

**UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

January 28, 2008

CALL TO ORDER – Comm. Lavalle called a meeting of the Community Development Committee of the Board of Commissioners of Upper Moreland Township to order at 7:00 p.m.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE WAS FOLLOWED BY THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were none.

ROLL CALL: Comm. Lavalle, Chairman took roll call. Present: Commissioners James Hotchkiss and Kevin Spearing.

Others: Assistant Township Manager John Crawford, Catherine Harper, Township Solicitor, Lonnie Manai, Township Engineer, and Jack Snyder, Director of Public Works.

APPROVAL OF MINIUTES:

Comm. Lavalle accepted the minutes of the December 17, 2007 Community Development Meeting into the record as submitted.

REPORTS:

Code Enforcement Report:

Comm. Spearing asked about a bill from McMahon & Associates for observation for a HOP (Highway Occupancy Permit) on Blair Mill Road.

Mr. Crawford replied we pay the bill to the consultant and then we bill the developer.

There were no questions of the Public Works Dept. and Public Works Recycling reports.

NEW BUSINESS:

2440 Maryland Road:

Nissan Shah, applicant, said he is here on behalf of Sai Paras, LLC, and we are considering a partnership to develop the land for a hotel that would entail demolishing the existing industrial building and building a three or four story premium hotel. The brand of hotel is undecided, but would target the corporate traveler.

Comm. Lavalle asked what is the zoning of that property?

Mr. Shah replied industrial and a hotel is not a permitted use. Height restrictions in the industrial zone allows for a three-story building. We can work with the setback requirements and any other requirements of the Township.

Comm. Spearing said previously the McMonagle family applied for a waiver of zoning relief. What was that for?

Mr. Shah replied they received approvals for a medical office building.

Comm. Spearing asked was it permitted by the ZHB or the Board of Commissioners?

Mr. Shah replied he will have to research that.

Comm. Spearing said he wants to be sure the large Oak tree will remain on this property.

Mr. Shah assured that the tree will remain.

Comm. Spearing asked about shared parking for this site.

Mr. Shah replied that is something we will consider.

Comm. Lavalle asked is the parking tied to any specific ratio or was it just what can fit on site?

Mr. Shah replied the parking on the site plan was suggested by the franchise and they are willing to work with the Township. We feel a 100 room hotel will suffice.

Comm. Lavalle asked about the lodge concept.

Mr. Shah replied the lodge is part of an extended-stay hotel with a small kitchenette with a lobby as a meeting place. Also a pool and sports activities will be provided.

Comm. Hotchkiss asked will the pool and sports activities be limited to hotel guests only?

Mr. Shah replied that has not been decided yet.

Comm. Hotchkiss asked would the meeting rooms be for outside use?

Mr. Shah replied yes.

Comm. Hotchkiss said that will impact the amount of parking on site.

Comm. Spearing asked has a feasibility study been done?

Mr. Shah replied we are looking for direction from the Township before we proceed with the feasibility study.

Comm. Spearing asked has PECO been contacted regarding height as the site is adjacent to power lines.

Mr. Shah replied no. The height issue comes into play if we are directly underneath the high tension lines, but the high tension lines are off to the side and not on this property.

Comm. Lavalley asked for the percentage of impervious surface.

Mr. Shah replied about 60% depending on height, and we prefer as much landscaping as possible.

Comm. Spearing commented based on this concept plan; the applicant will have to go before the ZHB to get relief.

Solicitor Harper agreed that the applicant will have to get a variance. If the Township wishes to facilitate this development the Board can change the zoning ordinance to add this as a permitted use, but it would be added anywhere this zoning exists or change the zoning of this parcel, but that would be difficult without a spot zoning issue.

Comm. Spearing said there is no request for a change in zoning at this time.

Comm. Efkowitz commented that we have other properties nearby that are zoned in a manner that a hotel could be built.

Solicitor Harper suggested that if the Board is opposed to the concept they should let the applicant know.

Comm. Lavalley said he likes the design of the building, but he is concerned about the intended use of the site and the parking.

Comm. Efkowitz commented if the Board changes the zoning on that parcel; it might not be an extended-stay hotel use.

Comm. Romaniello commented that she has no problem with this proposal and she would like to see this move forward.

Comm. Spearing said the previous applicant received relief from the ZHB or a variance which is important information that the applicant needs to find out about.

Comm. Lavalle asked for any other items of new business.

Mr. Snyder asked permission to purchase budgeted items from the capital fund.

Mr. Crawford commented when the Board reviewed the budget in November, they decided the department heads had to present their list to the appropriate committee and then the committee moves it for action to the full Board.

Comm. Lavalle asked what are the specific items to be purchased?

Mr. Snyder replied a leaf vacuum, a small pickup truck and a recycling truck.

Comm. Lavalle said we will move this for action at our next Regular Board meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Comm. Efkowitz commented that she doesn't remember asking to micromanage the managers with their capital budget.

Mr. Crawford replied a note was placed on the capital budget that every item purchased needs to be approved by the Board.

Comm. Efkowitz asked for an update on the Regency Towers' appeal.

Solicitor Harper replied the appeal was heard by Judge Steve O'Neill, and he gave no indication as to what his decision will be. The issue was whether or not the paving of a driveway that led onto Township road should have gone through land development. The ZHB found that it did not require land development and so the Township Board of Commissioners appealed their decision.

Comm. Efkowitz asked when will a decision be rendered?

Solicitor Harper replied it will take about a month to three months.

Comm. Efkowitz asked Mr. Crawford to check with the County on the status of Titles 9 and 10 as we have asked them to review and revise those titles.

Comm. Spearing clarified that the Regency Tower application was approved by the ZHB and then the previous Board of Commissioners challenged their ruling with an appeal.

Solicitor Harper said a permit to pave the driveway was denied by our current Code Enforcement Officer on the grounds that it required land development, and the previous Board of Commissioners supported the decision of the Code Enforcement Officer over the ZHB. The job has been done at the risk of the developer.

VISITOR COMMENTS:

There were none at this time.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. Elizabeth Vile