

SCHUYLKILL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

AUGUST 16, 7:30PM

MEETING MINUTES

Curt English called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Members in attendance were Michael Bauer, Peter Bigelow, Barbara Cohen, Michael Pellegrino, Andrew Jacob, David Demey, and alternate Tom Gresko. Alternate Michael Walker was absent. Paul Boettinger, Township Engineer, Laurie Getz, Township Manager, Bill Brennan Township Solicitor, Bob Cooney elected Township Supervisor, and Mark Donovan elected Township Supervisor were in the audience.

C. English made the motion to approve the minutes from the July 19th meeting. D. Demey seconded. Minutes were approved.

Reeves Property/Sedgley Farm/Pohlig Builders

Todd Pohlig, Jeremy Maziarz, and John Snyder, Esq., were in attendance to present revisions to the Sedgley Farms plan based on the last Planning Commission meeting's concerns. Todd Pohlig gave the commission members and audience a brief history of the plan they are seeking a recommendation on. This is the "by-right" plan which has been brought back to the Township in September 2022 after many years of sitting idle. All studies have been updated, they have met with AQUA PA and relocated some stormwater outlets and granted access easements to AQUA. They will be piping the water that currently flows into the Dorchester Way properties down Sedgley lane, discharging on their property. They will be replacing the trash racks on the culvert/inlet to catch debris and prevent clogs. This will be maintained by the Sedgley Farms HOA. Pohlig will be asking for a waiver to allow reduced cartway width to allow for more of a landscape buffer between the access drive off Route 23 behind the Dorchester Way homes. They would ask for a 24-foot width on Sedgley lane and 28-foot width throughout the rest of the development. They are now proposing a gated resident only access at the East Philip Drive connection to the proposed development. This will not be able to be used by trucks, non-residents, etc. T. Pohlig said they would open the gated access to the existing residents on East Philip Drive. P. Bigelow asked why they want a 24-foot cartway. T. Pohlig replied that it reduces the impervious coverage and helps to slow traffic. M. Bauer asked if they are proposing streetlights. T. Pohlig said the Townships EAC does not want streetlights. It was discussed about possibly one small light at the intersections for safety. M. Bauer asked if the Township ordinance requires streetlights. J. Snyder said if the Township requires or wants streetlights, they will put streetlights. It's not a requirement. P. Boettinger said they recommended in their review letter that the streetlights be shielded. M. Bauer said that each home could have a lamp post at the end of their driveway. P. Bigelow asked if sidewalks were proposed on both sides of the roadways. T. Pohlig said only on one side of the roadway. B. Brennan asked T. Pohlig if new plans would be submitted for official review, as of now what exactly is the Planning Commission to be voting on. T. Pohlig stated the "redline plans" showing the new stormwater outlets and AQUA easements. J. Snyder said they are asking for a recommendation based on the original plan, the redline plan and compliance with the items in the review letter. They included in the redline plan the T&M review of the Gilmore & Associates 2009 letter. B. Brennan asked about AQUA, that the Township received a letter dated 5/17/23 from AQUA's counsel stating that they were opposed to the approval of the plan. T. Pohlig said that they

have met since then, hence the redline plan changes, and he can get a new letter from AQUA stating this. All of these changes on the redline plan will be official on the final plan submittal. M. Bauer questioned the East Philip drive access and the left turn restriction from Sedgley to Route 23. Townships traffic engineer and applicants traffic engineer also recommended left turn restrictions during peak hours. Ultimately it is PennDOT's discretion to restrict left turns. M. Pellegrino asked if E. Philip Drive access could be a one way only out of new development, not an entrance. B. Cohen said it makes sense to have it as entrance and exit. P. Boettinger advised the Army Corp of Engineer review has not been submitted (wetlands delineation) and it is a preliminary plan approval requirement. T. Pohlig said they are pushing for them to complete their review. P. Bigelow asked if this report could cause the plan to change drastically. P. Boettinger said it could be possible. P. Boettinger has concerns about AQUA's position. J. Snyder said they would contact AQUA for a "clean letter". P. Boettinger said that no updated Post Construction Stormwater management plan has been submitted, which is a preliminary plan approval requirement and their PNDI study has expired. P. Boettinger also said the one-foot reserve strip of land between the Dorchester Way homes and Sedgley Lane does not constitute open space land, and reserve strips are not permitted by Township ordinance. M. Bauer questioned if they could get a waiver for the reserve strip. B. Brennan said that the waiver would be from SALDO which the Board of Supervisors would have authority to grant. J. Snyder said that the court has determined that the reserve strip prevents the creation of double frontage lots and this issue has been settled. B. Cohen asked if they could make a recommendation with the conditions that they comply with all the letters. B. Brennan said he cannot advise them what to do, but they can recommend what they want and put any conditions that comply with ordinances that they want. M. Bauer and P. Bigelow both said they'd recommend a waiver be granted for the allowance of the reserve strip to prevent double frontage lots. P. Boettinger discussed the E. Philip Drive curvature, one lane is narrower, the redline plan shows it wider. B. Cohen asked if P. Boettinger had reviewed the redline plans. P. Boettinger said no, they were just received. J. Snyder said it is not an extension of E Philip Drive, but a private road with a gate therefore the issue of the right of way width is moot. M. Bauer asked if the vertical curve could be eliminated, and T. Pohlig said yes, he feels like it can. P. Boettinger stated he hasn't seen anything from Valley Forge Sewer Authority regarding the proposed sewer changes. There have been no details shown for the construction of the retaining wall along Sedgley Lane, and the access to the former Makela property was shown, but now on the redline plans, they are not showing any access. T. Pohlig said they will allow access and make sure it's shown. P. Boettinger said the DEP sewer planning module is a requirement for preliminary plan approval and they don't have it. P. Boettinger said that if these roads are private, school buses cannot travel on them. If Sedgley has a reduced width it could be a problem at pick up/drop off time with cars sitting in que to pick up. P. Bigelow asked if these were private roads. P. Boettinger said that is up to the Supervisors to accept or not accept the roadways.

Public Comment

J. Stamatakos, E Philip Drive - Opposed to opening the cul-de-sac. He has two legal documents from Fox Rothschild from 2006 showing no easement exists. He will submit these to the Township.

E. Jantzen, Galway Lane – Concerns about the pollution of the reservoir, 51 homes is too many and with them showing grinder pumps now, they malfunction all the time. There is no benefit to the Township to develop this land.

A. Petty, Dorchester Way – Feels that the private access on E Philip Drive is a good plan and a good compromise. Not in love with having all the trucks using Sedgley which is in her backyard, but if they're going to equal out the impact on both developments being affected this is a fair plan.

K. Hilyard, Valley Forge Road - Asked if she connects to Sedgley would she also have access to the gated access on E. Philip Drive. T. Pohlrig said yes. She is opposed to a lot of streetlights, keep it as minimal as possible.

M. Haag, Dorchester Way – Asked if a “No U-Turn” sign could be put at the entrance to Chapel View Estates. L. Getz said the applicant cannot be made to put up signage in another development.

S. Arenschiold, Valley Park Road – Doesn't think the development has to have 2 entrances/exits. People pay a premium to live on a cul-de-sac. Mentioned compensating the residents of E. Philip Drive for losing that premium.

J. Kiernan, Wesley Lane – Questioned if school buses currently drive down E. Philip Drive. (no) Asked about cul-de-sac length in ordinance.

M. Bauer asked will this be considered a cul-de-sac. J. Snyder said it is a loop road by definition. P. Boettinger said he wrote his reviews as a cul-de-sac, not a loop. J. Snyder said if they recommend that they comply with T&M's letters, they will argue this because they feel these items don't apply. Discussion ensued regarding the E. Philip Drive access, and the two plans before them, Select Sites, and Sedgley/Reeves plan. M. Donovan advised they are two separate plans, which needs two separate motions. J. Snyder said all improvements occur in the Reeves plan, the Select Sites plan is only an easement. C. English said the need for people to use E. Philip is due to the left turn restriction at Valley Forge road during peak hours, maybe a time restriction on the gate would be possible. M. Pellegrino said the need to exit the development is greater than the need to enter the development from E. Philip. B. Cohen felt that the private road is a positive alternative to a complete opening. P. Bigelow said the proposal has come a long way, not sure the Planning Commission should complicate matters with time restrictions on the gate access. Felt that it should be an enter/exit and not just a one way. M. Pellegrino prefers it be one way out. M. Bauer said the gate being proposed would prevent cut through traffic and spread the development traffic out. M. Bauer asked about streetlights in the development. M. Pellegrino against streetlights, C. English has no comment on streetlights.

C. English made a motion to recommend approval of the preliminary subdivision & land development plan for the Reeves Property/Sedgley Farm, dated 5/1/06, revision 16 dated 4/18/23 and including the redline plan revisions received August 7, 2023 with the following conditions:

1. Final approval will require compliance with or resolution of comments in the following reviews
 - a. Schuylkill Township EAC review dated 2/28/23, revised 3/28/23 & 5/23/23.
 - b. Schuylkill Township Historic Commission recommendations
 - c. Gilmore & Associates review dated 1/20/2009
 - d. T&M Associates review letter dated 5/17/23, amended 6/30/23 and T&M flood study review letter dated 4/5/23.

- e. SAFE Highway Engineering review dated 3/30/23
- f. Chester County Planning Commission review letter
- g. Valley Forge Volunteer Fire Company review letter 7/21/23

2. Final approval will be conditioned on the applicant receiving and providing to the Township copies of permits/approvals/reviews from the following regulatory agencies.

- a. Chester County Conservation District and NPDES permit
- b. Valley Forge Sewer Authority
- c. Aqua Pennsylvania
- d. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- e. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- f. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

3. Access to the proposed development from East Philip Drive be limited to a gated access for residents only.

4. The structures requested to be preserved by the Historic Commission be allowed to remain. The applicant will need to file for necessary variances to allow these structures to remain.

5. The Township should consider accepting dedication of the cartway only but not the storm sewer system, stormwater management facilities and outfalls and the bridge/culvert maintenance.

6. The access from Valley Forge Road into the development shall be a minimum 28 foot wide cartway with sidewalk along one side and landscape buffers. The intersection of Sedgley Lane with Valley Forge shall provide left and right turn lanes.

7. Consideration to grant waiver to allow reserve strip of land to be owned and maintained by the HOA between the right of way of proposed Sedgley Lane and adjoining lots to avoid these lots from becoming double frontage lots. Deed restrictions shall be placed on the adjoining lots prohibiting the use of Sedgley Lane to access these parcels. This strip of land shall not be included in the open space calculations.

8. The lot areas within the Riparian Buffer zones one and two will be marked with permanent designation markers and deed restrictions prohibiting the clearing of these areas. Any non-native and invasive species may be removed as landscape maintenance and replanted in accordance with the riparian buffer recommendations and guidance.

B. Cohen seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously, 7-0, by all voting members in attendance.

B. Cohen made a motion to approve the Select Sites plan. There was no second. Motion died. C. English asked the applicant if they were going to withdraw the Select Sites application. J. Snyder said they could grant an extension for the Select Sites application until after the Board of Supervisors makes a decision

on the Reeves plan. B. Brennan said the extension on Select Sites would be a good idea. The Planning Commission agreed.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35pm.

The next scheduled meeting is September 20, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,


Kimberly Yocom Valyo