

Township Building
March 27, 2008

The regular meeting of the Shade Tree Advisory Commission was held tonight in the Township Administration Building. Those in attendance were: Messrs. Pecsí and Ruberg. Also in attendance were: David M. Lynch, Director - Engineering, Zoning & Inspections and Carmen G. Reitano, Assistant to the Director of Engineering, Zoning and Inspections.

Due to the lack of a quorum an informal meeting was held.

1. The minutes of the February 27, 2008 Shade Tree Advisory Commission meeting were accepted as presented.
2. Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 08-02: Record Plan 21-23 E. Glenside Avenue Proposed Parking Field was discussed.

Mr. Lynch presented plans of the proposed parking field and informed the Commission that these properties were purchased by Dr. Kim approximately one year ago. The use of the property at 21 E. Glenside Avenue consists of Rizzo's Restaurant and two (2) apartments and the use of the property at 23 E. Glenside Avenue consists of three (3) apartments. Zoning Relief for the five (5) apartments was granted under ZHB Appeal No. 3228 subject to conditions, one of which was the submission of a land development plan. Mr. Ruberg stated he visited the site and inquired if the grading and underground seepage beds have been addressed as no driveway currently exists. There is a 4' diameter Oak tree on the property and two trees have been removed; therefore, landscaping should be required.

It was stated that if part of the property is paved, landscaping will be required. It was also ascertained that the paving encroaches 5' onto the adjacent property; therefore, all three properties are involved and should be joint applicants.

Mr. Lynch stated the initial submission of this applicant was deemed incomplete and he will do research in order to ascertain if the Application needs to be acted upon by the April 15, 2008 Board of Commissioners meeting. (The Township must act on CTDA No. 08-02 at the April 15, 2008 Board of Commissioners meeting)

Mr. Lynch suggested that the Applicant request a Continuance to provide time for addressing the grading, stormwater management and landscaping.

It is recommended that the Applicant request a Continuance of Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 08-02: Record Plan 21-23 E. Glenside Avenue Proposed Parking Field in order to address grading, stormwater management and landscaping issues. In the event the Applicant does not request a Continuance it is recommended that this Application be denied.

3. Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 08-04: Record Plan Elkins Park Garden Apartments- HVAC Units – 8000 High School Road was discussed.

No representatives were present to discuss this Application.

Mr. Lynch presented pictures of the property and stated this Application does not need to be acted upon until the May 20, 2008 Board of Commissioners meeting. He stated the Applicant is proposing to install 48 HVAC Units. The placement of the units within the complex does provide a sound barrier to the neighboring property; however, there is

concern that the noise emanating from these units will bounce off the buildings and become a nuisance to the tenants of the apartment complex.

Mr. Lynch stated many trees have been removed and suggested that a landscape plan be required for the land development plan.

During discussion it was stated that the plantings cannot be too close to the HVAC Units as the condenser creates heat. It was also recommended that baffling for sound barriers be researched.

In response to a question by Mr. Ruberg, it was stated that units cannot be roof mounted because of the slope of the roof.

Mr. Ruberg stated there is ample room for planting and the species of bushes and trimming will be discussed.

He stated landscaping along the channel has been removed and suggested planting a vegetation barrier on one side of the channel.

Mr. Ruberg stated that while contracted to perform work at the site he planted three small trees and concurs that the property does need landscaping. He recommends that the units be clumped together and landscaped.

It is recommended that Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 08-04: Record Plan Elkins Park Garden Apartments – HVAC Units- 8000 High School Road be tabled and that the Applicant provide a landscape plan and equipment specifications that include the noise level decibel.

4. At this time Dr. Kim, Applicant of Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 08-02: Record Plan 21-23 E. Glenside Avenue Proposed Parking Field,

arrived at the meeting and Mr. Lynch explained STAC tabled this Application and explained their reasoning.

Mr. Lynch advised Dr. Kim that it was ascertained during this meeting that the proposed parking field is not a paved area and there was never a driveway at this location. He stated a topographical survey and a landscape plan will need to be submitted. Also seepage beds and stormwater management will need to be addressed. He also stated that if the adjacent property is being paved, the adjoining property owner will need to be part of the land development.

5. At this time Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 07-15: Record Plan Kirk and Matthew Watkins Subdivision – 426 Greenwood Avenue was discussed. Mr. Hal Lichtman, Architect, and Mr. Matt Hilbush, Engineer, were present to discuss this Application.

Mr. Lynch advised those present that this Application was slated to be heard on February 28, 2008, but the Applicant, prior to the meeting requested a Continuance.

He stated this is a heavily wooded parcel, consisting of an existing house with two water courses crossing the property. He stated the Applicant is proposing to develop the property in accordance with the initial plan that they had submitted.

The Applicant is proposing a three lot subdivision with a private road. Wetlands are on the property. It is the intent to utilize the existing driveway to the south of the property.

The driveway will be widened.

It was noted that a significant amount of scrub trees, 6" dbh or less were removed.

The Stormwater Management Facility will be designed to accept 125% of the 100 Year Flood for the new driveway, proposed houses, existing house and existing driveway.

Mr. Lynch stated neighbors report that there is a significant amount of flooding in the area. The lots are not in a FEMA Flood Plain area; however, Mr. Lynch is requiring that the limits of the 100 Year Flood Plain on the property be established.

Mr. Lynch noted that the Seepage Bed and a 1000 gallon sewage holding tanks must be located outside of the 100 Year Flood Plain.

An updated landscape plan was presented.

Ms. Barnhart, 12 Greenwood Place, inquired if any member of STAC made a site visit to the property; Mr. Ruberg stated he made a site visit.

Mr. Ruberg stated it is his opinion, that the property is actually being divided into four lots (Mr. Ruberg is counting the private road R/W as a lot). The tree counts should be satisfied by lot, and the landscape plan should indicate which trees are being removed and what is being proposed for planting by lot. He recommended that, if there is a deficiency of trees on a particular lot, trees should be planted on that lot. He also recommended that, if within five years trees don't survive, the trees be replaced on a one for one basis.

A discussion ensued regarding the condition of the existing trees, and Mr. Ruberg stated some trees are dead and/or in poor condition. He stated if no development is to occur at the site, some trees will fall down naturally and replace themselves. If development does occur and trees fall down, in all probability they will not be replaced.

Mr. Lynch stated with normal land development, trees are guaranteed for 18 months after the final inspection. A note on the plan can be amended to stipulate a tree warranty for five years, but there is no code basis for this. He also noted that there is no timeline as to when the houses will be constructed.

It was stated that an Arborist made a site visit and identified the condition of all trees and recommended one dead tree be removed.

There are 263 trees on the site and the Applicant is permitted to remove 15% before replacement of trees, on a one for one basis, is required. It was stated that the Applicant, in the worse case scenario will need to replace seven trees, due to trees either being compromised because of construction within the drip line or affected by the grading changes.

At the Planning Commission meeting on Monday, March 14, 2008, it was recommended that the plan be redesigned because of the site distance at the curb cuts for Greenwood Avenue.

Mr. Lynch stated of the 45 trees slated to be removed, 12 are compromised.

He stated a plan, including the amount of dead trees to be removed is required, but has not been submitted. All dead trees on the existing lot are to be removed. A key, identifying all trees, must be submitted.

In response to a question posed by Ms. Barnhart, Mr. Lynch explained the Township's code concerning tree replacement.

Ms. Barnhart stated that the plan does not take into account clearing that had previously occurred. She also stated that she does not believe that Township officials were present when a significant amount of trees were removed.

It was stated that a 5 1/2" gauge was used to determine the size of trees to be removed and that the Owner was cautious when removing the trees.

Mr. Lichtman stated that trees were removed in accordance with the Township Ordinance and a Township Official made periodic site visits.

The impact on stormwater management because of tree removal must be addressed.

If trees need to be removed in order to add sight distance at the driveway intersections, it must be noted on the plan. All trees are to be tagged in accordance with the plan, as submitted, after approval.

The tree inventory will need to be revised and the tabulations and trees along the lot line identified.

Mr. Lichtman stated, relative to the number of trees on each lot to be removed, it is more important to identify where the replacement trees are to be planted. He stated the trees may be better utilized if planted on another area on the property.

Mr. Lynch recommended that the original lot be treated as a whole.

Mr. Ruberg stated each lot should be treated separately as the lots don't exist at this time. He stated this is a multi-lot subdivision and each lot should be treated individually. He inquired if a condition can be made requiring replacement trees to be planted on the front two lots.

A discussion ensued regarding the replacement of dead trees that were removed and Mr. Lynch stated these trees are not included in the tree count. It was also noted that trees are not being removed from the rear lot.

Ms. Wietcha, 13 Greenwood Place, stated this summer a number of trees were removed that provided a visual and sound buffer. She recommended that trees should be planted in that area to provide an ambiance of trees and act as a noise buffer. She recommended that the trees be counted for Lot 3 and more flexibility be allowed in order to plant trees on the two remaining lots; Mr. Lichtman stated he has no objection to this request.

Mr. Ruberg suggested flexibility on the front two lots and omit the tree count on the rear lot. He also recommended that more trees be planted than required. Regarding Lot 1, he recommended that the trees be calculated but not made part of the total count.

A resident expressed her concern for the ecological impact the tree removal, and the lack of tree replacement in kind, will have on wild life.

Mr. Lichtman stated a continuance will not be requested for this land development application.

It is recommended that Cheltenham Township Development Application No. 07-15: Record Plan Kirk and Matthew Watkins Subdivision – 426 Greenwood Avenue be approved contingent upon:

- a. That a revised tree inventory be submitted and tabulations showing the location and tree species be identified.
- b. That a plan be submitted indicating the property line for the three lots and private road, and a tabulation of trees to be removed per lot with totals.
- c. That existing ornamental trees on each lot not be considered in the total of the 15% allowable trees to be removed on Lots 2, 3 and the private road.
- d. That vegetation and replacement trees be planted on Lots 2 and 3 and the private road in order to provide visual and sound buffering.
- e. A revised landscape plan based on the final site design be submitted for review and consideration.
- f. The removal of all dead trees.
- g. The removal of Japanese Knot Weed.
- h. That a mixture of shade trees, understory and shrubs be planted.

Mr. Lynch informed the residents that there is a possibility that the more landscaping required might result in a lesser amount of softscape.

It was stated that there is a note, on the final plan to be recorded, stipulating that any tree that does not survive for a period of 18 months after the final inspection is to be replaced on a one for one basis.

Regarding the Highway Occupancy Permit, Mr. Lynch stated he has not received any comments from PennDOT.

Ms. Barnhart, at this time, entered into the record a copy of an email she sent Township Manager Kraynik and Mr. Lynch (see attached). This correspondence permits entry onto 12 Greenwood Place, 13 Greenwood Place and 430 Greenwood Avenue in order to conduct measurements to determine the 100 year flood levels for 426 Greenwood Avenue. Also, it stipulates that the calculations are to be provided to the Township no later than Thursday, April 3, 2008 at 4:30 PM.

During discussion, Mr. Lichtman stated it is not possible to provide this information on April 3, 2008, as the engineers would not be able to enter the properties until Monday, March 31, 2008.

Mr. Lynch stated that he would prefer the report be received by Friday in order for him to review its contents thoroughly prior to compiling the Director's Report to be presented at the April 8, 2008 Public Works Committee meeting.

6. The meeting adjourned.

David G. Kraynik
Township Manager

Per: Emma Wetzel