

MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
BOROUGH OF PARKESBURG, PA
DECEMBER 16, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT –

Todd Brade
Matt Marran
Casey Wyatt
Shelby Smith
Josh Eastep
Dave Bashore

OTHERS –

John Carnes, Jr., Esq., Borough Solicitor
Ed Van Arsdale, P.E., ARRO Consulting, Borough Engineer
Jeff Strauss, D.R. Horton, Inc., Applicant/Developer
Nate Fox, Esq., Obermayer (Developer’s Attorney)
Mike Wagoner (Developer’s Landscape Architect)

Call to Order. Mr. Bashore called the meeting to order at Borough Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Quorum. A quorum of members was present.

Announcements. Mr. Bashore welcomed Josh Eastep of West First Avenue to the Commission; Josh was appointed as an alternate voting member of the Commission at Borough Council’s regular November meeting.

Approval of Minutes. Mr. Brade moved to approve the Minutes of the Commission’s August 29, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Smith and passed 5-0.

Further Discussion of the Land Development Plan of D.R. Horton, Inc., dba EPC Holdings 584,

LLC re: *Construction of 130 townhouses on 29.8 acres at 200 North Church Street, to be known as Meadowview, in the R-5 Residential Zoning District, adjacent to Crystal Springs apartments.*

* Mr. Bashore briefly recapped the history of this plan application, advised that the Borough had received an extension of time to take final action on the plan through 12/31/2024 and then asked Messrs. Van Arsdale and Carnes to explain the status of the application’s open space plan and related issues.

* Mr. Van Arsdale advised that the Borough had received a letter today from the applicant’s engineer, dated December 16, 2024, on behalf of the applicant, requesting “[a] waiver from Section 425 from the Borough of Parkesburg Subdivision and Land Development ordinance as it relates to open space, as the type and size of open space is to be provided as shown on the “Open Space Plan” dated 2/8/24, last revised 12/11/24 and any subsequent changes.”

* Mr. Van Arsdale directed the Commission to his Plan Review Letter #5 dated 12/16/2024, comments #7.nn and 32-33, which state in part, “[T]he active open space area shown as Pocket Park #1 behind Lots 118-124 is only 0.38 ac., which is less than the minimum 0.5 ac. required by ordinance. If minimum areas cannot be met, a waiver request shall be submitted for review and approval by the Planning Commission and Borough Council.”

* Mr. Carnes added, among other things, that if a waiver from Sec. 425 weren’t approved by the Borough, a payment in lieu of the applicant’s compliance with the open space provisions of the SALDO would be appropriate. The applicant stated they were not interested in making a payment in lieu of meeting the Borough’s open space requirements and instead were asking for a waiver therefrom.

* The applicant said they would be willing to extend the walking path noted on the revised open space plan to Chapel Avenue if the Borough can get access from the adjoining property owner (believed to be the water company, American Water). Mr. Carnes advised that he would confirm the property’s ownership and contact the owner about granting the Borough an easement or other means of access. The applicant prefers a non-lighted path made of wood chips or other non-macadamized materials.

* Following questions from members of the Commission and an informal poll of how members felt about whether the Borough should accept dedication of the open space, what types of active recreation elements should be included on the recorded plan, and what materials the pedestrian walkway through the woods from the apartments to Chapel Avenue should be made of, Mr. Brade moved to recommend approval of the Applicant’s open space waiver request as follows:

The Planning Commission recommends that Borough Council approve a waiver from the technical requirements of Sec. 425.C. of the Borough’s SALDO subject to the applicant’s acceptance of and compliance with all the following conditions:

1. That the Borough Council accept the Open Space Plan dated December 11, 2024, and its representations regarding the proposed improvements and pocket parks (which improvements must be constructed to meet the minimum identified requirements thereof);
2. That the Borough follow the Planning Commission’s recommendation that the Borough not require immediate dedication of the open space to the Borough but instead require that the Applicant and also the Homeowners’ Association be obligated to make a continuing offer of dedication of any or all of the open space areas, including improvements, to the Borough, with no obligation of the Borough to accept same in whole or in part at any time and with such offer to be memorialized on the recorded plans;
3. That the Applicant construct a wood chip trail of the dimension shown on the open space plan that extends through the existing wooded area from the existing apartments toward Chapel Avenue, and the Applicant shall obligate itself to escrow sufficient funds for the benefit of the Borough for the Applicant to complete this trail from the edge of its property to Chapel Avenue – if the Borough can obtain access by way of an easement or other means from the intervening property owner to reach this destination before the subdivision is completed and the developer files for a maintenance bond; and

4. That the Borough be granted access easements by the Applicant to all areas identified in the Common Open Space Plan for access by the Borough and its residents.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Marran and passed 5-0.

Old Business. None

New Business. Mr. Bashore announced that Borough Council has scheduled a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Borough Zoning and Subdivision & Land Development Codes to permit Traditional Neighborhood Development in the R-2 Residential Zoning District for Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 7:00 pm. The public is invited to attend and participate in the hearing.

Adjourn. Mr. Brade moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Smith and passed by unanimous consent. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Dave Bashore, Chair

(NOTE: *These minutes were approved 5-0 by the Planning Commission on 1/23/2025.***)**