my professional opinion, having this private access will save time and lives.

The Commissioners briefly went through the Wynn Associates memorandum dated July 5, 2023.

Upon a Motion made by Gretchen Rice, seconded by TJ Francisco the Solebury Township Planning Commission recommended approval of requested waivers from both Part 4 and Part 5 of the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance, conditioned upon the Wynn Associates review letter dated July 5, 2023, Simon Collins review letter dated July 7, 2023 and the Township Zoning review letter dated July 7, 2023.

v. Sketch Plan – Solebury School Ball Fields (6832 Phillips Mill Rd – TMP #41-018-079)

The applicant proposes to construct a natural grass soccer field, natural grass baseball field, and the associated field amenities including the construction of a new comfort building with paving, walkways, grading and stormwater management.

Michael Bowker, Apex Engineering was present on behalf of the application.

Michael Bowker gave a brief overview of the proposed project. It is the desire of Solebury School to do this project in phases pending finances.

TJ Francisco expressed concern with the location of the proposed facilities in connection with the existing sewage facility system.

Michael Bowker commented the existing system will be removed once the new facility is complete.

TJ Francisco asked what the status was of the new sewage facility.

Cut Genner stated it is nearing completion, the Township has just received a final as-built plan for the project that is under review.

Michael Bowker briefly addressed the sketch plan review comments from Wynn Associates, Simone Collins and Township Zoning Officer.

VI. Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Farm Accessory Dwelling

Maureen Carlton gave a brief overview of the proposed amendments.

Maureen Carlton explained the amendment proposes to modify requirements related to accessory dwellings for agricultural workers in the RA, Residential/Agricultural District and RB, Residential/Agricultural District.

Gretchen Rice asked what is the problem the Township is trying to address with this ordinance.

Maureen Carlton explained the farmers do not want to be required to house farm works within a 20% clustered section of the farm.

TJ Francisco questioned whether the Farm Committee had reviewed and endorsed these changes, and explained why this is a benefit to them.

Gretchen Rice is concern with the approach of allowing the ability to further develop and encroach on actively farmed property that already allows within a 20% cluster. This is not what Solebury is all about.

TJ Francisco suggested a dialogue with the Farm Committee to better understand what the farmers in the community are trying to accomplish with this change in the ordinance.

TJ Francisco tabled the discussion until the Commissioners can meet with the Farm Committee.

VII. Adjournment

Upon a Motion by TJ Francisco, seconded by Keith Deussing, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Weiss
Planning Commission Administrator, Solebury Township