

SHALER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
April 18, 2016

The Regular Meeting of the Shaler Township Planning Commission was held on April 18, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Piekarski called the meeting to order. Ms. Re called the roll as follows:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: David H. Piekarski, Conrad Wagner, Howard Abel, Matthew Thiel, Terence J. Brown, Gregory Greiff and Drew Gerst, Liaison Member

ABSENT: Chip Pearson

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER: Matthew Sebastian

BUILDING CODE OFFICIAL/ZONING OFFICER: Robert Vita

RECORDING SECRETARY: Noreen A. Re

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 21, 2016

Motion to approve made by Mr. Greiff and seconded by Mr. Abel.

Motion carries– 6 to 0

REPORT OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING:

April 12, 2016

Mr. Piekarski had no report.

OLD BUSINESS:

Site Development – Shaler Area School District – Titan Track & Field Renovations – Mt. Royal Boulevard

Mr. Greer Hayden of HHSDR Architects was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Hayden stated the lighting concerns were addressed. The new lighting will be a four-pole configuration, 80 feet tall. There will be 12 fixtures on each pole. There will be LED fixtures for walkers on the track as well as LED fixtures for nighttime security. They will be taking an alternate bid for LED fixtures and will price compare it on bid day to see what is most effective for the district. He described the lighting in detail.

They have received the NPDES permit from the county. The stormwater management plan has been reviewed by the township and approved. They are retaining all the water on site and releasing it at a much reduced rate into the present system. The turf is combustible. Mr. Greer indicated “There is no flame resistance that’s available with these carpets.” There is a fire hydrant on the northwest corner of the property. Turf fields and the link to cancer was discussed.

The three different fields being looked at are crumb rubber, cryogenic crumb rubber and organic. There will be no lighting bleed-over into the neighborhoods. There will be new foundations for the lighting standards. The electrical drawings have been updated. Mr. Thiel stated before they vote, the plans should be reviewed. Mr. Sebastian stated that the plans were reviewed and any prior concerns were addressed.

Mr. Thiel inquired whether the school district is taking responsibility for any future health concerns related to somebody filing a lawsuit against the township for cancer caused by the track. Mr. Sean Aiken, superintendent of Shaler School District, stated the research right now is competing. He stated he would have to speak to the solicitor regarding the liability. Mr. Wagner voiced a concern that they don't want to give approval to a substance that is going to cause cancer 10 or 20 years down the road. Even though that is not known now, precautions need to be put into effect right now so, should something happen, everyone is covered, especially members of the Planning Commission.

The organic material is made up of 95 coconut and cork and

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5 percent rubber. The base and grading is the same no matter what material is used. It would be only the top layer that could be different. The performance of the materials is the same, but the organic one requires a pit for the GeoMax rating and does not have the same resiliency without the shock pad, which will be an upcharge. The organic field also requires more maintenance. Drainage is not affected. There are no carcinogenic factors with the organic field.

The organic field would also cause the least injuries to players. The highest risk would be with the crumb rubber materials, which is 30 percent rubber and 70 percent sand. Regarding concussions, all three materials have a GeoMax rating greater than 120. You can never exceed 155. There will be testing annually for the GeoMax rating. The testing is included with the yearly maintenance. One fire hydrant is sufficient for coverage.

Mr. Aiken stated they are meeting with their solicitor on Wednesday and could inquire then about the school board's position on health issues related to the field. Mr. Greiff also asked for an indemnification clause from the manufacturer that indemnifies the school and the township. Mr. Hayden stated probably the closest thing they could get is that the product complies with the ASTM product testing that's been produced on those products. Beyond that, he wasn't sure what they would actually be able to give.

Motion for preliminary and final approval made by Mr. Wagner and seconded by Mr. Greiff.

Mr. Thiel indicated he would vote for preliminary approval as long as the letter is received from the solicitor and the drawings are updated. Mr. Thiel also stated Goodyear is one of his customers, and currently there is a lawsuit with Goodyear based on the tire rubber they generate.

**Motion carries – 5 to 1
Mr. Thiel voting in the negative**

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NEW BUSINESS:

Site Development – Shaler Area School District – New Rogers Primary School – Scott Avenue

Mr. Greer Hayden of HHSDR Architects was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Hayden made a preliminary presentation to the Planning Commission regarding the project. He described the project in detail. Currently the asbestos is being removed from the building. The playground area will have some new pieces, and some of the older pieces will be relocated. The ball field will remain. The existing sign will be relocated with a possible name change. The building will be moved back another 75 feet.

The new building will be a two-story structure. Parking was discussed in detail. Fencing was discussed in detail as well as the retaining walls and dumpster enclosure. There will be no lighting pollution that carries over to the neighborhoods. Utilities were discussed. A lot of focus has been placed on security. All the play areas are located in the back of the building, which would be a place of refuge, if anything should happen. There is emergency vehicle access to the rear.

There will be a terraced effect to the retaining walls. There will be a six foot high ornamental fence on the retaining walls in the rear. Landscaping was discussed. The building layout was discussed in detail. There is a separate entrance for visitors to enter a holding area. There will be video surveillance on the interior and exterior of the building. The building will have more of a residential theme to keep it in context with the neighborhood.

Regarding the engineer's report, with regard to No. 1, the site does comply with the landscape buffer requirements. Regarding No. 2, the sign will be internally illuminated with the same height and with a new brick base to match the building. The name plate will be changed.

Regarding No. 3, they are going to come out and make a connection to Clearview. The grass paver will stop at the end of the property line. Currently it is not designated to be fenced. Fencing

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was discussed in detail. There is a wetlands area that will be fenced off. The issue regarding No. 4 goes away, since they pulled that work back onto their property. Mr. Greer indicated No. 5 has been taken care of. Mr. John Carly of HHSDR Architects was also present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Carly indicated some notes were moved for clarity.

Regarding No. 6, Mr. Carly stated the north arrows were corrected. Mr. Abel also commented that the legislative route actually turns and goes down Clare Street. No. 7 was taken care of in the demolition drawings. Regarding No. 8, Mr. Carly stated the drawings now show the pipe will be replaced.

Regarding No. 9, Mr. Carly indicated they were unable to find any invert across the street over at the other school's property to help tell the exact depth of the pipe that they are tying into. They are pretty comfortable that they are going to miss it. They have notations in there telling them to find it first before they tie or do any other excavation so a redesign for that pipe can be done, if necessary.

Regarding No. 10, as with the other two instances, they took that work away, so it is no longer applicable. Regarding No. 11, Mr. Carly stated that is part of the stormwater system. It could be made wider, but the fact that it's all gravel in there and the fact that cars are going to overhang those areas, they believe any plantings there would be sacrificial and dead in a year or two.

Regarding No. 12, they have put bollards around all the hydrants for protection. Regarding No. 13, Mr. Carly stated a pit will be installed; and then the waterline will extend from there to the boiler room. Regarding No. 14, Mr. Hayden described the location of the manholes in detail. Regarding No. 15, Mr. Carly stated an updated drawing has been provided showing the piping location. The location of the leveler was discussed.

Regarding No. 16, Mr. Carly indicated the landscape plan has been extended to show the entire property. Regarding not having planting between parking spaces, one of the reasons was site constraints and security.

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Updated drawings were provided to Mr. Sebastian this evening. Mr. Brown questioned the need for the retaining wall in the rear of the building and why it was not staired. Mr. Hayden stated the elevation was maintained for access to the loading dock. The elevation was discussed in detail. Mr. Hayden indicated they could do a terrace effect to minimize the height of the wall. Mr. Brown also stated he would like to see a sheet showing what the designated zones are for emergency access and egress.

Mr. Thiel inquired as to what size truck could access the loading dock. Mr. Greer stated a straight box truck and actually a semi could access the area. It is a single loading dock. Mr. Brown and Mr. Thiel both commented on the good quality of the plans. They are not encroaching on the wetland area.

Mr. Wagner inquired about the playground surface. It is similar to the track surfaces that are currently being used. There will be loose rubber below the bonded top course for fall protection. The amount of loose rubber is dictated by the playground equipment and the Consumer Safety Council. It is eight inches of loose material and one inch of bonded rubber on top. The playground equipment has not yet been finalized. There will be some metal umbrellas that would provide some sun protection. Signage was discussed. Signage for stopping for pedestrians in crosswalks will be added. The playground area will drain through the bonded rubber. There will be bleed systems underneath it.

Motion for preliminary approval made by Mr. Thiel and seconded by Mr. Brown.

Motion passes – 6 to 0

Mr. Piekarski reiterated the request for the school board solicitor to comment on the indemnification of the township with regard to the field surface.

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ADMINISTRATIVE:

Proposed Wind Turbine Ordinance

Mr. Vita stated he was under the impression that he was going to get specific questions from Planning Commission members, but he did not receive any. The ordinance was drafted by the solicitor. Mr. Vita stated the ordinance was drafted specifically for the vertical turbine. Mr. Thiel commented that looking at the picture, it looked more like an industrial use rather than residential. Mr. Brown commented that several issues were raised and discussed about errors, omissions and lack of additional information. He also believed questions were raised about structuring it such that it would fit into the existing current code as opposed to a stand-alone ordinance. Mr. Vita commented the request was to draft a stand-alone ordinance. Size was discussed. Being interconnected with the grid was mentioned. The definition of what “off grid” meant was also mentioned.

Mr. Brown also stated standards were mentioned, but not a specific version or a year approved or adopted. Previous discussion also included setbacks and guy wire anchors, et cetera. Mr. Abel commented on color. Mr. Vita stated you can’t legislate color. Mr. Vita stated this was for a limited installation possibility on the hillside above the Allegheny River, the Gentile property, which is residential. Insurance and posting was also discussed. Permitting and annual testing by the building inspector was also discussed. Mr. Vita stated that would be outsourced to a third party with certifications provided to the township. Concerns were addressed with having a turbine on residential property with a half-acre lot.

Following discussion, Mr. Piekarski suggested they be restricted from residential and changing the definition to large vertical axis turbines with a diameter no larger than six feet. Mr. Brown further commented that definitions for “interconnected” and “off grid” were also needed. Also, the issues of inspections and insurance need to be addressed. Mr. Thiel also commented that installation and final connection should be made by a registered electrician. Mr. Vita stated that is the only way Duquesne Light would do it.

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ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Wagner and seconded by Mr. Thiel.

Motion carries – 6 to 0

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:11 P.M.

Terence J. Brown
Secretary

Minutes prepared by Noreen A. Re, Certified Realtime Reporter.