

Draft of 9/26/14

Chadds Ford Township
Delaware County, PA

Special Public Meeting
Tuesday, August 26, 2014
7:00PM

Officials Present:

Keith Klaver, Chairman
Frank Murphy, Supervisor
Craig Huffman, Planning Commissioner
Amanda Gattuso, Interim Township Manager
Hugh Donaghue, Solicitor
Joe Mastronardo, Engineer
Matt DiFilippo, Secretary

Call to Order

A special public meeting was called to order at 7:00PM to discuss the residential development sketch plans of J. Grace Co. at Bellefair and Oakland Roads. No formal plans have been submitted, and the special meeting was called for informational purposes to notify neighboring residents and allow them to express any concerns and ask any questions. Chairman Klaver explained that J. Grace Co. has submitted three sketch plans: a by-right plan which would allow homes on 2-acre lots, a 1 acre lot Planned Residential Development (PRD), and a ½ acre PRD. Chairman Klaver continued that J. Grace Co. has engaged John Snook, Land Planner, Brandywine Conservancy who will comment on the plan with some recent revisions.

J. Grace Co. Residential Proposal for Bellefair Lane and Oakland Road

Michael D'Ignazio, attorney for the applicant, described the three sketch plans submitted. He stated the plans are density neutral, all plans present approximately 40 homes, all expected traffic will be the same, by-right plan will utilize septic systems, and the PRD plans will utilize public sewer.

John Snook, Land Planner, Brandywine Conservancy, explained that he will review the J. Grace Co. plans for the Township, and that J. Grace Co. will reimburse the Township for the expenses generated for Mr. Snook's time and materials. Mr. Snook explained that the current zoning allows for homes on 2-acre lots, but that 2-acre lots would remove a significant portion of the current woodlands and stress the overall natural habitat. Mr. Snook continued that the benefit of a PRD-3 (1/2 acre lots) would be preserving contiguous open space, clustering the homes and maintaining more woodland. It was pointed out that 1 acre homes are currently allowed under the existing PRD overlay ordinance, but ½ acre lots are not permitted and would be a new proposal and a new ordinance: PRD-3. Mr. Snook continued with his presentation and showed revisions

he suggested to Mr. Grace's proposed ½ acre PRD-3 plan. Those revisions emphasized open space near Oakland Road, revised stormwater holding areas and allowed protection of the historic district. Mr. Snook asked Mr. Grace to request the University of Delaware survey for archeological artifacts and if items are found to create "memorial gardens" as a part of the open space, and it turn, disturbing less of the open space.

Craig Huffman, Chairman, Planning Commission, reported the Township's Planning Commission's involvement and their recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for a PRD-3 approach to the J. Grace Co. residential plan. He further explained that there will be a number of developer requirements to the PRD-3 ordinance. He also commented that the PRD-3 will require public sewage connection whereas the by-right plan allowing homes on two acres could allow for septic systems.

Public Comment

Douglas Garrabrant, Webb Road, raised concerns about stormwater management, and asked if J. Grace Co. owns the land. Mr. Snook responded that 2-acre lots will produce more stormwater than ½ acre lots. Mr. D'Ignazio confirmed that J. Grace Co. has legal rights to the land.

Samantha Reiner, Webb Road, inquired if all homes would have driveways or share driveways if the by-right plan was executed. Mr. D'Ignazio confirmed that no one would be sharing driveways. There was additional discussion about driveways. Ms. Reiner continued and inquired if the developer would consider transferring property rights from the residential side to the commercial side of the property to reduce the number of residential homes proposed to be built. Mr. D'Ignazio responded that the developer wouldn't consider transferring property rights. Mr. D'Ignazio reconfirmed the number of acres in question to be developed with Ms. Reiner as 91.46 acres, and that public sewer would be provided in two of the three plans.

Amy Holmsten, Oakland Road, expressed stormwater management concerns, traffic calming devices, public sewer, water and natural gas availability to residents on Oakland Road. Mr. D'Ignazio clarified the two proposed PRD plans will bring public sewer to the area. Chairman Klaver did mention that if sewer is brought to that area of the Township the sewer line will travel down Wilmington Pike and not Oakland Road, according to the Township's 537 Plan.

Debbie Dean, Hunters Lane, inquired about traffic studies. Chairman Klaver responded that that will be dealt with in the Planning Commission process after a formal plan is submitted. Mr. D'Ignazio responded that all three proposed plans will bring in the same amount of traffic.

Dennis DeCola, Webb Road, inquired about stormwater management and existing creeks and ponds adjacent to the property. Township Engineer Mastronardo and Mr. D'Ignazio both responded that stormwater management controls will be put into place.

Eric Goodman, Bellefair Lane, expressed support for one of the PRD plans and not the 2-acre by right plan for the sake of preserving contiguous open space.

David Parks, Webb Road, inquired about adjacent properties and of possible sale of other farm land along Oakland Road, too. He also expressed support for one of the PRD plans and not the 2-acre by right plan.

Ed Kisco, Bellefair Lane, expressed distrust in the plan that only 40 homes will be built on 90 acres. Solicitor Donaghue responded that if a formal submission is made showing 40 homes on the plan than only 40 homes will ultimately be built. Mr. Kisco also expressed concern about the 5-points traffic stop at historic Dilworthtown, and the commercial piece of the plan.

Planning Commission Chairman Huffman stated that tonight was not to discuss the commercial piece of the plan and that the traffic studies will involve PennDot.

Bill Kirkpatrick, Supervisor, Birmingham Township, asked that the Birmingham Township Planning Commission and Police Department be involved in the traffic study.

Debbie Reardon, Talley Ho Drive, inquired about the topography of the site and if any of it includes wetlands or steep slopes where J. Grace Co. can't build. Mr. Huffman responded that the Township does have ordinances in place that protect wetlands and deny building on steep slopes. Ms. Reardon also inquired about the proposed open space and whether or not it would be open to all residents or only for residents of the proposed development. Mr. D'Ignazio responded that it would be open to all residents.

Vince Barbone, Bellefair Lane, inquired about the three existing properties and whether or not they're included in the 91 acres being discussed tonight. Supervisor Murphy responded that the existing structures are included in the acreage.

Dennis Henry, Webb Road, inquired about the traffic study to consider the impact on Webb Road. Mike Schneider, Engineer, Pennoni Associates, responded that a traffic study will be considered.

Debbie Dean, Hunters Lane, inquired if the development received ½ acre plot approvals then will it set a precedent. Solicitor Donaghue responded potentially yes.

Samantha Reiner, Webb Road, expressed the importance of involving the school district in the traffic study.

Adjournment

Chairman Klaver adjourned the special meeting at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt DiFilippo
Secretary