

MINUTES

ZONING & SUBDIVISION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday – July 17, 2007 – 7:30 p.m. – MCRPC Offices

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sam Scott, Chairman
Chuck Garrett
James L. Hogan
Clifford McCandless
Ron Faull
James Hughes
Elliott Lengel

OTHERS PRESENT

Lisa Holm Schrader, Planner
Peggy Heldorfer, Associate Planner
(See attachment for others present)

Mr. Scott, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. **A quorum was present.** Mr. Scott announced that the zoning amendment request for the Ristvey property has been removed from the agenda. A question was raised as to why it was removed from the agenda. Ms. Holm Schrader explained that the applicant requested that the City of Hermitage and MCRPC remove it from the agenda this month, with intentions to resubmit the request at a later date, which has not been determined.

Mr. Scott noted that the Minutes of the June 19, 2007 meeting were mailed prior to tonight's meeting and there being no additions, corrections, or deletions, the Minutes stand approved as mailed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment – City of Hermitage – Ms. Holm Schrader explained a rezoning request for the City of Hermitage to rezone 1.6 acres from Institutional (IN) to Highway Commercial (HC). This property is located on the west side of North Hermitage Road on the northeast corner of the YMCA property. Currently, the YMCA property address is 925 N. Hermitage Road (Route 18). The property consists of a parking area and closed driveway that was previously used by the YMCA. The YMCA had added additional parking behind their building so this parking lot is only used for overflow parking. The property is currently accessed by the south access drive to the Wal-Mart and adjacent plazas and restaurant off Route 18. Ms. Holm Schrader explained that this is the north end of the Institutional zoning district which extends from the school access road north to include this property along the west side of Route 18. The property slopes slightly to the west towards the YMCA access lane at the rear of this lot. The surrounding zoning and land uses to the north is Commercial (Wal-Mart complex); to the south and west is Institutional (remaining lands of the YMCA); and to the east across Route 18 is Highway Commercial (plaza, car wash and Flip Side store). The site is serviced by public sewer and water and accesses Route 18.

Ms. Holm Schrader next reviewed the zoning amendment criteria based on the PA Municipalities Planning Code as adopted by the Commission. 1) Consistent with community objectives and plans - Sections of the PA 18 North Corridor Planning Study completed by the City of Hermitage find the YMCA property consistent with community objectives and plans. She noted that in this study it was recommended that the property allow more office or limited commercial uses not presently permitted under the Institutional zone. The YMCA Board was considering requesting the Highway Commercial zoning at the time of the PA 18 Corridor Study. Also in the PA 18 Corridor Study it mentions protecting the institutional core district at the intersection of PA 18 and Highland Road. The County Comprehensive

Plan labels this as an economic revitalization area. Intended uses could include mixed commercial and public or private recreation. 2) Compatible with surrounding land uses with minimal impacts – properties to the north and east are zoned and used commercially. Property to the south and west would remain Institutional and continue to be used by the YMCA as recreational property. The site is accessed by existing lanes adjacent to this property and added traffic would not be a problem for the roadway. 3) Infrastructure is adequate – public water and sewer exists of this site and the lot is served by PA Route 18. 4) Adequate, already zoned sites are not available elsewhere – vacant lots still exist in the Commercial zoning district and a number of empty lots zoned Highway Commercial are available along PA 18 to the south. 5) Local, area conditions have changed – the widening of PA 18 has improved traffic and access along PA 18. The additional development to the north of the Wal-Mart property has created useful access lanes to the north and west of this site. She noted that previous development has increased commercial pressure along PA 18. The floor was open for comments.

In discussion, Mr. McCandless asked if the property is not in use. Ms. Holm Schrader stated that the property is occasionally used by the YMCA for overflow parking but its proximity to the road makes it unsafe for recreation facilities. Mr. Geoff Hartenstein, President of the Board of Directors for the YMCA explained that the frontage along PA 18 does not benefit the YMCA property since it is somewhat isolated from their remaining property by the access drive and wooded area west of this site. Mr. Hartenstein stated that the remaining acreage owned by the YMCA would remain in the Institutional zoning district and would continue as a recreational use. Mr. McCandless questioned if the YMCA was planning to subdivide any more of their property in the future. Mr. Hartenstein stated no, there are wetlands behind the access road and the reason to consider this part of the lot is the frontage along Route 18 that does not benefit the rest of the property. Also, the YMCA has enough property remaining that should they want to expand their facilities, they still have enough property to do so. Mr. McCandless expressed his thoughts of maintaining much of the Institutional district, but felt that rezoning this 1.6 acre site should not create a problem. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Hogan and seconded by Mr. Faull to recommend approval of this rezoning request. The motion passed.

2. Minor Land Development – Mercer Borough – Ms. Holm Schrader explained a minor land development for the Mercer Elementary School on Lamor Road to expand the building approximately 25,000 square feet with additional parking and access areas. Mr. John Carly of HHSDR Architects explained that across the street from the Mercer Elementary School is a gravel parking lot between the road and the practice field, which will be turned into a paved parking lot and stormwater that will be developed for the site. Mr. Jerry Johnson from Mercer Borough stated that the Borough is concerned that there is nothing addressed regarding stormwater management. Mr. Johnson explained that the stormwater will be increased due to the increased paved areas and additional building space and should be addressed according to the Mercer Borough Stormwater Regulations. Mr. Johnson also stated that the Borough has no other objections to the Mercer Elementary School Expansion.

Ms. Holm Schrader explained that this minor land development was reviewed for consistency with regional and local comprehensive plans. The Mercer Elementary School Expansion meets the goals in the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan, since expansion of existing facilities discourages sprawl. Also, according to the Mercer Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, the school is located in a Revitalization Target area. Revitalizing the school would meet this goal. Ms. Holm Schrader explained that stormwater will be increased due to the increased paved area and additional building space and must be addressed according to Mercer Borough requirements and stormwater ordinance to determine that all of the stormwater and sewer requirements are met.

After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Lengel and seconded by Mr. Hogan to recommend approval based upon meeting the goals with respect to the Mercer County Comprehensive Plan. The motion passed.

3. Additional Discussion – Mr. Garrett from Wilmington Township addressed the motion made at the June meeting regarding the rezoning from R-2 to IB in Wilmington Township. He stated that he did not realize that there is still a large IB district available in the Township. He explained that this R-2 area is the last higher density residential area available in the Township. If the Township rezones this R-2 area to IB, the Township could be shorthanded on R-2. Also, the Township should encourage the use of land that is already zoned IB. He explained that he had voted for this rezoning at last months meeting, but he did not look at the whole area and do his homework. He stated that he would have recommended against this rezoning. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Holm Schrader,
Planner

LHS/ew