

Wallace Township Planning Commission
Working Session
October 22, 2008

Attending PC Members

Barbara D'Angelo
John Frommeyer
Janet Grashof
Jim Mackrell
Skip McGrew
Bill Moore
Ken Nicely

EAC Members:

Mark Eschbacher

Also Attending

Robert Lonsdorf, Brandywine Conservancy
Rodgers Bender, township resident
Sandy Neufeld, township resident

Meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

Pending Subdivisions

- Popjoy subdivision – current status uncertain
- Bryan subdivision – awaiting sign-off from CCPC; will address at next PC mtg. On 11/12

PC Workload and meetings through YE 2008

- The next Greenfield CU hearing is on 10/28, where the witnesses for the Audubon program will present. The PC is meeting with them to review their plan on the afternoon of 10/27 – it is a public meeting with time still TBD. Skip said that it is still not clear what the PC role is in questioning CU witnesses, but it needs to prepare its questions in the event that the Q&A session will follow quickly after the 10/28 hearing.
 - Audubon documentation that the PC and others will need to prepare their questions, has not yet been posted on valhallabrandywine.com, as Mr. Greenfield had promised.
 - PC will meet on 10/29 to draft questions. Public will be invited.
 - PC next regular meeting is 11/12/08 but they agreed to cancel their work session scheduled for 11/26/08 – the day before Thanksgiving.

Ordinance review to address Greenfield challenges

- PC has worked through changes to the FHWSO ordinances; need final approval. Changes to the Stormwater Management ordinances are ready to go but they will need to be linked to other SALDO ordinance changes.
- Skip distributed drafts of proposed changes to the woodlands ordinance, based on his work with Robert to bring in characteristics noted in the “spreadsheet” to better define parameters that define woodland classification. Skip also noted that there are no funds available to pay for review by the township attorney this calendar year.

Valhalla challenges relative to timber harvesting

- Reference: Pa State study section 9
- Relative to challenge: question trigger for TH Plan for any purpose and to basis for 10-tree limitation – beyond which a timber harvesting plan is required. Objections to the actual numbers but the numbers are meant to be guidelines. What should trigger a Timber Harvesting application and/ or review process.
- PC wants to address the issue of a developer getting around the replacement requirement by harvesting before applying for a plan

- Issue – what is the basis for the 3-yr prohibition provision? Is it enforceable?
- Woodlands classification – are the criteria reasonable enough to survive the test of whether or not it is reasonable and/or arbitrary
- Skip recommends that timber harvesting definitions be added to the ordinances
 - Add as an exception – “activities or uses otherwise requiring a building permit”.
 - Delete phrase “for any purpose” in 1st line.
 - Need a better definition of invasives and a list of species.
- Are there other things in the mechanics that does not pass the reasonable test?
 - Barb – Jay’s forester approved the plan as reasonable so no reason to assume otherwise.
 - Jeff – other factors mentioned in PaState study
 - fee structures – Skip – fee is set by resolution.
 - Timeliness of process – recommend changing the timing from 90/60 days to 60/30 days.
 - Qualifications of the reviewer. Ordinance stipulations only “township”. We are covered with current zoning officer’s company – they have a forester on staff. No change to ordinance.
 - Woodlands classification
 - Ref. To Habitat corridors map but he doesn’t see any place where that is actual. Recommend deleting
 - Woodlands classifications – vulnerable to objectivity challenge. Depends on existence of maps that classifies based on aerials GIS maps. Map determines the amount of canopy. There are no standards from which to base a challenge.
 - Class 1 – defined by level of resource protection they provide. Will have to depend on identifiable features and land characteristics rather than the size and types of trees. But will still restrict the amount of canopy that can be removed.
 - Mark – how does one measure % of canopy coverage? Professional forester can tell but twp. zoning officer might not be able to do this.

Skip will do the rewrite, including taking out reference that map is addendum to zoning ordinance. He stated that it is useful as a guide but should not have to go through ordinance revision when map is updated.

Robert is thinking about how to confirm the amount of remaining “high-value” forest. Ordinance attempts to restrict “high grading”.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00pm