

Phoenixville Planning Commission

MINUTES

Thursday – October 12, 2023

6:00 PM

- I. Call to Order
 - a. 6:03PM
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
 - a. Done
- III. Roll Call
 - a. Present
 1. Chairperson: Tom Carnevale
 2. Vice Chairperson: Catherine BiancoMembers:
 3. Kevin Dwyer
 4. Kristiaan Wiedegreen
 5. Debra Johnston
 6. Joseph Sikora
 7. Raffaello Di NapoliCouncil Liaison Brian Moore
Solicitor Scott Denlinger
Engineer Owen Hyne
Land Planner Adrienne Blank
Manager Jean Krack
Planning Director Dave Boelker
- IV. Approval of Minutes
 - a. September 14, 2023
Motion to approve as submitted by Wiedegreen.
Seconded by Johnston.
Motion carried 7-0.
- V. Updates / Correspondence
 - a. Moore update the commission that Council approved Main Street Lofts III, thanking the commission for their efforts.
- VI. Public Participation
 - a. None
- VII. Old Business
 - a. **2023-02 - Paradise Village - Paradise Development, LLC - 15-8-22, 15-8-24:** This plan proposes to construct 5-story building with 12,670 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor, 200 residential units (264 bedrooms) above; the Hall Street extension; surface and under-building parking with 196 dedicated residential, 42 dedicated

commercial and 45 shared parking spaces that includes 14 shared, 9 commercial and 2 accessible EV parking spaces; and associated storm water management.

Presenting: Michael Murray and Mike Bercek. Bercek reviewed what has changed on the plan including: Hall Street ROW, cartway, direction of travel, etc. Now, it shows a 50' ROW, with 22' ROW. Connectivity was improved by creating a walkway from the oft used path from Luxor, crossing Hall, and a connector trail, down to the existing walking trail. The trail construction closest to the building will be constructed such that the fire apparatus will have full access. Coordination has occurred with the Steelworks developer regarding Hall Street. EV parking has been updated. Loading zones (ride share, deliveries, etc.) have been proposed in multiple areas.

Letters:

RVE

Hyne reviewed selected comments:

29 – Parking stall configuration, wheel stops comments. Will comply.

34 – 10% of proposed EV charging must be publicly available. Will comply.

40 – Fee in lieu is intended.

49 – Stormwater discharge onto the fire station property does require a n easement.

49 – Calculations for retaining walls are required. Will comply.

66 – Solid waste storage and removal. Confirmation needed that vertical clearance is available for sanitation vehicles. Bercek confirmed.

67 - Gross tract calculation adjustment is needed. Will comply.

69 – Outdoor market. RVE recommendation is that any reference to it be removed. Will comply.

88 – Fire Department meeting occurred. Fire Department review letters were sent the night before the meeting. Bercek indicated the FD approved the changes.

97- Sidewalk connection to a pedestrian entrance. Bercek indicated a sidewalk access will be provide off Paradise. Architect indicated that a sidewalk connection cannot occur to grade. It will occur within the building footprint.

99 – Sidewalk connections shown on landscaping shall be reflected on the LD plan. Will comply.

100 – Sidewalk connection to the French Creek trail recommended.

105 -Additional lighting along Paradise and interior parking lot. Will comply.

106-109 – Outdoor market items that are being removed, comments will be not applicable.

Waiver Requests

1. §22-410.2.A – to not provide the required minimum horizontal curve radius of 200 ft. for one proposed horizontal curve along the proposed Hall Street centerline. The applicant has coordinated with the Borough Traffic Engineer to optimize the alignment of Hall Street with Paradise Street. *RVE supports this waiver request.*

2. §22-419 – to not provide sidewalks and planting strip along the southwest side of Hall Street. The applicant is providing concrete pavement between the proposed retaining wall and back of curb along the southwest side of Hall Street. In addition, the applicant is providing sidewalk and a crosswalk for a new connection to the French Creek Trail. *RVE supports this waiver request.*

3. §22-423.2 – to not provide streetlighting along the southwest side of Hall Street. The applicant is providing street lighting along the entire length of Hall Street, but for a portion of the street the light poles will only be located on the northeast side to accommodate a proposed retaining wall. *RVE supports this waiver request.*
4. §22-500.2.A – to allow a floodplain preservation, steep slope preservation, very steep slope preservation, and woodland preservation that is less than the required minimum preservation. *RVE has no objection to this waiver request.*
5. §22-502.1.C.(3).(a) – to allow the removal of existing trees that are over 6” in DBH. *RVE has no objection to this waiver request.*

Gilmore

Blank – Removal of the public open space labels, fee in lieu of for open space, tree removal – 30 trees are in fair condition, but they are not shown on the plan as required. Pedestrian access was improved. Street trees to be shown in wells along commercial street. Parking buffer landscaping, some areas are missing. Street lighting, partial waiver request. Blank asked if wall mounted lights were investigated. No answer. Market Study was missing project specific fiscal viability, local impacts and demand. Bercek indicated they would revisit that. Tree and curb conflicts were discussed in some planting locations. Multimodal considerations should be made.

Denlinger added comments on stormwater AND geotech emergency access area, notes should be included to back up those easements. Suggested all maintenance items should be included that if the ownership should transfer to condo, then all are transferred to the HOA.

Commission Discussion:

Bianco/Bercek – Discussion on further definition of loading zones. Bianco/Bercek discussed on street parking availability. Comments on specifics being shown regarding bike racks, external and internal storage and subsequent connections to the French Creek Trail via sidewalks.

Johnston/Hyne/O’Rourke/Bercek – discussion on pedestrian access to the commercial space.

Carnevale/Bercek – Short discussion on trash and under building loading zones to allow box truck access. This will be shown in subsequent revisions. Public Open Space needs to be designated/programmed. Murray indicated passive space for now. Carnevale questioned if there will be more details provided for loading zone shelter.

Krack added that the Borough has ordered, and will be implementing a standard bus shelter design that he’ll share.

Moore/Bercek – Discussion on tree waiver and location; Luxor connection improvement cooperation.

Sikora

Public Participation:

None.

- b. **2023-08 Ringold Street SDLD - Providence Capital Group - 15-12-495, 15-12-497:** The plan and application propose to subdivide two (2) existing lots into five (5) resultant lots, four (4) of which are to be developed with single-family detached houses, each with

associated improvements, landscaping, sidewalks, curb, parking and stormwater management facilities.

Presenting: Joel Comanda – InLand Design – Discussed the changes of the plan. The angled lot line has been reestablished and made more definable. Crosswalks have been better defined. Compliant parking was made on the existing lot.

Letters:

RVE

50-52 – Signage and stop bars, pedestrian signage. Will comply.

All items have been identified as Will Complies.

Waiver Request

1. §22-502.1.C.(3).(a) – To allow removal of existing trees over 6" in DBH. This plan would include the removal of 16 trees over 6" DBH. *RVE has no objection to this waiver request.*

Gilmore

Trees have been identified and permitted by Public Works to remain in the utility easement areas.

Commission Discussion:

Sikora/Comanda – Comments on shape of lot 4 and usability.

Denlinger – Note 18 should state that the Borough has a blanket right of access and easement over the property. Add Note 19 to say that a specific area is offered for dedication.

DiNapoli/Comanda – Comments on location and impervious lining of the stormwater management underground basin. Hyne described the system in more detail for the benefit of the commission.

Moore/Comanda – Discussion on saving the large 26" tree on lot 5.

Public Participation:

Dave Gyuris – 810 Cherry – Comments on front and side yard setbacks, driveway locations, excavation/soil qualities.

Lynn Miller – 851 Maple – Commented on tree removal, coal ash concerns and drainage.

Recommendation:

Bianco made a motion to recommend the plan for approval under the following conditions:

- Standard Action Memo terms,
- Satisfaction of all consultant review letter points,
- Including the waiver, with the condition that the applicant coordinate with the Planner and Engineer to make all attempts to retain the 26" dbh tree on lot 1,
- amending of Note 18 and addition of Note 19 as recommended by Denlinger in the meeting:

- General Note #18 – add that the Borough has the **blanket** right of access **and easement over the Property**.

- Add General Note #19 – that the area between the subdivided lot lines and the legal property boundary along Ringold Street and Maple Avenue is offered for dedication to the Borough.

- the addition of screening along driveway for lot 1.

DiNapoli seconded.

Motion carried 6-1

- c. **2023-05 – 785A Starr Street Expansion – Starr Street Partners, LLC. - 15-9-279.1:** The proposed development consists of the construction of a new 8,800 square foot commercial building facing Starr Street, parking lot and associated stormwater management facilities.

Presenting: Adam Brower – EB Walsh – Discussed the revisions to the plan since the last appearance; building façade improvements, sidewalk areas, buffering and screening. The underground basin has been enlarged to limit overflow to the existing, larger ACME basin.

Letters:

RVE

122 – Brower/Hyne/Denlinger/Boelker – Discussion on the larger development traffic flow and control, that a resolution of approval can provide due diligence mechanism.

20 – Monument sign – Public Works does not object that the monument sign remains.

21 – Additional easement area shall be provided for the sign.

47 – Retention basin has been redesigned to extend the detention longer since last, below what is being discharged from the site. They are not able to infiltrate effectively, requiring a waiver. Carnevale/Hyne – This system will actually reduce peak flows from the unimproved land, but increase volume due to impervious. Amended soils are being added to additionally help with peak flow reduction. Brower is requesting the waiver.

92 – Fencing and additional screening.

120 – Comments on historic plans that show discrepancies of underground utilities.

121 – EV charging stations. Further detail will be supplied.

123 – Comments on discussion with the adjacent owner to coordinate additional swm bmps off site. Brower agreed it would be beneficial and agrees.

Waiver Requests

1) §22-600 (Market Analysis) – Applicant’s rationale: Given the small size of the project and that it is an expansion of an existing retail center, a market analysis would not show an impact on the community and should not be necessary.

2) §22-601 (Environmental Impact Assessment) – Applicant’s rationale: The area to be developed is part of an existing retail center is a maintained lawn area. An environmental impact assessment would not show an impact on the environment; therefore it is requested that it not be required.

3) §22-602 (Traffic Study) – Applicant’s rationale: The project is an expansion of an existing retail center and is a small increase in overall retail space. It is noted that it is an existing shopping center and no new driveways are proposed. The trips generated by the new building will utilize the existing driveways. The retail center parking availability concludes that the parking lot has a substantial number of open parking spaces and

presumably less trips to and from the center than anticipated. As the increase in trips from the retail center is limited it is requested that a traffic study not be required. *RVE does not support this waiver request.*

4) §22-603 (Community Impact Analysis) – Applicant’s rationale: Given the small size of the project and that it is an expansion of an existing retail center, a Community and Fiscal Impact analysis would not show an impact on the community and should not be necessary.

Gilmore

Landscape plan is much improved, and will be sealed by a certified LA. Will comply. Partial waiver required for a TPZ. Concerns on the eventual decline of the tree considering the root zone may be impacted.

Commission Discussion:

Carnevale/Brower – Discussion of lighting plan along Starr Street and parking lot elevation for solid waste storage. Just the “back doors” are not lit. The photometrics need to show these if they do not. Blank indicated two wall packs. All letter comments are Will Complies, confirmed.

Bianco – Suggested that the applicant continue to investigate additional bmp methods, and even getting credit for some of the landscaping that is already included. Brower agreed to investigate.

Public Participation:

None.

- VIII. Review of Project Dates
 - a. October 2023
- IX. Review of Zoning and SDLD Ordinance
 - a. None
- X. Committee Member Updates/Discussion
 - a. None
- XI. Adjournment
 - a. 8:32 PM