

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
PALMYRA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION**

Wednesday August 26, 2020

Steve Ricker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Palmyra Municipal Building, 325 S. Railroad Street, Palmyra, PA, 17078.

Attendance: Eric Hoy, Carissa Mellinger, Steve Ricker, and Joe Templin were present. Borough Manager Roger Powl and Frank Chlebnikow (Rettew) were also present. Jessica Creter was absent.

Public Comment:

1. Dave McCloskey (212 E. Ridge Rd): Present to express his concerns about stormwater run-off that could result from the possible development.
2. William Garber II (725 N. Grant Street): Present to express his concerns about stormwater run-off that could result from the possible development.

Approval of Minutes:

A **Motion** was made by Joe Templin, seconded by Carissa Mellinger, to approve the February 26, 2020 meeting minutes as written. **Motion Carried.**

Action & Discussion Items:

1. Chimel Property – Millfield Construction Co Petition to Amend the Zoning Ordinance:

Claudia Shank, Esq of McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC; Bob Riahi and Heather Fremont of Millfield Construction, and; Bill Swiernik of David Miller Associates were present. Ms. Shank explained that Millfield is seeking a zoning ordinance amendment that would allow duplexes to be constructed by right within the Low-Density Residential District on tracts of land 10-acres or larger and meeting specific criteria – including: must be a planned community, contain no more than 6 dwelling units per acre, must have access to a major arterial or collector road, must have two means of ingress/egress to/from the planned community, and must meet other lot coverage requirements, etc. Ms. Shank explained that the applicant worked with the Borough Manager and the Borough Solicitor to develop the proposed language contained in the text amendment. The applicant submitted the petition to request the text amendment change on July 17th and the petition was reviewed by Borough Council on July 23rd and approved for referral to the Lebanon County Planning Department and Palmyra Planning Commission for the 45-day review and comment. Lebanon County Planning Department has not submitted any review comments. Ms. Shank explained that they are present this evening to seek the Planning Commission’s recommendation of approval for Borough Council, who will be conducting the required public hearing on September 10th. Mr. Riahi explained that Millfield has been constructing developments in central PA for the past 33-years, with the closet one to Palmyra being Windermere in South Londonderry Twp. He presented a booklet showing the various developments Millfield has undertaken and explained that Millfield’s philosophy is to design the development to work with the unique characteristics of the land and not force the land to conform to the design of the development. Mr. Swiernik reviewed and explained a conceptual sketch plan showing the possible layout of the development with a new road being constructed into the development by extending N. Lincoln Street while a second gated “emergency” type ingress/egress point would be established by extending N. Chestnut Street. Mr. Templin asked about the locations of the stormwater management basins, and Mr. Swiernik explained that there is two drainage areas affecting the development, therefore, one drainage basin will be located to the west between the development and N. Railroad Street, and one would be located to the southeast just above E. Ridge Road to manage stormwater run-off from both of those drainage areas. Mr. Ricker asked how the development would impact that naturally occurring spring on the property, and Mr. Swiernik explained that hasn’t been investigated as of yet. Mr. Hoy asked if this was going to be

restricted to a 55-years of age and older development and Mr. Riahi explained that it will not be age restricted but the target demographic for this type of development would be empty nesters looking to downsize, not have any yardwork, and having the ability to travel, etc. Mr. Ricker asked if these units would be rentals and Mr. Riahi explained that these will all be sold as fee simple units. Mr. Hoy asked if they have studied the traffic impact of the proposed 56 units and Mr. Swiernik explained that a traffic assessment was recently completed to take to PennDOT for the Highway Occupancy Permit that will be required to connect N. Lincoln Street extension to Ridge Road and he said the assessment revealed that the traffic volumes will be so low that a traffic impact study will likely not be required. Mr. Ricker asked if the development will border or cross into North Londonderry Twp and Mr. Swiernik explained the boundaries of neighboring properties, and the possible future expansion onto the Bixler property. Ms. Mellinger asked Mr. Powl if the proposed development would impact the Borough plans to manage the stormwater run-off in the Phase A area of the Borough, and Mr. Powl explained if there is any impact it should be a reduction of the downslope run-off from the area of the development. Mr. Ricker asked if trees would be planted as a buffer between the development and the existing properties and Mr. Swiernik explained that it would depend on whether enough existing trees are already available to serve that purpose, whether folks would be concerned about obstructing the tremendous views the development will offer but, that will all be sorted out through the land development plan review and approval process. Mr. Templin explained that he has been to all of the Millfield developments as part of his job and he can attest to how well the landscaping is designed and maintained in these developments. Mr. Ricker asked an approximate selling price for these duplex units and Mr. Riahi explained they would start around \$300,000 for the smaller 2-bedroom units and increase to \$400,000 for the larger 4-bedroom units. Ms. Mellinger asked Mr. Chlebnikow about stormwater management concerns and he explained that nothing has been designed to this point so when the land plan is officially submitted Rettew will be studying the stormwater designs and calculations for compliance with the Borough's stormwater regulations that require post development run-off conditions to be equal to or less than pre-development conditions. She also explained her concerns for sinkholes in the Palmyra area and Mr. Swiernik explained that the first study they conducted was a geological study which revealed that this site is not situated over karst limestone soils but a more sandy or shale type soil that should lend itself well to deep infiltration and no sinkhole problems. Mr. Ricker asked if this would be considered "spot zoning" and Mr. Powl explained that it would not be because the Borough would not be changing the zoning classification, it would merely be adding an additional permitted use with specific criteria within the existing zoning district. Mr. Garber & Mr. McCloskey provided some input to Mr. Swiernik on their observations of stormwater run-off and volumes of water currently flowing down off the hill.

A **Motion** was made by Eric Hoy, seconded by Joe Templin, to make a recommendation to Borough Council to enact the ordinance required to amend the Palmyra Zoning Ordinance to allow the construction of planned duplex communities by right on tracts of land containing 10-acres or more within the Low-Density Residential Zoning District, as proposed by Millfield Green LLC. **Motion carried.**

Communications: There were no communications.

Other Business: There was no other business.

Adjournment:

A **Motion** was made by Joe Templin, seconded by Carissa Mellinger, to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Roger E. Powl
Borough Manager