

**MANHEIM TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, July 17, 2024**

The meeting of the Manheim Township Planning Commission was held on Wednesday July 17, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. Members present were Stacey Betts, Michael Gibeault, John Hendrix, Sandy Kime, Alex Rohrbaugh, John Shipman, and Nathan Van Name. Township staff present were Sharyn Young, Director of Planning and Zoning and Declan Murphy, Communications Specialist; Township Engineer Nate Hardman of C.S. Davidson was also present.

Roll Call

Ms. Young called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Reorganization

Motion was made by Mr. Shipman and seconded by Mr. Hendrix to nominate Mr. Gibeault for the position of Planning Commission Chairperson; motion carried 7-0.

Motion was made by Mr. Kime and seconded by Mr. Hendrix to nominate Mr. Shipman for the position of Planning Commission Vice Chairperson; motion carried 7-0.

Motion was made by Mr. Gibeault and seconded by Mr. Shipman to nominate Jim Langenstein, Plan Review Administrator, for the position of Planning Commission Secretary; motion carried 7-0.

Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Shipman and seconded by Mr. Hendrix to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2024, meeting. Motion carried 5-0 with Ms. Betts and Mr. Rohrbaugh abstaining.

Subdivision/Land Development Plans

Parkside Reserve Phase 4 Final Plan (Millpond Drive, R-1 Residential Zoning District)

Josh Boultbee of Pioneer Management presented the plan on behalf of the applicant, Petersburg Road Associates; Douglas Parkins of Petersburg Road Associates was also present. The plan proposes development of the final phase of the five-phase Parkside Reserve residential development for thirty-four (34) single-family detached home lots and two open space lots, which will be owned by the HOA. All TDRs required for the development have been obtained. The lots are adjacent to Manheim Township Community Park and an access path will connect the development to the park. Township staff will address the means of connecting the path to the park trail. Mr. Boultbee also explained that approximately 10,000 CY of fill are necessary for Phase 4, and that the fill is already on site.

Motion was made by Mr. Shipman to recommend approval of the plan and seconded by Mr. Rohrbaugh; motion carried 7-0.

SNS Property Management/ProCare Medical Final Land Development Plan (759 Flory Mill Road, I-1 Industrial Zoning District/D-R Retrofit Overlay)

Matthew Mack of Mack Engineering presented the plan on behalf of the applicant, SNS Property Management. The plan proposes construction of a 7,200 SF addition at the rear of the existing warehouse on the 2-acre property, along with curbing and sidewalk along Flory Mill Road. Mr. Mack explained that the sidewalk width was reduced to 4' from the required 5' because of conflicts with existing utilities. He also explained that they didn't propose a sidewalk to the front door of the existing building because the grade changes significantly from the sidewalk at the street and the front door, and that the applicants' customers are non-ambulatory.

Motion was made by Mr. Shipman to recommend approval of the plan and seconded by Mr. Kime; motion carried 7-0.

Petition to Amend Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map

KIRPA Estates (3001 Oregon Pike – B-3 Business Zoning District/T-5 Oregon Village Overlay)

Bernadette Hohenadel of Nikolaus & Hohenadel and Joel Young of Rettew Associates presented the Zoning Ordinance amendment petition on behalf of the petitioner, KIRPA Estates. The petition proposes to rezone 20.52 acres of the 26.77-acre site from B-3 Business to R-3 Residential, increase the maximum permitted building height for multi-family buildings in the R-3 Residential Zoning District to 50 feet without purchase of TDRs, increase the maximum permitted building height for buildings in the B-3 Business Zoning District to 55 feet, increase maximum density for multi-family dwellings to 14.5 units per acre without purchase of TDRs, and permit houses of worship under 20,000 SF or 200 seats by right in the R-3 Residential Zoning District. Ms. Hohenadel and Mr. Young displayed a concept plan for a mixed-use development consisting of a 256 -unit apartment community, house of worship, hotel, bank, and restaurant. The Zoning Ordinance amendment petition would enable development of the concept plan.

Mr. Young pointed out that the language of the proposed amendment limits where in the Township the proposed multi-family development could occur under the new regulations and displayed a map showing only three qualifying properties, including the petitioner's. He acknowledged that redevelopment or consolidation of existing properties could expand that number. Mr. Young agreed to add a requirement to the proposed amendment that properties would have to be along a major arterial roadway to qualify for the reduced minimum area of 3,000 SF per apartment dwelling. Mr. Young also stated that applicability of the proposed increased height for non-residential buildings in the B-3 Business Zoning District is also limited, although no map of these locations was provided. Ms. Hohenadel suggested that the proposed amendments are appropriate because the subject location, and other eligible locations, are ideal for higher density housing.

Discussion between the Planning Commissioners and the petitioner's representatives resulted in elimination of the 200-seat limitation for houses of worship permitted by right in the R-3 Residential Zoning District couldn't exceed 20,000 SF regardless of seating count. Commissioners noted that the Township is currently in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan and that the potential impact of TDRs on housing choices is a component that should be explored during that process. They also noted that increased housing density is already a stated goal of the current Comprehensive Plan, therefore the timing of the proposed amendment shouldn't need to wait until the updated Plan has been completed. There was a discussion of the purpose of the TDR program in general, and Mr. Gibeault suggested that the petitioner consider a compromise between the existing TDR requirements for increased apartment building height and density and eliminating them entirely.

There were no comments or questions from members of the public.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, motion was made by Mr. Kime and seconded by Mr. Rohrbaugh to recommend adoption of the proposed ordinance, with minor changes as discussed; motion carried 6-1, with Ms. Betts dissenting.

Informal Presentation of Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Attorney Claudia Shank of McNees Wallace and Devon Wagner of Oaktree Outdoor Advertising informally presented a Zoning Ordinance amendment proposed by Oaktree that would amend several sections of the Ordinance regulating billboards. They described the key changes proposed, including increase in size of billboards along limited access highways to 300 SF and 120 SF along the "pikes", increase in billboard height to 35 feet, measurement of billboard height from the roadway surface instead of ground surface at the billboard, and elimination of setbacks from overlay districts. They also propose changes to regulations governing electronic variable messaging signs (EVMS) to reduce the frequency of the message changes from 5 minutes to 10 seconds and to allow 100% of sign surfaces to be EVMS. Ms. Shank utilized a PowerPoint presentation to depict existing signage and what is proposed.

Mr. Wagner explained that Oaktree is a member of the industry organization OAAA, which maintains a set of principles by which members are to abide. He stated that the ability to change EVMS messages more frequently would allow display of public service messages. He cited several studies and statistics finding that the proposed frequency increase in EVMS display changes are safe for motorists.

Mr. Wagner responded to many questions from Planning Commission members, primarily regarding the proposed frequency of message changes, height measurement, whether billboards would cantilever over the roadway, and how many locations in the Township could potentially contain the larger billboards. Ms. Shank and Ms. Young discussed Township staff concerns with how billboard height would be measured, with the potential for billboards to be very high when measured from the road surface in instances where the ground slopes steeply down from the road surface. Ms. Shank stated that they would consider revision to that section of the proposed ordinance.

Public Comment

Township resident Tara Patterson presented objections to the proposed billboard ordinance amendment, citing other, non-industry-produced studies that found that short frequency EVMS message changes along roadways are unsafe. She also stated that she doesn't want to see a proliferation of large billboards in the Township, particularly along the pikes, and views the proposed changes as inconsistent with the character of the Township.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.