

Buckingham Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Buckingham Township Planning Commission was held **Wednesday, October 1, 2008** in the Township Building, 4613 Hughesian Drive, Buckingham, Pennsylvania.

Present:	Andrea Mehling	Chairperson
	Patrick Fowles	Vice-Chairman
	Tom Baldwin	Member
	Glynnis Stone-Tihansky	Member
	Daniel Gray	Township Engineer
Absent:	Rebecca Fink	Member
	Marc Sandberg	Member
	Ann Sutphin	Member
	Lynn Bush	Bucks County Planning Commission

Ms. Mehling called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Consideration of Approving Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2008.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky made a motion, seconded by Mr. Baldwin to approve the minutes of the September 3, 2008 meeting, with amendments. The motion carried unanimously.

2. LD 2007-01 "Doan Kirkbride/First Savings Bank", 3969 Durham Road, TMP# 6-6-25-4, 3.21 Acres, NVO Zoning, Final Plan of Land Development. Review expiration date December 30, 2008.

Representing the applicant were Mr. Ed Murphy, Attorney, Mr. Gregory Glitzer, Gilmore & Associates, Project Engineer, Mr. Joe Phillips (architect), Donovan and Associates, Mr. Fred Shea, Bank President, and Mr. Bob Hurley, Director of Operations. Mr. Bob Welch, previous applicant for this project in the preliminary stage, was also present.

Ms. Mehling was in possession of an email from Lynn Bush, saying that Bucks County Planning Commission had not received this submission for review. Mr. Glitzer will check into this matter.

Mr. Glitzer provided a brief overview of the project, saying this project has received Conditional Use Approval, Zoning Hearing Board approval for specific variances, and Preliminary Approval when Bob Welch was the applicant. The applicant has acquired an easement from Bucks County for use of the access driveway/road. There will be one-way circulation through the driveway/parking/teller areas; due to NVO zoning all parking must be at the rear or side of the building. The plan relies on a remote kiosk for teller accessibility. Plans were submitted for the Fire Marshal's review regarding turning radii. Waivers were granted at preliminary approval and have not changed.

A few changes to this plan include the parking spaces which are now straight on, not angled, due to dimensions involved. The parking requirements have been met. Porous pavement has been used in the southeast portion of the parking lot, and a bioretention basin will be in the front corner of the property.

Mr. Glitzer continued saying the intersection of Cold Spring Creamery Road and Route 413 signal modification has been submitted to PennDOT, and the Highway Occupancy Permit will be submitted when Knight Engineering's comments have been addressed with their traffic engineer.

Mr. Joe Phillips from Joe Donovan Architects showed the exterior views of the building. He explained they have maintained the original structure as the dominant feature, and added on to it. The bank will be on one side, with offices in the center and other side. Citizens will enter either the bank branch or the offices, or go upstairs to more office areas. Traditional materials are being used on the exterior such as stone, stucco, siding and metal roofing in portions.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky said she understands having one entrance, but asked if there was a requirement for another in case of emergency. Mr. Phillips said they have emergency exits, but only one point of entry.

Ms. Mehling said the plan looked good, and asked if there would be a pedestrian crossing over Route 413. Mr. Glitzer said yes, with pedestrian push buttons and patterned crosswalks on all four legs of the crossing.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky asked about bike path access. Ms. Mehling thought that was going to be installed on the church property across the street, but not this property. Mr. Glitzer said the Board of Supervisors directed a "fee in lieu" be submitted in place of a bike path in front of the building.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky liked the parking in the rear area of the building. Mr. Baldwin liked it, also, noting it would not be noticed from Route 413.

Mr. Gray pointed out the applicant is preserving significant trees. Mr. Glitzer confirmed there are no significant trees being lost, that there is a conservation easement to preserve the trees, and there are preserved trees being retained within the parking lot island areas. Ms. Manicone noted there are actually more trees on the site than are shown on the plan, and that she thinks it is a nice looking property.

Ms. Mehling asked Mr. Gray if the Planning Commission should wait for PennDOT HOP approval prior to making a recommendation for approval. Mr. Gray said that was not necessary. Mr. Glitzer said typically the applicant waits until the plan receives final approval to see if changes need to be incorporated into the plan to be submitted to PennDOT. Mr. Glitzer said the applicant may want to schedule a Work Session with the Board of Supervisors to be sure there were no issues prior to submitting to PennDOT. Mr. Gray said he would discuss this scheduling matter with Ms. Cozza, Acting Township Manager, as he was not sure it would be necessary.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky made a motion, seconded by Mr. Baldwin, to recommend Final Plan Approval of “Doan Kirkbride/First Savings Bank”, Township File LD 2007-01, 3969 Durham Road, TMP #6-6-25-4, conditioned upon compliance with the Bucks County Planning Commission review yet to be received.

Mr. Gray suggested amending the motion to include that the plan must comply with all outstanding review letters.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky amended the motion, seconded by Mr. Baldwin, to include the condition that the plan must comply with all items listed in the review letter from Landscape Review Committee dated 9/25/08 and Knight Engineering, Inc’s review letter dated 9/26/08. The motion carried unanimously.

3. LD 2008-01 “First Savings Bank (aka Exxon Mobile)”, 3617 Route 202, TMP #6-8-54-2, 0.610 Acres, R-1 Zoning, Preliminary Plan of Land Development. Review expiration date December 30, 2008.

Representing the applicant were Mr. Ed Murphy, Attorney, Mr. Gregory Glitzer, Gilmore & Associates, Project Engineer, Mr. Joe Phillips (architect), Donovan and Associates, Mr. Fred Shea, Bank President, and Mr. Bob Hurley, Director of Operations. Mr. Bob Welch, property development coordinator, was also present.

Ms. Mehling was in possession of an email from Lynn Bush, saying that Bucks County Planning Commission had not received this submission for review. Mr. Glitzer will check into this matter.

Mr. Murphy explained that earlier in the summer the applicant went to the Zoning Hearing Board for relief to permit the site to be redeveloped as a branch bank without a drive-through. This was granted. He explained the applicant has taken a lot of care to redevelop the site in a tasteful fashion.

Mr. Glitzer presented a brief overview of the project, saying the redevelopment includes utilizing the existing building and paving as much as possible. They will use two of the three existing driveways that currently serve the site. The building itself will be renovated. The subject of the Zoning Hearing Board variance was non-conformity relative to use and setback requirements. He said Joe Phillips has a great plan for renovating the building to be attractive. He said with most of the site being paved, there will be limited soil disturbance. The site has been remediated from its former MTBE contamination, but there is ongoing monitoring of the situation. They may not regrade the site, inject water into or remove water from the site. They intend to improve stormwater management by reducing impervious surface and installing two shallow rain gardens. They will leave underlying soils in place and work only the surface.

Mr. Glitzer explained the site has been designed with the possible Route 202 widening project in mind. They are coordinating with PennDOT so when improvements are done, the work site will not be adversely impacted. Mr. Fowles asked about a tan area on the plan at the intersection. Mr. Murphy said that area is reserved for a future turning lane, and will be grass in the meantime.

Mr. Glitzer said there will be significant landscaping at the corner. Mr. Murphy concurred, saying they received a variance for full width buffer yards due to the size constraint of the lot, but they will be softening up the site, improving the look to attract people. A variance was received for a "Welcome to Buckingham" sign and has been commissioned, but there will not be a fountain. The Planning Commission members liked this idea.

Mr. Murphy said the waiver request list was extensive due to site constraints. He said neighbors had been involved in the planning of the site and were thrilled with the concept. He said residents attending the Zoning Hearing Board meeting were supportive. Mr. Murphy noted there were no audience members present due to no opposition.

Ms. Mehling asked about the box on the north side of the property surrounded by fencing. Mr. Glitzer said that was temporary monitoring equipment that will be removed by the time the bank is in operation. Mr. Welch confirmed Exxon has been requested to remove it. Mr. Murphy said monitoring wells at grade will stay as there is continued quarterly groundwater monitoring. Mr. Fowles asked what happened to the underground gasoline tanks. Mr. Welch said they had all been removed in compliance with the underground storage tank law.

Ms. Mehling asked how water would be supplied for the site. Mr. Murphy said they had asked for and received acceptance for Doylestown Township to service this site with public water. They will not rely upon groundwater. He said there must be an intermunicipal formal agreement, and that it would be a small water line only to service their location.

Ms. Mehling expressed surprise at the applicant being able to reuse the building. Mr. Murphy said it was an ideal location for a bank use.

Mr. Joe Phillips, Donovan & Associates, showed exterior drawings of the renovated building. He explained it is a rectangular flat box that looks like two pieces with a steel frame. They intend to install sloped roof trusses for a gabled roof, and reskin the building with stone and stucco. There will be one entrance and one exit to the vestibule area. Offices will be located around the edges of the interior, circular area. There will be a night deposit ATM area on the side facing Route 313.

Mr. Gray asked if the ATM was outside and will it be seen from Route 313. Mr. Donovan said yes. Mr. Gray asked if they will meet signage requirements. Mr. Murphy said variances were granted.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky asked about lighting. Mr. Donovan said they will downlight from the overhanging roof. Mr. Murphy said they prefer white over amber lights for security purposes, it is more appropriate for security cameras. He confirmed the lighting will face downwards, and will not shed onto adjacent properties.

Ms. Mehling questioned bushes shown in front of the ATM's. Mr. Murphy said these are actually much lower materials, not bushes.

Mr. Murphy pointed out there is no door on the front of the building. That all branches have security vestibules. Mr. Shea explained there are metal detectors in the doors, and the entrance/exit doors cannot be opened at the same time. Mr. Murphy said there are no tellers, but rather service representatives. Mr. Shea said each service representative can provide all banking business. Mr. Baldwin commented it is a full service bank, but does not look like it in a traditional way.

Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Shea why a drive-through was not needed. Mr. Shea said the amount of transaction volume is decreasing with people using the internet and telephone banking, that people generally visit banks less frequently and are usually needing to work with a knowledge based staff rather than just for transactions. He noted there is the 24-hour ATM available for cash withdrawals.

Mr. Murphy requested to review the Knight Engineering September 26, 2008 letter:

DEVELOPMENT CONCERNS

1.0 Preliminary Subdivision Plan Review – September 26, 2008

1.1 Prior environmental contamination (MTBE). They will provide an executive summary to the township. The environmental remediation is complete, but they will let everyone know the continuing monitoring obligation of Exxon.

1.2 Bike Trail / lack of it. Mr. Glitzer doubts the parkway multi-use trail will extend to this location. He said there is an existing sidewalk on the Swamp Road side, but not along the Route 202 frontage. Mrs. Mehling recommended that a note be added to the plan stating the bike path will be installed in the future, if requested by the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Murphy said there is available space in the right-of-way. Mr. Gray asked if they would install the curb depressions just in case the bike path is requested in the future, Mr. Murphy replied “yes”.

1.3 Lighting – white light preferred to amber light for security reasons.

II. Individual Plan Sheet Comments

1.2 Mr. Glitzer believes the rain gardens and impervious surface reduction reduces the runoff volume, however they may need formalize their waiver if more stormwater management is required. There currently is no stormwater management on the site. Ms. Stone-Tihansky asked if there was a big hole in the ground where the tanks were for the gasoline station? Mr. Welch replied they have been filled in and tested for compaction, that all is stable and returned to the original status.

5.3. Sewage holding tank. Mr. Murphy said there is a holding tank to provide sewage for the site, and there is an active permit with Bucks County Department of Health. Mr. Gray asked if they intend to use the existing tank, and Mr. Murphy replied “yes”.

5.14 Mr. Glitzer explained the water main will need to run under the tree canopy due to an existing culvert. He said this request will need to be approved by Doylestown Township, as well as Buckingham Township.

Mr. Murphy said all “Development Concerns” are “will comply” or will be worked out appropriately.

Ms. Manicone, Landscape Review Committee had no issues, and said she has met with the landscape architect. She believes this to be a nice plan and it will provide a nice introduction and attractive entrance into the township. She said there many constraints on the site, and this is a good compromise.

Ms. Mehling wished to confirm this project has been before the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Glitzer said yes, and that the waivers requested were unanimously approved.

Mr. Glitzer distributed a revised waiver request list dated “revised October 1, 2008”, and proceeded to review the following items:

5.2.B.16 The ability to map the underground utilities is restricted, but will be provided for the water line area. Ms. Mehling said the planning commission usually accepts this.

6.3.B.16 Field surveying – Mr. Glitzer said this is a normal request.

9.4.A.4 Building orientation – they will be using the existing structure, for which solar orientation was not a driving force at the time of construction.

9.4.C.1. and 9.4.C.3 Landscaping placement – Mr. Glitzer said they will be using the existing parking lot and there will be no ability to screen the Swamp Road side from winds or sun.

9.7.A.13 Road widening – Mr. Gray advised this is a Board of Supervisors decision. Mr. Murphy said they are keeping the right-of-way available for future use by PennDOT.

9.17.A.5 Parking facility location – Mr. Glitzer explained they had to get relief to allow the building to continue outside the setback area, same with the parking lot. The parking is within prior limits of pavement, and they will be re-paving the top surface and reducing it in the process.

9.18.B and 9.18.C. Sidewalks/Bicycle-Pedestrian paths – Mr. Glitzer said they will document on the plan the allowance for future installation.

9.20.D.1 Buffer requirements – Mr. Glitzer said they received a zoning variance for this, and are now seeking SALDO waiver.

9.20.D.2 and 9.20.D.3 Buffer area use – Mr. Glitzer said most of the site is within a buffer area of 50’ from property lines.

9.20.E.1 Parking lot enclosure – The applicant does not wish to install a low wall around the site.

9.23.C.1 Stormwater management – Mr. Glitzer explained the remediation program does not let them disturb the groundwater, and stormwater management must be very shallow. Mr. Welch said pumping and gas venting stopped in 2003 and levels of MTBE in offsite wells have been completely clean and non-detectable for 3-1/2 years. Mr. Welch said there are slightly elevated levels onsite, but only 60-80ppm as compared to 50,000 parts years ago. The problem is just about gone.

9.23.F.3 Stormwater management calculations – Mr. Glitzer said the “during construction calculations” will be very close to the “final construction calculations”.

9.23.I.1.c Cut-off trench – Mr. Glitzer said this is not relevant to the use of rain gardens.

9.23.J On-site Soil Analysis – Mr. Glitzer said they are not allowed to dig up the soils.

9.23.O.3.b.ix Easement access – Mr. Glitzer said this is very accessible due to it being a landscaping feature.

9.18.A.2 Concrete curbing – Mr. Glitzer said they are requesting a 6” curb or lower possible to match the fixed low elevation of the existing building. They are requesting flexibility.

The remainder of the waivers are technical issues.

Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Fowles, Ms. Stone-Tihansky and Ms. Mehling all agreed this is a great addition to the corner.

Mr. Gray asked if the applicant would send a letter to the township when they have received the Bucks County Planning Commission review saying “will comply with all”? Mr. Murphy said yes. Mr. Murphy said they would be submitting revised plans to clean up Knight Engineering items prior to appearing before the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Fowles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Baldwin, to recommend Preliminary Approval of “First Savings Bank (aka Exxon Mobile)”, Township File LD 2008-01, 3617 Route 202, TMP #6-8-54-2, subject primarily to the applicant’s compliance with all aspects of the Bucks County Planning Commission review yet to be received, recommending approval of all waivers as listed in the October 1, 2008 request with the addition that the applicant will include a note on the plan agreeing to install curb depressions as needed due to the possible future bike path which could be built, and in accordance with the recommendations within the Knight Engineering review of September 26, 2008. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Murphy said the note regarding the future bike path would probably be in the form of a unilateral declaration of restrictions to reflect this future obligation.

Mr. Fowles thanked the applicant for a good transformation of the site.

Ms. Stone-Tihansky made a motion, seconded by Mr. Baldwin to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori Wicen