

MINUTES

LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

**REGULAR MEETING
MAY 25, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**

Meeting was called to order by Chauncey Knopp at 7:00 P.M. with the following present:

Chauncey Knopp, Chairman	Jim Diamond, LST Solicitor
James Young, Vice Chairman	Rich Snyder, LST Planning/Zoning Coordinator
Kimber Latsha	Tonya Condran, Recording Secy.
Dale Messick	Shawn Fabian, HRG
Howard Crawford	Alexa Korber, DCPC

Others present:

Ron Paul, LST BOC	Deb & Dean Cotton, residents
Adam Davis, Hyland Engineering	Chris DeHart, LST BOC
Laurie Castagna, resident	Mark Hackenburg, RGS Associates, Inc.
Jason Wheeler, TPD	Jake Krieger, RGS Associates, Inc.
Todd Truntz, LST BOC	Mike Sunajko, resident
Senate Alexander, CHS	<i>[illegible]</i> Nelson, CHS
Leah Hottenstein, resident	Sean Concannon, CHS
Scott Dietterick, JSDC Law Office	Sarah Martinez, resident
Ryan Corcoran, resident	Jennifer Lekites, resident
Bill Wos, Milton Hershey School	

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Knopp asked if there was a motion to approve the April 27, 2023, meeting minutes. The motion was made by Mr. Latsha and seconded by Mr. Messick. All were in favor. Minutes were approved.

COMMENT FROM CHAIRMAN KNOPP

Mr. Knopp started off the meeting by reiterating that after each agenda item, and before the Planning Commission makes a recommendation, he checks with the Township Staff, HRG, DCPC, and our Solicitor, and then he asks for Public Comments rather than putting a specific agenda item for public comment at the beginning of the meeting. He

feels it is more effective if we do it during each specific presentation. Then at the end of the presentations, he asks for any general public comments.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. Aberdeen Development – Planning Commission File PC#2022-02. The proposed project intends to subdivide a 19.1-acre lot into 25 single-family lots. Furthermore, the proposed project will include 2 locals streets, improvements to /along Oberlin Road (SR 441), public water/sewer connections, utilities, and Stormwater Management BMPs.

Adam Davis, of Hyland Engineering, said that the items the Planning Commission had asked to see and further evaluate were the submission of the Traffic Study and the sidewalk and curbing along Oberlin Road.

Mr. Davis discussed the Traffic Study first. Since the March meeting, they did have the traffic engineer (TPD) submit to the Township the traffic study which included the studied area and the projects, as requested by the Township. As a result of that Traffic Study, there were no offsite improvements warranted. That does include a signal at the proposed intersection of Oberlin and Powderhorn Roads. Based on the analysis, the signal is not warranted. That includes both the signal and the associated turn lane.

Mr. Knopp asked for clarification that it was found that there is no need for a turn lane.

Mr. Davis said that is correct, there was found to be no need for a turn lane.

Mr. Davis then went on to the topic of the sidewalks. They met with Township Staff yesterday and went over a proposed plan for sidewalk along Oberlin Road. One of the concerns with putting the sidewalk directly along the frontage of the project is the stream. So putting sidewalk there would impact both the curbing and the stream, as well. So what they are proposing is connecting to the existing sidewalk which would be at the northern end of the Catherine Hershey project. They would extend that north into their site and connect to the internal sidewalk. There were also talks about extending the sidewalk on the opposite side of Route 441 where Powderhorn Road comes out. The Developer is willing to do that as well to provide connectivity with the development across the street.

[More discussion on sidewalk ensued with the use of the map on the overhead projection screen.]

Mr. Knopp asked for any questions or comments from the Planning Commission.

There were none at this time.

Mr. Davis then went on to discuss curbing. He said they submitted a request for a waiver for the installation of curbing along Oberlin Road. There was discussion last time about an area of some concern of potential erosion that may occur in that area. They are proposing to extend the riprap within that area where the embankment and the roadway meet to prevent any further erosion. Installing a curb there will have impacts on the stream as well as the existing wetlands on the north side of the proposed intersection.

Mr. Knopp asked the Planning Commission if they had any questions on this.

Mr. Messick said that it seems to him that it warrants some kind of stabilization there to keep the road from breaking away. Or at least part of the way.

Mr. Davis said that what they proposed was that rather than it just be bare earth they would “beef it up” with the riprap apron along that area.

Mr. Snyder added that the area of concern is to the side of the existing end wall. [He then pointed out what he was talking about on the overhead projection of the map.] He went on to say that when they were out walking along it earlier this year, there was active erosion occurring. As the water sheet flows off of 441 toward that point, they noticed that the erosion is back to either the gravel shoulder or infringing upon the side of the macadam; so, what they suggested was to look at hard-armorizing the bank between their proposed end wall and the existing end wall to curb any of that erosion.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Fabian for his thoughts on this.

Mr. Fabian said that he understands with the stream being there that any kind of widening and curb would potentially encroach on and would trigger permitting from the department, so he feels in lieu of trying to do that, what they are proposing with the armorizing would address that erosion issue in that location. From the sidewalk perspective, it sounds like they are kind of sold on the connectivity from the development

itself for their own pedestrians as well as an existing fragmentation for everyone in Old Reliance. He feels what they are proposing sounds reasonable.

[More discussion on sidewalks ensued using the overhead projected map.]

Mr. Knopp advised that we are going to need a revised plan to look at.

Mr. Snyder explained that the purpose of their presentation this evening was to explain the results of the final traffic study and discuss recommendations of the connectivity and improvements along Route 441, and they would go back based upon any questions or recommendations and then create a revised plan to submit to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Davis said that the only segment of sidewalk that is missing (from the plan the Planning Commission has tonight) is the section that extends along the radius which they will add to the plan.

Mr. Messick stated that the only thing that he is questioning in regard to the Traffic Study is that there is no need to widen the road there. Coming south, he feels the road needs to be widened to turn into the Aberdeen development.

Mr. Latsha agreed with Mr. Messick. He feels it is odd that right across the street there is a turn-lane but then on the other side there is none.

Mr. Davis referred this comment to Jason Wheeler of Traffic Planning & Design (TPD). But he said the analysis did show that a right turn lane is not warranted. If it had shown that it would be warranted, he said they would install it.

Mr. Wheeler added that it is up to PennDOT whether a turn-lane is warranted or not. The Powderhorn Road approach serves a great deal more residences that what was surveyed with this proposed project; so, a right-turn lane was warranted for that side. It also depends on what direction traffic is coming from, stating that more traffic comes from Route 283/Fulling Mill Road.

Mr. Latsha rebutted that people will be coming from the south to turn in that development as well.

Mr. Wheeler agreed but said that the criteria for warranting a right-turn lane is the amount of traffic approaching the intersection and the amount of traffic turning right into the development. So, the Powderhorn Road side would have significantly more traffic due to the size of the development.

[More discussion on traffic study proceeded.]

Mr. Knopp asked for any further questions from the Planning Commission.

There were none at this time.

Mr. Knopp asked for any further questions from the Township Staff.

None at this time.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Fabian for anything further from HRG.

Mr. Fabian said that for their review letters, they do have a review of the traffic assessment dated 5/19/23 and it seems like the bulk of their commentary was around how the sidewalk issue is going to be resolved and how we are going to address some of the questions around the turning with the speed everyone is traveling and providing some crash analysis. So, it sounds like a lot of that has been worked out so we will be able to get a resubmission to address the remaining comments soon. As far as the Plan Review comments, he said he didn't have a recommendation on the sidewalks at the time, but he was in favor of the waiver of the Preliminary Plat and the intersection approach. With the actual engineering aspects of the plan, HRG also had some minor comments for sidewalk layout and curbing, but most of their comments were technical.

Mr. Snyder informed that the waivers for curb and sidewalk were submitted as deferrals.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Snyder to explain that.

Mr. Snyder explained that the Planning Commission would not be asked to waive those requirements, it would be deferred so that if sometime down the road they were requested, they would then be requested to install them at that later date.

Mr. Diamond added that the theory is if you have a deferral, the Township could ask for the installation at any time; but if you waive it, it is permanently gone.

Mr. Messick asked which location is this deferral for.

Mr. Snyder said it is for the installation of the curbs along Route 441 (Oberlin Road) parallel to the stream located south of the proposed intersection of Powderhorn, Bonnie Blue and Oberlin Rd. and the Catherine Hershey School property.

Mr. Young added that to defer is consistent with what the Planning Commission usually does, but we do like to actually see a written document.

Mr. Snyder responded that this waiver request just came in today as a follow-up to their meeting yesterday.

Mr. Young stated that since this is before the Planning Commission with revisions to a plan they don't have a revised copy of, and a request for a waiver that we also do not have the actual documentation for, he doesn't think we should be supposed to make a recommendation tonight.

Mr. Snyder said either a recommendation or a table.

Mr. Young replied that he feels we cannot do anything but ask for it to be tabled. He asked how we are doing as far as the timeline goes.

Mr. Diamond said we are good timewise. But if we are considering tabling, we should take Public Comment first.

Mr. Knopp assured us that we will take Public Comment before we make any decisions. He then asked Ms. Korber if there were any comments/questions from Dauphin County Planning Commission (DCPC).

Ms. Korber explained that DCPC does a once-and-done review and they have completed and discussed that at the first meeting.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Diamond for any further comments.

He had none at this time.

Mr. Young asked to discuss one thing before the Public Comment commenced. He asked if they were still planning a through-street where Aberdeen meets with Twelve Oaks.

Mr. Davis confirmed that yes, they are still planning a through-street there.

Mr. Messick reiterated his opinion on widening Route 441. He asked the Township Staff and Township Engineer if they felt the same, that widening 441 would enhance the development to have the traffic flow into a turning lane into that development. He would like to hear if they were still thinking about it and if so, should they be adding it to the revised plan. Or, he asked, if this idea was just given up on.

Mr. Latsha agreed with Mr. Messick and said that he hasn't given up on that either. Mr. Latsha informed that the intersection there now is already a very busy intersection, especially during work hours. He feels it will be considerably busier with the new development and the new traffic.

Mr. Davis explained that one of the hinderances of widening the road there is the wetlands. So they would be impacting the wetlands for an unwarranted turn lane.

[More discussion on the wetlands and the road continued.]

Mr. Knopp asked for comments/questions from the Public at this time.

Laurie Castagna, resident of Twelve Oaks, came to the microphone to discuss the opening of the cul-de-sac at the end of Bonnie Blue Lane. She said she has lived in Twelve Oaks for 31 years and it has always been a closed cul-de-sac; she stated she went back and read the minutes from years and years ago stating that it was only to be a temporary cul-de-sac. She said she understands that, but the fact remains that Twelve Oaks has no streetlights and no sidewalks. They have children who walk to bus stops in the dark with no sidewalks and now there is talk about opening up a cul-de-sac to through traffic. She feels this is all it is going to be, through traffic; it is not going to be to connect the two developments because they are two separate developments. She feels strongly that they should stay separate.

Ms. Castagna has two comment letters from people who couldn't be here tonight, but they would like their comments known:

-Dawn & Jeff Zimmerman, of Scarlett Lane: We have been residents in this small development for 23 years. As the Planning Commission of the Township, you have a commitment to the community to take into consideration the negative impacts of opening up the cul-de-sac on the residents of Twelve Oaks. Among the negative impacts is, first & foremost, the safety of our children and residents who live in the neighborhood. During the last 23 years, we have raised our children in a fine, peaceful neighborhood. Our children and neighborhood friends could walk to one another's homes, ride their bikes, and play without worrying about a lot of traffic on our streets. We don't have the luxury of sidewalks, so our children and residents walk, run, and ride bikes on streets. Safety has never been an issue due to the low level of traffic that comes through our neighborhood because it is mostly residential traffic. However, the opening of the cul-de-sac would create more traffic as people who have no residency in Twelve Oaks would be using the neighborhood as a thoroughfare which would cause a safety risk to our children and residents who are forced to use the streets as walking and biking paths. There are no streetlights through most of Twelve Oaks, which will cause additional safety concerns. In addition to opening Twelve Oaks and making a thoroughfare, most motorists would begin to travel through Twelve Oaks having no residency and would lack concern for the children and residents of Twelve Oaks and would not obey the posted speed limits. [Ms. Castagna added there are no posted speed limits in Twelve Oaks, but that's another issue.] Increased speed, lack of lighting, and no sidewalks at night is a recipe for disaster. This cul-de-sac has been closed since the beginning of the development and the residents do not want it opened. It is my understanding that the meeting with some residents of Twelve Oaks with McNaughton, McNaughton is not the one who is proposing opening the cul-de-sac, it is the Township that wants it opened. I hope you will listen to the constituents and keep the children and residents of our neighborhood safe. The decision to open the cul-de-sac should not be based on a case of creating a shortcut to allow people to get from one area to another, especially one that will create a major safety concern.

-Linda Lupp, of Butler Drive: My family has lived here for 18 years and love living in the neighborhood. I'm sharing my comments and requests because the Twelve Oaks neighborhood will be impacted more than any other neighborhood based on future development: the building of the Hershey School, the development of The Pond, the development of Aberdeen, and the development of the Williams farm. With regard to the development of Aberdeen, she would request that you follow the request of neighbors and the Developer and do not open the cul-de-sac. As you are aware, Twelve Oaks

residents are not in favor of opening the cul-de-sac. In conversations with the Developer, the Developer is also not in favor of opening the cul-de-sac. Consider all the developments not individually but comprehensively and through a lens of long-term planning. Taking this approach includes ensuring that comprehensive traffic studies are conducted independent of builders in an effort to ensure the safety of our constituents and our community.

Sara Martinez, of Bonnie Blue Lane, asked if it is not a recommendation by the Developer to open up the cul-de-sac into a through street, then why is there a recommendation to do so.

Mr. Young explained to her that we usually rely on the Fire Department in terms of the ability for First Responders to be able to ingress and egress a development in the event of an emergency. He informed her that anytime there is a plan where there is only one ingress/egress to a development, the comment we get back from the Fire Dept. is that if there is a blockage at that one ingress/egress, how would First Responders get in to respond. This is a very paramount concern to the Planning Commission, as well. So, there are a number of factors that are looked at on that subject.

Mrs. Martinez said that did answer her question and now she can make sense of it. She was not aware that there is only one entrance (without the opening of the cul-de-sac) and asked if she was understanding that correctly.

Mr. Davis confirmed that yes, without the cul-de-sac opening, there is only one entrance into the development [off of/onto Oberlin Road].

Mr. Young added that Route 441 (Oberlin Road) is a State road and any access onto a State road would require PennDOT approval. It is not something the Township has final say in.

Mrs. Martinez asked if there were any laws or regulations on the requirement of having sidewalks and streetlights and posted speed limits. She stated that these things are a major concern to all of them.

Mr. Young said that Twelve Oaks was developed in a number of phases. He thinks the phases were evaluated on what was in place at that time. He believes the issue with the cul-de-sac came up in 1996 or so, and it was discussed as a temporary cul-de-sac in

the event that the farm would ever be developed it would be a through street. It was actually designed and built with that in mind.

Mr. Knopp added that back when Twelve Oaks was laid out, the cul-de-sac was definitely laid out as temporary.

Mrs. Martinez asked what we do about safety then. She asked what the things were that they have thought through in terms of how to address this. She stated again that she is deeply, deeply concerned about the through traffic. She added that the small amount of traffic that comes through there is a big reason why they bought their house there, for the safety of the area. So she said she is curious about the remediation that would be considered with this being a major change.

Mr. Young informed her that the Planning Commission's responsibility is to review plans for compliance with Comprehensive Plan and Township Ordinance. The final decision makers are the Board of Commissioners; our role in this process is simply to take the input from the impacted residents and make a recommendation as to whether it is in compliance with what is required.

Mrs. Martinez's last question was if the traffic studies were conducted with all the different projects considered.

Mr. Fabian assured her that yes, that was part of their first comment letter to pull all background and all future plans in; that was all taken into consideration.

Mr. Snyder added that was also part of the PennDOT comments to help direct the traffic study. PennDOT became aware of all the other projects and the Township relied on PennDOT's requirements to help guide the traffic study that was done by TPD and Hyland.

Mrs. Martinez concluded that what she asks of the Planning Commission was to bring up to the Board of Commissioners the fact of the safety concerns (the sidewalks, the curbs, the street lighting, the increased traffic, and the lack of signage). She asked if this could be part of the final recommendation. If there is no other way to avoid connecting it, that it would come with either a requirement or a strong investigation into whether there are laws or requirements to have those kinds of things put into the neighborhood to maintain the safety of it for the residents.

Mr. Diamond stated that when there is no sign, it doesn't mean you can drive whatever speed you want. Sometimes a sign will educate people on that, but the State traffic laws actually say that in neighborhoods like that, the speed limit is 25 mph.

Mrs. Martinez said she was aware of that. She suggested putting up signs such as "Children At Play" or the "25 MPH" speed signs. She asked that the Planning Commission please recommend that to the BOC.

Mike Sujako, resident of Twelve Oaks, agreed with everything Mrs. Martinez brought up and then expressed his own concern over the connection of the streets between Aberdeen and Twelve Oaks. He feels the stop sign at 441 and Nissley will become busier, and as it is now it is already a "death trap". Any morning now, you may get two or three cars queue up, but he feels opening up the cul-de-sacs will then create about five or six cars there once they learn they can take this new route to avoid the Powderhorn intersection. Mr. Sujako suggests putting a gate or a chain between the two developments and then give the Fire Department a key or a card-swipe, if they need to get in.

Ryan Corcoran, a resident of Twelve Oaks, stated that one of the reasons they bought their house was because of the seclusion. He said not knowing the history of the cul-de-sac (with it being a temporary one), he stated that he echoed Mrs. Martinez's comments and concerns. Mr. Corcoran, being the COO of Capital Area Communications and Operations Executive of K&C Communications, says he fully believes in public safety. He feels to have an "Emergency Services Only" sign at that connection point would most likely defer people from using that as a thoroughfare. Mr. Corcoran said that he knows the local police watch the roads occasionally for speeding; but everyone locally knows that so having this other path through will be another way for inebriated drivers to circumvent those watch points. So that coming through the neighborhood on top of the lack of safety through Twelve Oaks is a concern. He went on to say that we have to think practically. Aside from speeders, and people who come through that don't live there and don't care about the children, there are also going to be drivers who circumvent that point. If the cul-de-sacs have to be connected, he feels it should be exclusively for fire and safety vehicles. Another thing to consider is, if it had to be for through traffic, more residents of the area would be using the intersection (down at Powderhorn/441), increasing the traffic there. So, if it is a matter of contesting the wetlands to PennDOT, for what is currently unwarranted, he said he thinks it will be warranted if it is connected the whole way through because the traffic pattern will change. So, he strongly feels this

information should be taken to PennDOT because traffic will increase in both directions, which in that case will warrant a turning lane.

Jennifer Lekites, a resident of Twelve Oaks, says she also echoes everything everyone has said about the cul-de-sac. She feels it would be disheartening to lose it. She says looking at the plan as a prospective buyer in the new neighborhood, the lots will be larger, there will be an HOA, so presumably a more expensive home for that person. But those voices aren't being considered in the egress of the street. She said if she was the buyer of one of these nice big houses, she wouldn't want "the riffraff of Twelve Oaks" driving through her neighborhood either. She feels we need to wait on the cul-de-sac until the voices of the residents of Aberdeen can be heard.

Leah Hottenstein, a resident of Twelve Oaks, said she is very sad to see the farm and cows leave, and she is not a big fan of having neighbors. She said they have been there for 17 years and one of the reasons why they bought their house was because it was on a quiet cul-de-sac. They have three children who have had zero lessons in traffic safety because they have always had free reign of a cul-de-sac for their entire lives. She said she was shocked at the Traffic Study results. She is constantly hearing big trucks jake-braking down the hill behind her house to hit the curve and she can't imagine it will be very long before there is an accident at that intersection. She also echoed previous comments from other Twelve Oaks residents saying that she will also more than likely use the new road and intersection at Powderhorn and 441, causing more traffic; so, she feels the traffic study was inadequate. She also informed that the number of cars she sees on 441 from 7:00-8:30am and from about 4:00-6:00pm is immense. When she tries to pull onto 441 from Nissley every morning, she always counts 6 TruGreen trucks going past and then it is just residents, so she feels Twelve Oaks will now be a cut-through. Ms. Hottenstein asked if the public has access to the results of the PennDOT study.

Ms. Snyder told her they are a matter of public record, and she is welcome to come to the Township Building anytime between 8am-4pm Monday through Friday and it can be provided to her.

Ms. Hottenstein said it is of her opinion that the issue with the wetlands and not adding the turning lane is not a Township issue, that is the Builder's issue to figure out. If they want to put those houses there, this is what is available so that is their issue to address and figure out. But she feels the turning lane needs to be there just for safety. Ms. Hottenstein then asked who actually owns the property right now because the signage is

still up that it is For Sale. But she was wondering who was responsible for mowing it, because when it was the farm, it never looked like it does now, and she is concerned about the ticks coming on to her property because of it.

Mr. Young said that sounds like a Code Enforcement issue. This issue has come up before with The Pond.

Mr. Davis said he does not believe their client has purchased the property yet, but he will mention that to them.

Mr. Messick stated that he thinks it will get mowed in the next couple of weeks for hay.

Ms. Hottenstein stated that section of Bonnie Blue is actually narrower than Scarlett and Ohara, so she has a concern about their cars getting hit that have to park along their street because of the speed that people will be coming from up over that hill.

Deb Cotton, a resident of Twelve Oaks, says that she and her husband are most directly impacted by opening up the cul-de-sac. She said they have met with McNaughton and their representatives, and they showed her where they would be cutting out and replacing the street and planting more yard to mow, but she said that was the least of their concerns. Mrs. Cotton said she echoes every single thing that was said by the other Twelve Oaks residents. The thought that people will shortcut off of 441 up through Bonnie Blue and then through the rest of the development is unconscionable to her. She said she has lived in Twelve Oaks for 31 years, the first 25 years on Wilkes Drive in the development, then they moved to their current home on Bonnie Blue. They chose to remain in Twelve Oaks when they decided to downsize because it is self-contained, it's safe, and she doesn't fear when one of her grandchildren or their dog runs out into the cul-de-sac because there's no through traffic there. She added that she does understand the egress need but she feels a gate there would be a better idea. But if you made that street for locals only, or for emergency use only, she feels that would be a healthy compromise. She also added that she is excited for the new development to come in. She said McNaughton homes are beautiful and there are only 25 of them, so she thinks it is going to be lovely. She said we need the progress, but we don't need the traffic and we don't need the worry of the safety of our kids. She also feels it could be a liability for the Township if an accident happened because of the extra traffic. She asked to please

respectfully consider what was said here tonight by the concerned residents when making a recommendation to the Commissioners.

Mr. Knopp asked for any other comments from the public.

Ms. Hottenstein wanted to add that there is development up by Target where a cul-de-sac meets another cul-de-sac. (Cordial Lane – cul-de-sac meets a dead-end street).

With no further comments from the public, Mr. Knopp asked the Planning Commission what they would like to do with the plan in front of them.

Mr. Young made a motion to table it until we receive revised plans consistent with the meeting and after we have been able to review the written waiver requests.

Mr. Latsha seconded the motion.

All were in favor. Plan was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Catherine Hershey School – Planning Commission File PC#2023-03. The proposed project intends to consolidate two (2) existing parcels into a new 7.578-acre parcel. Furthermore, the proposed project intends to construct a 27,700-sf school for early learning, improvements to/along Oberlin Road (SR 441), retaining walls, public water/sewer connections, utilities, and Stormwater Management BMPs, and repaving an existing access drive.

Mark Hackenburg, of RGS Associates, introduced himself and his colleagues: Senate Alexander, executive director of the Catherine Hershey School; Bill Wos, capital projects manager for Catherine Hershey School; and Jason Wheeler, project manager for Traffic Planning & Design (TPD).

Mr. Hackenburg stated that they were here tonight to present the initial stage and an overview of the project. He then turned the floor over to Senate Alexander to explain why they are interested in this particular location, talk about their mission, and how it relates to the local community.

Mr. Alexander, executive director of the Catherine Hershey School, gave a high-level overview of who they are and why they are coming here to the Middletown area. They are a subsidiary of the Milton Hershey School (MHS) so they are funded by the MHS Trust.

Mr. Alexander explained why they are interested in this particular location. After many years of great results at the Milton Hershey School, the school wanted to embark on how they could help more children, which is what the Hershey legacy is all about. So, after a long standing of planning, they decided to create six quality education facilities across Central Pennsylvania. When creating these, they really wanted to focus on keeping them here in Dauphin County first. Their first center is going to be in Hershey, opening in the Fall of 2023. Then they have another center that will be opening in Harrisburg Middletown area; and now this one here in Middletown. The other three locations are actually in Lancaster.

Mr. Alexander went on to say that this center is for at-risk, disadvantaged youth, all free of cost. This facility will hold 150 children. Hours of operation are from 7am to 6pm, Monday through Friday. With those 150 children, they believe about 100 to 120 families will be there because they are taking into account siblings. They are not the typical pre-school or daycare; it is a core early learning program. They will be helping children with kindergarten readiness.

Mr. Alexander explained their second mission. They also help with family success. Given that this is just a day-program, it is different than Milton Hershey School, which is a residential school. But it is very important to them that the families as a whole have their needs met. In each of their facilities, there is a Family Success Center that families will be able to utilize. They will be helped with job training, connecting them with employers here in the area, helping them with health services, helping them with budgeting and financial literacy, etc., to try to help them break the cycle of poverty.

Mr. Alexander went on to say that, thirdly, it comes as whole child support. How they help the child in the family. They will provide transportation. Right now, the way the plans are, they are thinking about 48 children would be eligible and able to use this transportation program, but that is something that can change. If they found that more families did need transportation, they could up that and add more. Basically, they have 8 passenger vans; they run two trips in the morning with three vans, and two trips in the

afternoon with three vans. Also, they will help with supplying the meals, the diapers, the wipes, everything a family would need in order to be able to participate in the program.

Mr. Alexander said, lastly, they will also be providing health services. They will have a Registered Nurse on site. They will also have Early Intervention Services, such as OT, PT, Speech Pathology, etc., which they would be able to give right there on site.

Mr. Hackenburg gave a presentation of the details of the proposed project. It is just shy of 7.6 acres. It is a composition of two parcels of ground (one has been owned by the Messick Family, the other owned by the Kuharic Family). There are a number of buildings on the property, and there was some discussion on whether those buildings could be adapted or integrated into the project. He said they have looked at this in every way possible, and how they may be able to integrate the barns & buildings into the project. Part of the issue is that there is about a 46-foot grade differential from one end of the site to the other, so it would be very difficult for them to even consider. They have tried to figure out how the barns could be part of the Family Success Center and maybe provide some ancillary spaces. But it became a very cost prohibitive venture to even try to pursue that any further. So, what they are doing is they made a commitment to retain some of the wood materials from the barn which will be integrated into the interior spaces of the lobby. They are intending to use some of the stone foundation as part of an outdoor STEM garden area. So, the history of the past of this farm is intended to be captured in the sense of the materiality, and some of the opportunities that they are going to take to try to interpret some of the past of this particular site.

Mr. Hackenburg continued with the presentation with the visually proposed rendition of the site on the projection board.

[The proposed layout was discussed using the projection board at this time.]

Mr. Hackenburg informed that the access drive will be shared with the Lottery Building. That roadway will have to be reconstructed and built a little higher. They are working with the owner of the Lottery Building on this. They are also working with McNaughton on the access easement between their properties (Catherine Hershey School and Aberdeen). McNaughton would like to retain the ability to use this easement while the construction and demolition of the barns are taking place. They are working it out between the two parties. The temporary access/easement will be removed as these two projects move forward.

Mr. Hackenburg stated that they are requesting a waiver of the preliminary plan process, not necessarily this evening, but at some point in this process.

[More explanation of the layout of the proposed project ensued.]

Mr. Hackenburg continued by saying that the layout of this particular property, as well as all other Catherine Hershey School properties, are very focused on safety and security. So, the function and actions of bringing children to and from are very purposeful, security is paramount to Catherine Hershey Schools. There will be 80 staff members for the 150 students.

Mr. Hackenburg said the mission behind the efforts of the Catherine Hershey School is the ability to create a great experience for family members as well as the children; so, the way the buildings are laid out is part of the fabric of what this is all about. But this is not going to create significant traffic volumes. There will be a higher teacher-to-student ratio, but it doesn't mean the volume of activities that are taking place to be much different than what you may see in a traditional daycare facility.

[More discussion on the southern access drive using the projected map/site plan. He did add that there is a permit from 2007 associated with the driveway. He will provide it if needed and work with the Township with any details, he just wanted to inform that it was permitted back in 2007.]

Mr. Latsha asked about the other (northern) access drive. He asked them if they were in discussions with McNaughton on this access drive and can he share any information on that with us.

Mr. Hackenburg confirmed that they are in discussions with McNaughton. He said he just spoke to Joel McNaughton today. McNaughton will include the removal and closure of that driveway as part of their highway occupancy permit (HOP). The Milton Hershey School will agree to remove the asphalt once the driveway is no longer functional. The Milton Hershey School will agree to vacate the easement that they have rights to on that property. McNaughton will use this point of access for their walkway if that is ultimately approved.

[More discussion on parking, screening, dumpster, retaining walls, walkways, and loading area ensued using the projected site plan.]

Mr. Hackenburg then discussed the utilities. Sanitary Sewer exists on the property so they will be connecting into the public sanitary system. Most of their utilities come from the opposite side of Oberlin Road. So, all utilities are available for this site. They have received a Sewer Module exemption approval already. They are waiting for feedback from Veolia on the water connection and feedback from the Fire Department on the fire hydrants.

Mr. Snyder said the zoning in this district requires a lot of 15 acres minimum for development. The Kuharic property alone is 3.6 acres and the Messick property is 3.9 acres totaling 7.5 acres when they will be combined. So, they would be below the 15-acre requirement. But it also takes into account that historically the parent-tract from which these were originally subdivided would also include the Souder's Market property, but even that would be below the required 15 acres. But going back historically, when these lots were created, they were all non-conforming at that point and from what we can see they were created prior to the current zoning ordinance. That being the case, we have requested that they put a table on the cover sheet or note sheet of their plan set listing the non-conformity and then the disposition with the approval of the plan; therefore, it would need a certificate of non-conformity listed on the plan and recorded in the courthouse. The other thing he wanted to discuss is the determination of a possible 2nd non-conformity. The other one was the connectivity of the sidewalk internally. Catherine Hershey School wants to have an internal walkway, but there is some concern with a certain part of the sidewalk not having a handicap access ramp or connectivity. If anybody wanted to access at that point, they would have to walk within a heavily paved area in a loading/unloading zone as well as the ingress/egress for the employee parking. If they would want to connect, they would have to either walk on or across the access lane to gain access to the other sidewalk.

Mr. Young asked what the hours of operation were.

Mr. Hackenburg stated they are 7am to 6pm, Monday through Friday. Unlike a traditional daycare, where your arrival is generally a particular timeframe, there is a little more flexibility with the Catherine Hershey School model. Their goal and intent are to be responsive to the needs of each family. So, it is not about classes starting or ending at a particular time, there is more of a window which will lessen the concentration of traffic.

Jason Wheeler, with Traffic Planning & Design (TPD), explained that so far, they are in the early stages of the traffic study for this project. They have submitted a memo to the Township and HRG to request a determination on the scope of work that is required in the traffic impact study. They will be addressing the comments as part of their traffic impact study submission. In general, they are studying the am/pm peak hours (6am-9am and 3pm-6pm). They were asked to study the three intersections along the Oberlin Road corridor, starting at Powderhorn Road, then Kreider Drive, and then the signal at Fulling Mill Road. The access drive does have an HOP and they believe it is for a low-volume driveway classification. They do not believe the school will cause this to be reclassified to a medium or higher volume classification.

Mr. Hackenburg said one of the things he wanted to make mention of, because he knows it was raised by staff, it relates to the location of the access drive. TPD initially looked at a traffic projection based on the number of students and employees; what they were concerned about was whether or not they had a major impact on this intersection. They anticipate, based on the volume of the traffic at that intersection now, that it is not going to trip this into a different classification. The one concern that staff has raised is the concern about queueing and separation from stacking at this particular entry point. The question that was raised is does this entry point need to move deeper into the site to accommodate the volume factor coming in. At this point in time, until they get a more detailed study, they do not have a complete resolution to that issue. They were just acknowledging the fact that it is a state of concern that they will focus on as they walk through the details of the traffic study.

Mr. Latsha asked if there were turn lanes heading north and south when you turn into any of the mentioned intersections.

There are left turn lanes into Kreider Drive and the shared access drive with the Lottery Building, and a right turn lane turning onto Powderhorn Road. There are dedicated center lanes at Kreider Drive.

Mr. Hackenburg said that they are anticipating within the next several weeks to work through the details of the traffic impact study and addressing the Township's comments. They are hopeful of getting back to the Planning Commission in a reasonably short period of time. They are hoping to be in front of the Board of Commissioners in August so they can start this project in the early part of next year as far as construction is concerned.

Mr. Knopp asked if there were any other questions from the Planning Commission. There were none at this time.

Mr. Knopp asked for any questions/comments from HRG.

Mr. Fabian stated that some of the comments they had were highlighted in the commentary tonight. It is not a typical facility so some of the questions were clarifications on how everything is going to operate. A lot of the things they found in reviewing were just minor clerical things. These will all be things they can easily work through.

Mr. Knopp asked for any questions/comments from DCPC.

Ms. Korber asked that since there are a lot of residential developments around here, would there be a goal for anyone to walk to this school?

The answer was no. There will be no walking, they would be set up with Public Transportation if needed.

Ms. Korber asked Mr. Fabian if the large BMP was a detention pond.

Mr. Fabian responded that it looks like it was an MRC (Managed Release Concept). A lot of the infiltration testing that they have on site found that the site is not favorable for a lot of the infiltration-type BMPs so an alternative design may be made in regard to stormwater. We have run into those in a number of other developments in the Township. It does look like there is some underground storage in the parking area.

Ms. Korber wasn't clear on how any standing water would be controlled because of the kids that would be around.

Mr. Fabian said one of the nice things about the MRC is the underground draining systems.

Mr. Snyder spoke about the selective soil mix. The MRC will have a graduated soil mix so that the storage of the water will be in the soil mix as well as the landscaping. The actual above-grade ponding is very minimal. If there is any ponding, it is usually cleared within 24-36 hours.

Mr. Fabian added that we do have MRC basins built in the Township right now. They have them at D&H Jednota South on Rosedale Avenue.

Mr. Knopp asked if there were any questions from the Public.

There were none at this time.

Mr. Knopp asked the Planning Commission what they would like to do tonight with this plan.

Mr. Young made the motion to table it. Mr. Latsha seconded the motion. All were in favor. Plan tabled.

OTHER BUSINESS:

June 22nd Meeting - The next Planning Commission Meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 7:00 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no more comments/concerns at this time.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Mr. Crawford and seconded by Mr. Messick to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donald A. Fure, Director of Codes/Planning & Zoning