

East Fallowfield Township  
Planning Commission  
Approved March 3, 2014 minutes  
6:30 p.m.

Attendees: Dennis Crook, Chairman  
John Schwab, Vice Chairman  
Joe Perzan  
Jim Durborow

Richard Agatone  
Jim Weeks  
Garth Monaghan

The meeting was called to order.

DISCUSSION: First item of business is a discussion of priorities on the order of the agenda. Mr. Sisk is present with the Hope Community proposal, and Parks and Recreation

MOTION: A motion was made to proceed to setting priorities for tonight. Parks and Recreation followed by the Hope Community Plan. Seconded. Passed

PARKS AND RECREATION: Looking to put in about a half a mile of trail. It would go around the pond connecting the boardwalk to a new accessible bridge across Dennis Run and continue down the meadow trail down toward the Big Apple Restaurant. At the point where it currently swings towards the crossing, it will hit a turn around. It's to connect the east side and west side of the park. The bridge will be about 45 feet long. The trail is eight feet wide and will go almost the length of the park on the south side. There was some discussion regarding water control and steps to be taken to handle the storm water runoff. From an amenities standpoint, there would be park benches throughout every so many feet.

Schedule – weather permitting – within the next couple of weeks to complete the geo-technical design for the bridge abutments, complete the soil testing for the storm water management and follow the design calculations and test results and reach out to Chris Della Penna. Hoping to have approval in the summer 2014 and design in the fall.

The question was asked if the bridge be able to handle the weight of the mowers and were told yes but not the weight of a vehicle, such as a pick-up truck.

HOPE COMMUNITY PLAN: Michael Gill began the presentation and introduced Jim Sisk and Glen Bentley. We wanted to talk about a concept plan for Hope Community to be located on 72 acres. The first phase would be located on the east side of Rt. 82 with the second phase on the west side. This is not low income or Section 8 housing. We think it has the support of the county planning commission. CCPC did issue a review letter last month of which you have a copy. We gave the PowerPoint presentation last summer.

The Planning Commission did have some comments, most notable had to do with the intersection between the internal road system and Rt. 82. The developer has taken steps to better align those intersections to provide for recreational usage in phase one so pedestrians would not have to cross over Rt. 82 to get to the recreational facilities for the development.

The question of zoning was raised. Mr. Gill informed the Commission that the current zoning is industrial. Are the recommendations of the county planning commission going to be incorporated into the final plan? Mr. Gill answered yes. If the Board of Supervisors gives us the go ahead, we will see the plans reflected in the next versions. One of the recommendations was that you work with the township engineer. Have you done that yet? Before we advance this plan to the township engineer, we want to know if the township is on board with this concept.

The question was asked why they thought this was a good project for this space and was told that on the county's landscapes plan, this is perceived to be an urban area. The comment was made that the one concern was that we are working on the Comprehensive Plan and there would need to be a re-zoning for this project. There is no way to support a re-zoning prior to conversation regarding the Comprehensive Plan because we need the plan for the township in it's entirety. We need to get far enough along with the Comprehensive Plan to see if it makes sense in totality.

One of the subjects that came up briefly at the community meeting for the Comprehensive Plan was the ability to have industrial commercial development to support the township financially. We would be wiping off a premium location for commercial industrial.

The developer, Mr. Sisk stated that he had discussed with the new owners of Prang's junk yard and they are willing to sell the property for commercial development. With that, there would be retail in addition to an offsite parking lot for the train station which came up as well. Otherwise, they are considering using the property for a slag processing plant. That would add dust, noise and truck traffic right next to Branford Village and across from Carriage Crest. They are willing to sell that property if we can go forward.

There is a grant for geo-thermal – these are proposed geo-thermal air conditioned and heated houses – that will expire 2016 and the grants are needed to keep this project affordable. That puts a time line on getting this project done. What we need to know is whether this is a concept that the township finds is a worthwhile concept.

There had been a recent traffic study and it didn't foresee any problems. The study was just an overview.

A question was asked, "Would there be any way the Planning Committee and other interested parties could see what the potential homes would be like?" He was told yes. Mr. Gill mentioned that they were going to re-present the PowerPoint presentation at the Park and Rec meeting and would bring that information with them. The price range would be \$85,000 to \$145,000. Two deed restrictions would go along with it. One would be resale. You would only be able to resell for the original cost plus three percent cap and improvements. This would keep them affordable. This has been done in a community in Colorado called the Poplar community. We envisioned two trails that would connect on the access trail that goes to the park. This would be a homeowner's association community. There would be no rentals. That is the other deed restriction.

On the original concept plan for people in the Phase one to use the recreational facilities, they would have to cross Rt. 82. We tried to create a proportional amount of recreational activities on the north side so that you don't have to cross Rt. 82. There will still need to be a pedestrian crossing. There would be a marked crossing – no stop signs or lights. The Planning Commission member/s commented that would not be sufficient. You can't have kids trying to cross Rt. 82. That would be something that

would need to be discussed. There is a culvert at the bottom of the hill that needs to be replaced. That could be an area where you could put a walkway. It came up in the township meeting that no one wanted traffic lights in the township. They would need to do a warrant analysis. John Schwab and Garth Monaghan et al made the comment that that was a deal breaker. There is no way that kids can be crossing that road.

A project like this could end up adding to the expense of the township rather than providing some sort of income toward it. If the retail and commercial development goes ahead than it would be added. Mr. Sisk party commented if the slag pit goes in, there is no business tax, no real estate tax and there is no reason to hire anyone from the community. So the township gets nothing except the noise, the dust and the traffic. There is the option to take housing completely off of the north side and turn it all into retail. If the slag pit goes in, I don't foresee building this.

If you have a house currently there, it would be added into the plans. The house itself would remain. It would be part of the homeowner's association.

We will be meeting with the Supervisors to re-present the PowerPoint presentation. We are not looking for any approvals but a sense that it's worthwhile to continue to pursue the project. The comments were made that from a personal standpoint there are some things to overcome, but I like the fact that its affordable housing and you're not going to allow rentals. I am not opposed. I'm concerned about the traffic.

We're not looking for anything formal. Just are you okay with us moving forward. It was indicated that they would be okay with that. We can give a conditional recommendation pending some further discussions. If you're going to have housing there, there must be a safe mechanism to cross Rt. 82. The proposed streets are fifty foot rights of way and there are some alleys that are narrower. This is dependant on whether we go with on street parking but that would be written into the new ordinance, also, you would need sidewalks throughout.

Proposal: Conditional recommendation pending some further information – traffic, such.

MOTION: Pending some additional information - such as traffic, finances, size of the roads, commercial, including the slag plant and that it fits into the Comprehensive Plan - we can make a conditional recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that if we can overcome those, we are not opposed to moving forward with the idea. Also, pending the review of the township engineer.

PASSED: Unanimously

We need to put a big condition on that. We don't want the supervisors to think we've approved pending a clean engineer's report. We just approved the idea only.

DISCUSSION: PA Municipal Planning Code course. Dennis Crook commented that it has been very interesting and informational. We have to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the development of the municipality set forth in this act and present it for the consideration of the governing body and to keep and maintain all files and records of its actions. All records and files shall be in possession of the governing body. Everything else is optional. Which of these do you want to include? He went on to explain what the other communities were doing. It is like continuing education to find out how they overcome pieces of negativity.

DISCUSSION: Public Sewer and Water Surveys. Dennis Crook stated that we have the data but nothing has been compiled. The survey was sent out to people in the community. They received about 700 responses. The information needs to be entered into a database and compiled into usable information. The surveys were done in 2010.

MOTION: Dennis Crook made a motion to get an intern from the school to enter this information. Seconded.

PASSED: Unanimously

DISCUSSION: Letter to the Health Department. The comment was raised about contacting the Health Department for the failings or other conditions for the Comprehensive Plan. The previous Comprehensive Plan had information on the soil types but throughout the whole township in one place it may be solid rock; in another farmland. It would be good to know what our land uses would be.

MOTION: A motion was made to write a letter to the Health Department to have a representative come and answer some questions.

PASSED: Unanimously

DISCUSSION: A comment was made that the Planning Commission needs to make it very clear that they did not approve the Hope Community project with the engineer's approval. We're just saying that we're okay with moving onto the next step. Also, the Planning commission doesn't want anyone to say that we don't want the reprocessing facilities. We're not saying that. We don't want any misunderstandings. With everyone's help, we'll draft a letter of clarity to give to the Board. We'll email it around for everyone's approval.

DISCUSSION: Denise Miller. Jim Durborow said that we should go on record saying that we always had a satisfying relationship with Denise and the Planning Commission was not in favor of her being dismissed.

MOTION: A motion was made by Jim Durborow to go on record that the Planning Commission was not in favor of Denise Miller being dismissed and that they never had problems working with her. Seconded.

PASSED: Unanimously

MOTION: To adjourn the March 3, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting. Seconded.

PASSED: Unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Barnes  
Temporary Administrative Assistant

