

ATTENDANCE

Planning Commission

Richard Schmidt, Chair- (In person)
William Burnett, Vice Chair- (in person)
Jim Payne, Secretary- (in person)
Ellen Foreman, Alt. Secretary- (in person)
Sharon Collins- (in person)
Debbie Scitti- (in person)
Brian Peterka- (in person)

Township Staff

Douglas Erickson, Township Manager- (in person)
Amy Farkas, Incoming Township Manager- (in person)
Alexandra Castrechini, Township Engineer- (in person)
Nicole Harter, Zoning Officer- (via zoom)
Leslie Warriner, CRPA - Senior Planner - (in person)
Valerie Good, PW - Administrative Asst- (via zoom)

Audience

C-Net
WTAJ- Jordan Mansberger
Nick Argot – Borton Lawson
Ron Leshar Jr. – Geisinger
Kirk Thomas – Geisinger
Tony Fruchtl – PennTerra Engineering
John Haschak – Leech Tishman

****Meeting was Hybrid**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The May 1, 2023, Planning Commission regular meeting was called to order at 4:32PM by Chair Mr. Schmidt.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes from the April 3, 2023, regular meeting were brought before the Planning Commission for approval.

Ms. Scitti made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Burnett seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote 7-0.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments

4. GEISINGER GRAYS WOODS PHASE #3 - LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mrs. Warriner noted that back in February there was a Master Plan submitted for the Grays Woods, Geisinger Health Plex, which was conditionally approved but not yet recorded. Subsequently, Borton Lawson submitted a Land Development Plan for Geisinger Phase

3 Land Development Plan. The LDP is proposing the construction of a two-story 10,750 square foot building addition to the north side of the existing Grays Woods Clinic located at 132 Abigail Lane, Port Matilda.

Two surface parking lots with 112 new parking spaces are proposed on the existing gravel area and directly behind the existing parking garage. The existing lower entrance parking will be reconfigured to increase the ADA accessible parking and an existing parking space at the upper entrance will be restriped to add a new ADA space adjacent to that entrance. The changes to the existing parking area will reduce the total by 3 spaces for an overall increase of 109 parking spaces to the site during Phase 3 construction. A waiver is being requested to reduce the required parking.

Multiple utilities will be relocated during Phase 3. Stormwater improvements will be made by installing a swale along the new parking lot and increasing the capacity of an existing basin adjacent to Grays Woods Blvd. New crosswalks will be installed to accommodate pedestrian circulation from the proposed parking lots to the upper entrance of the building. Site lighting, landscaping, and bike racks are also proposed.

Waiver request

A waiver has been submitted, requesting a reduction to the required parking which would eliminate the parking area behind the existing parking garage, reduce the new parking by 62 spaces also eliminating the need for the reconfigured ADA space at the upper entrance to the facility. If this waiver is granted, the total new parking added during Phase 3 would be 48 spaces. (50 in the new lot with 2 existing spaces restriped for ADA parking at the front entrance of the building.)

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed the material provided:

Ms. Foreman inquired about Bicycle parking. Ms. Castrechini noted the Township worked with Borton Lawson to ensure the bicycle ordinance was met. Mr. Argot clarified there will be bicycle parking provided 5 short term and 5 long term.

Ms. Scitti inquired if they will remove ADA spaces. Mr. Argot noted they will add 4 ADA spaces.

Ms. Collins inquired about taking away a whole strip of parking. Mr. Argot noted they will install a strip of 50 parking spaces on the right side.

Mr. Argot noted the parking study conducted last November showed only 70% of the existing parking spaces were utilized during peak time, which equated to 150 open spaces. The waiver requests only adding 50 parking spaces, but the Ordinance requires 108 additional spaces.

Mr. Burnett inquired about restricted parking for staff, patients, etc. Mr. Erickson noted that we calculate parking based on the size of the building. The Township traffic engineer reviewed the parking study and found no issues or concerns.

Mr. Payne noted he has concerns about parking. Mr. Argot noted that the upper parking deck is underutilized.

*Reference Resolution 2022-008: Policy for Adding items to Published Agendas in Accordance with Act 65 of 2021.

Mr. Schmidt inquired about the comment letter regarding the lighting reduction plan. Mrs. Warriner noted the lighting reduction plan has been addressed.

Mr. Schmidt asked how it was addressed. Mr. Erickson noted that all businesses must reduce lighting by 75%.

Mr. Schmidt asked if this expansion would change the operating hours to 24 hours. Mr. Argot noted the operating hours will not change.

Mr. Schmidt inquired that with the recent news of Geisinger being bought by an outside entity are they anticipating any changes with Phase 3? Mr. Argot noted there are no anticipated changes.

A motion was made by Mrs. Collins to recommend conditional approval of the Geisinger Grays Woods Phase # 3 – Land Development Plan with completion of all items noted on each comment letter provided by staff, any additional outstanding staff/agency comments, and approval of the parking waiver. Ms. Scitti seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote 6-1 and will be forwarded to the BOS meeting on May 10, 2023, at 5:30pm to conditionally approve the plan and approve the parking waiver.

5. SKETCH PLAN FOR TOFTREES GOLF RESORT

Mr. Fruchtl with PennTerra Engineering, Inc. presented a sketch plan to the Planning Commission illustrating a proposal to rebuild the Toftrees Golf Resort, which includes complete demolition of buildings and the parking lot and to rebuild from the ground up. Mr. Fruchtl noted the proposal is to move the main driveway to the middle of the site and the existing driveway will be retained for service access, loading dock and trash collection. A traffic study is in the process to determine what improvements will be required, such as turning lanes. Mr. Fruchtl also noted that the expanded parking will accommodate the increased seating capacity in the Field Restaurant and the increase in available hotel rooms. A parking study will be conducted to determine the ultimate balance of provided parking spaces with the multiple uses of the new facility.

The Planning Commission discussed the sketch plan for the Toftrees Golf Resort. Overall, comments were positive about the aesthetics of the building, site, and proposed amenities. The Planning Commission had further discussion on the building design, concerns about the parking, specific to the multiple uses, including wedding venue, and comments and concerns about Toftrees Avenue traffic volumes with multiple modes of crossing conflicts near the entrance drive. There was clarification on the demolition and construction schedule, that the Carnegie House operations will remain unaffected and the timeline for the Bellefonte Central Rail Trail project. There were concerns about fire response to the building and the location of the proposed Pickleball Courts. There was a request made to incorporate a multi-use trail, like the Geisinger Grays Woods bike path, into the site. Since the proposal is for a sketch plan, no formal action was taken by the Planning Commission.

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6. SKETCH PLAN FOR TOFTREES MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Fruchtl with PennTerra Engineering, Inc. made a brief presentation showing the sketch plan for the proposed update to the Toftrees Master Plan. The sketch plan shows two major changes. The first is to extend a roadway through the NR-3 and connect at the Waddle Road intersection. The second is to exchange 4.23 acres of high density residential for commercial at the corner of Curve Hill Road and Greenview Drive.

The Planning Commission had a brief discussion about the proposed sketch plan for the Toftrees Master Plan. There was a request to incorporate mixed use into the Master Plan with residential and commercial in the same structure. Further clarification was made on the phasing and timeline to complete a full build out of Toftrees, noting it will take decades. The Planned Community Zoning does allow the Master Plan flexibility to adapt to changes and to implement opportunities as they arise, The Planning Commission also had concerns that Toftrees Avenue needs to be addressed, specifically for safety, with all the new development proposed. Since the proposal is for a sketch plan, no formal action was taken by the Planning Commission.

7. WORK TASKS for PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF

A) The update from the General Code is expected to wrap up in the next month. Work tasks generated from that exercise will be added to the list, with prioritization to follow.

8. STATUS REPORT ON PENDING ITEMS

A) Attainable Housing Update-No Update

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Payne thanked Doug for his guidance and knowledge of Zoning and planning, and his long years of service.

10. ADJOURN

Mr. Payne made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Burnett seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 PM.

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