

Draft of 11/9/15

Chadds Ford Township  
Delaware County, PA

Planning Commission Meeting  
Wednesday, October 14, 2015  
7:00PM

Call to Order

A meeting of the Chadds Ford Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00PM. Chairman Craig Huffman, Vice Chairman Tom Singer, Commissioner Bill Mock, Commissioner Tom Kerwin and Commissioner Valerie Hoxter were present. Also present were Ms. Amanda Serock, Manager, Mr. Michael Maddren, Solicitor, Mr. Michael Schneider, Engineer and Mr. Matt DiFilippo, Assistant to the Manager and Planning Commission Secretary. Sixteen (16) people from public were present.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Mock's motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of September 9, 2015 was seconded by Commissioner Kerwin and passed unanimously.

New Business: SALDO Application, 2015 Hillman Drive Extension

Mr. Ross Weiss, attorney for the applicant, The Henderson Group, introduced the applicant's Hillman Drive Extension SALDO application. Mr. Weiss identified the intersection of Wilmington and Baltimore Pikes (US 202 and 1) as well as the other three loop roads around the intersection, State Farm Drive, Brandywine Drive and Applied Card Way. He described Hillman Drive as being incomplete; serving as a driveway to Painter's Crossing Condos on one end which connects to Baltimore Pike; and, at the other end connecting to Wilmington Pike, the road stops at the entrance to the Estates at Chadds Ford. Mr. Weiss continued that the purpose of the applicant's application is to complete Hillman Drive by finishing 1,260 ft. of incomplete roadway, and ultimately connecting Baltimore Pike with Wilmington Pike completing the fourth loop road around the major intersection. He explained that the applicant would like to design, engineer and complete the construction of Hillman Drive at their sole expense. Chairman Huffman inquired if there would be any future use issues if the road were to be completed before the vacant lots adjoining the road were developed. Mr. Weiss responded that it is usually up to the developer to post security to ensure connecting roads are completed when there is land development; and, he further confirmed to both Chairman Huffman and Solicitor Maddren that it was his applicant's intent to complete the road prior to seeking approval for development of the adjacent lands. He continued, confirming with Commissioner Kerwin that a finished road would make the vacant lots more marketable. Chairman Huffman commented that there were a number of significant issues in the Pennoni Engineer review letter. Mr. Weiss and Chairman Huffman agreed that Mr. Weiss would address each item in the Pennoni review letter dated October 9, 2015.

Mr. Weiss began with the five zoning issues addressed in the letter, the first being a comment about the setbacks of the corner property at Baltimore Pike and Hillman Drive, being reduced to 43 feet, if the road is built, from the required 55 feet. He continued that there were other comments in the review letter related to this property, and that he and his applicant have met with the property owner, TFF Investments, and that the property owner is fully supportive of the completion of the road. He, however, couldn't offer an answer to the setback issue at this point in time. Regarding comment five under zoning, he implied that the applicant would most likely have to request a variance to screen the outer perimeter of the parking lot of the corner property at Baltimore Pike and Hillman Drive. Concerning zoning issues two and three raised in the Pennoni review letter, Mr. Weiss said that he believes his applicant and their application was not subject to the Township's recently passed steep slopes ordinance, but that they would pay attention to such comments regarding steep slopes and address them when and if they could. Finally, Mr. Weiss confirmed that the applicant would comply with zoning issue number four in the letter requesting street trees.

The next issues addressed by Mr. Weiss were the Traffic Impact Study comments of the Pennoni review letter. He began citing that in several instances, the letter implied that the submitted plan of the completion of Hillman Drive be discussed with PennDot, and confirmed that his applicant has absolutely agreed to this, adding, that he believes PennDot is familiar with the plan, and that his applicant is aware they will need a Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP). He continued that it's not his applicant's intent to not involve PennDot in the process. Matt Hammond of Traffic Design and Planning addressed issues in the Traffic Impact Study section of the Pennoni review letter. Mr. Hammond addressed the following: if and when complete, Hillman Drive being used to bypass the intersection of Wilmington and Baltimore Pikes by regional commuters, possibly underestimating the number of new drivers using a completed Hillman Drive, baseline data for the traffic study and adjusting the traffic study to reflect proposed businesses along Hillman Drive, and considering neighboring commercial and residential developments. He continued emphasizing the difficulty in predicting regional commuter traffic flow, and that the study ultimately projects a 3% growth in traffic. Chairman Huffman inquired as to how traffic uses for undeveloped property is determined to which Mr. Hammond responded that his team used an approved plan for Henderson's business lot #12, and reviewed the Township's current zoning map and considered what businesses could be by-right uses to determine the traffic. He continued that if any lots are developed differently in the future, then adjustments would be made to the traffic study, and that he believes his team was fairly conservative with their traffic study assumptions of what could be developed on the vacant parcels. Mr. Hammond also confirmed with Commissioner Hoxter that they did take into consideration the 240 units at Painters Crossing Condos and the 120 homes at the Estates at Chadds Ford in their traffic study. Engineer Schneider commented on the importance of discussing required capacity improvements with both PennDot and the Township for the Wilmington and Baltimore Pike intersection to ensure that Brandywine Drive and Hillman Drive are not overburdened with bypass traffic; and, he continued that he feels the traffic study underestimated bypass traffic, primarily southbound on Wilmington Pike, and that it's concerning to possibly have heavy amounts of bypass traffic intermingling with residential traffic from the existing Painter's Crossing Condo development and the Estates at Chadds Ford. Mr. Hammond added that the current design of Hillman Drive is a design that was done by the Township in the past and that the HOP permit was renewed

several times in the past, but now has expired. Engineer Schneider responded that the plan for the road was never fully completed, though, and that a lot has changed, since then, especially with the residential development access on the road, today, and increase in traffic in just the last five years. Chairman Huffman added that Hillman Drive is the only loop road with residential access. Engineer Schneider also added that if residential access is blocked due to commuter drivers being backed-up along Hillman Drive then it can be very impactful for those residents living along Hillman Drive with Hillman Drive as their only access point to their home. Chairman Huffman added that there is also an element of school bus traffic entering and exiting the residential developments along Hillman Drive, and that the road ultimately is not a loop road but will be more of a road used to access future businesses along that road. He added that a regional improvement would be a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of Wilmington and Baltimore Pike to really move traffic. The intersection at Hillman Drive and Wilmington Pike was discussed in detail, specifically, turn lanes and lining up the intersection with Applied Bank Boulevard. Again, it was implied that PennDot would have to be brought into the conversation to see what type of improvements could be made at that intersection because of the close proximity of the Goddard School to Hillman Drive. Mr. Frank Murphy confirmed that traffic could possibly be backed up to Dickinson Drive during peak rush hour times along Hillman Drive with Engineer Schneider. Mr. Frank Murphy also confirmed the level of service of the road with Mr. Hammond who confirmed that it was currently a level service E condition and that improvements would only bring it to a D or an F. Other issues addressed were extending the turn lanes and channelizing the turn lanes, specifically at the intersection with Baltimore Pike, and adapting the traffic light with the other adaptive traffic lights already in place along Wilmington Pike. The Planning Commissioners briefly discussed the current state of the traffic at the Wilmington and Baltimore Pike traffic intersection and where they feel traffic is backed up the most. Hillman Drive being classified as a collector street rather than a primary road was discussed, primarily, the determination affecting the width of the road and the right of way. It was confirmed between Mr. Weiss and Chuck Olivo, engineer on behalf of the applicant that the road is currently classified as a primary road and that's what the application reflects in the design with the right of way and width of the road adhering to the measurements for a primary road. Engineer Schneider confirmed the proposed application and corresponding right of way and width of the road measurements. It was ultimately confirmed that the current right of way being proposed isn't satisfactory.

Mr. Chuck Olivo, engineer on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Subdivision and Land Development and Stormwater Management issues brought up in the Pennoni review letter. He agreed that they will comply with #14 – 26, #29 and #31 – 34 under the subdivision and land development section of the Pennoni review letter, and #35 – 40 and #42 – 44 under the Stormwater Management section of the Pennoni review letter. He did discuss in detail the steepness involved in connecting the two segments of the existing roadway and removing existing curb cuts. He added that waivers would most likely be requested by the applicant for certain items, that related to the Pennoni recommended "collector street" classification.

Mr. Weiss also commented regarding the General issues in the Pennoni review letter that the applicant would comply with #45(b. – c.), #45(e. – j.), #45(l. – q.), and #47.

Chairman Huffman decided not to call the application to a vote and asked the applicant to sign an extension to give more time to the Township to make a decision. Mr. Weiss confirmed that the MPC timeclock of 90 days started from the date of tonight's planning commission meeting. Mr. Weiss also confirmed that he would not want his applicant placed on the next meeting agenda, November 10<sup>th</sup>, and would like time to make changes to the plan and re-submit within the 90-day time period.

#### Public Comment

Samantha Reiner, Webb Road, asked if there was any property that Henderson owned that couldn't be accessed today with the current state of Hillman Drive. Matt Hammond responded that technically, yes, if the Gakis property used the Painters Crossing Condo driveway, then access to all of the properties could be possible. Ms. Reiner followed up inquiring about just limiting a section of the road to residential only. Engineer Schneider stated that the only way to prohibit it would be signage and enforcement.

Mark Eisenhardt, Henderson Group, discussed the project and the project's history and the need for the road. He specifically followed up to Ms. Reiner's question about access and said that the properties are currently not accessible unless the road is built. He did say that property C is accessible by the Painters Crossing Driveway confirming what Matt Hammond had said. He added that Henderson owns all of the properties, too. He continued to describe how the Henderson Group has used the previous plans to come up with the plan submitted as the SALDO application. He emphasized they would be greatly improve Painters Crossing Condos second access, and that the HOA is in agreement. He continued that the Henderson Group did not welcome the Estates at Chadds Ford development accessing Hillman Drive, and that it was a Township demand the Henderson Group reluctantly agreed to the access easements. He also brought up the massive stormwater basin on the business campus that would affect where the road would go. He finished stating that completion of the road will help everyone, complete development and bring taxes into the Township.

Vicky Hoxter, Painters Crossing, expressed concern about the completion of the road, specifically access to Painters Crossing Condos. She also inquired about curving the roadway. Engineer Schneider responding citing site distance.

Commissioner Hoxter asked how the plan in front of the Planning Commission was different from previous plans. Mr. Olivo, engineer for the applicant, confirmed that there were no major changes with the exception that the screening hasn't been finalized. Per Commissioner Hoxter's request, Mr. Olivo pointed out the access to Painter's Crossing Condos. She ended with commenting about traffic calming measures to make the completed road less attractive to truck traffic.

#### Adjournment

Chairman Huffman's motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:17PM was seconded by Commissioner Hoxter and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt DiFilippo, Assistant to the Manager