

**Borough of Sewickley
Planning Commission Notes
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

The Planning Commission was called to order at 7:05pm by Chair Paul Pigman. Also in attendance were planning commission members Marlin Bartos, Erica Kagel, Nathan St. German, Tom Rostek and Sharon Pillar; Jamie Morrill, Council liaison to planning, and Kevin Flannery, borough manager.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of June 4, 2014 was made by Mr. Morrill and seconded by Mr. Bartos. The motion passed with a vote of 7-0-0.

Old Business.

Public hearing for subdivision and rezoning request by Sewickley Valley YMCA for 349 Backbone Road

Mr. Pigman opened the public meeting.

All speakers were sworn in.

Mr. Flannery explained the hearing is for a subdivision and also rezoning. The YMCA wants to subdivide the residential property from the YMCA property and to rezone the property from Institutional to R-1.

Trisha Burn of the Sewickley YMCA spoke on behalf of the YMCA. The house was originally used as the groundkeeper and director's house at different times. Since the 1990's, the house has not been used by the YMCA and they want to sell the house.

Mr. Pigman asked for other proponents and opponents and there were none.

Mr. Flannery noted that the public ad was placed within appropriate timelines and notification was sent to adjacent property owners, municipalities bordering Sewickley borough, and to the school district. Notification was also sent to Kay Pierce at the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development. No comments have been returned.

Mr. Pigman closed the public hearing.

Mr. Bartos made a motion to recommend to Sewickley Borough Council the approval of the YMCA plan of lots subdivision for block and lot 508-J-361, and the establishment of a 140'x90' parcel on backbone road commonly known as 349 Backbone Road. Ms. Kagle seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0-0 without discussion.

Mr. Morrill made motion to recommend to Sewickley Borough Council the approval of an ordinance to amend the Borough of Sewickley zoning map to establish the 140'x90' parcel, commonly known as 349 Backbone Road as R-1 zoning district. Mr. St. German seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Public Hearing subdivision rezoning request by Jim Rock for 401 Waterworks Road

Speakers were sworn in.

Mr. Pigman opened the public hearing.

Ms. Pillar responded that she was in agreement with Mr. Rostek, and noted that if we wanted to rezone our open space, we should have a public discussion about what that should look like and we should not be rezoning based on the desires of one property owner.

Mr. Pigman asked Mr. Rock if he'd be acceptable of the creation of a large lot zoning district to match that of Sewickley Heights. He said that he would. Ms. Pillar noted that she interprets creating a distinct zoning district that does not exist anywhere else in the borough for the benefit of one property owner would be considered spot zoning.

Mr. Rock notes that his intention of the use of the property is to build a house. He hired Victor-Wetzel for an analysis of the property to better understand what it was worth and they told him that someone could build 35 homes on the property. Ms. Pillar asked Mr. Rock why he would go to the trouble and expense of hiring Victor-Wetzel to do an analysis of the property if he only intended to build one house. He replied that he hired them to get a better understanding of what the property was worth for bidding purposes. The appraisal was based on residential use. He was the only bidder on the property.

Mr. Bartos asked why the property was appraised as residential. Mr. Flannery noted that the property was appraised as open space/residential.

Mr. Bartos also asked what the borough's interest was in rezoning the property and Mr. Flannery noted that it will be added to the tax rolls.

Mr. Rostek motioned to recommend to Sewickley Borough Council the approval of the Waterworks Parks Plan of Lots - revised parcel C-1 subdivision, and the establishment of a 4.0 acre lot parcel C-2R and the establishment of a 9.635 acre lot parcel C-1R. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Pillar motioned that the requested change in zoning from Open Space to Residential be denied. Mr. Rostek requested that he amend the motion to add reasons to deny the request for rezoning. Ms. Pillar allowed Mr. Rostek to add the reason, which included: 1) rezoning of Open Space district for residential use is not consistent with the Aleppo-Osborne-Sewickley Comprehensive Plan, 2) rezoning of the property to the R-1 will create a zone that does not resemble any district either adjacent to or in the vicinity of the property; 3) rezoning of the property to R-1 will create a zone of roughly nine times the density of properties in the Sewickley Heights Borough district, making it materially unlike any district in the bordering municipality; 4) rezoning of the property to R-1 undermines any appropriate and organized planning efforts for the future of the watershed area of the borough. If it is the desire of the borough to allow residential development in the watershed areas, remedies more in line with an organized planning process are available and can be considered.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Rostek. Mr. Pigman asked for a roll call vote. Ms. Pillar - yes, Mr. Rostek - yes, Mr. Morrill - yes, Mr. St. German - yes; Mr. Pigman - no; Mr. Bartos - yes, Ms. Kagle - no. The motion passed 5-2-0.

NEW BUSINESS

424 Frederick Avenue, Laughlin Center. Douglas Florey of the Laughlin Center and Gretchen Bartlett, architect were present to explain the request to consolidate lots. The one building constructed in 1986 was built across two lots, so they want to consolidate the two lots so they can build an addition. They have requested a variance for the side lot, since it is not in compliance of the zoning ordinance. The Zoning Hearing Board granted the variance.

Mr. Pigman left the dais at 8:09 because his wife is chair of the Laughlin Center board and he did not want to create a conflict of interest. Mr. Bartos assumed chair of the meeting.

Mr. Morrill made the motion to schedule public hearing for September 3, 2014 for the unification of the lots. Mr. Rostek seconded the motion and it passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Pigman returned to the dais at 8:12pm and resumed chair responsibilities.

Other

Mr. Flannery notified the planning commission that at the September 2 zoning hearing board, they will hear a challenge to the change in the zoning change to allow cultural/museum center for 501c3 non-profits with office space in the back of first floor.

Ms. Pillar motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bartos and passed 7-0-0. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Pillar
Secretary, Planning Commission

Approved by Planning Commission by a vote of _____ on _____.