

**WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2005**

The Wrightstown Township Planning Commission met on Thursday, September 8, 2005 in the Community Room of the Village Library, Penns Park Road, Wrightstown, PA. In attendance and voting were: Frank Davis, Chair; John Halderman, Vice-Chair; Members Dennis Keating, Ann Mark, Norman Sommer and Lary Whalen. Also in attendance were: Township Engineer Mario Canales of Pickering Corts and Summerson, Inc., and Township Planner Judith Stern Goldstein of Boucher and James, Inc.

**Call to Order:** Mr. Davis called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Fowler asked that in the Minutes of August 11, 2005, page 2, Toll/Hibbs paragraph 1, the phrase “easier and less expensive to maintain” be removed.

*Mr. Fowler moved to accept the Minutes of August 11, 2005, as corrected. Dr. Mark seconded and the motion passed 4-0-2, with Messrs. Keating and Sommer abstaining.*

*Mr. Halderman moved to accept the Minutes of August 25, 2005. Mr. Keating seconded and the motion passed 4-0-2, with Mr. Fowler and Dr. Mark abstaining.*

**Szarko Minor Subdivision Preliminary/Final Plan:** Mr. Joseph Szarko presented a Preliminary/Final Plan for subdivision of a 3.8 acre lot on Penns Park Road in the CR-1 Zoning District. Mr. Szarko said that on the Boucher and James letter dated August 18, 2005, section 1.B refers to a garage that already exists, which is attached to the house by a breezeway. Ms. Goldstein agreed that this is an existing non-conformity and should be noted on the plan. He also pointed out that the property, adjacent to a school, is also an existing non-conformity to be noted on the plan.

Ms. Goldstein said that the buildings are very close to the street and she encouraged the applicant to use plantings to provide more privacy, and to acknowledge this non-conformity on the plan.

Mr. Szarko said that he had not located a well for lot number 2 on the plan yet. After the building is designed, the well would be placed on the plan. It will be toward the front of the lot, but he cannot be sure of the exact location. The house will be about 3,000 square feet, with a 1,500 square foot footprint, and will require a sprinkler system for fire safety.

Mr. Szarko said that he will comply with the Boucher and James letter of August 18, 2005 and with the Pickering Corts and Summerson letter of August 24, 2005.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Pickering Corts and Summerson letter. Mr. Szarko asked for a waiver from SALDO Section 503.H, requiring improvements to Penns Park Road. He noted that there would be no new curb cuts, as the plan would use the existing “U” shaped driveway, with each house using one curb cut and the center portion would be filled.

The Commission discussed the use of Wooley Run Road. Mr. Szarko said that the prospective owner prefers using Penns Park Road as an entrance, and the Wooley Run Road gravel area will be covered over with topsoil and seeded. Hilltop Road does not exist.

Resident John Meyer said that some people attempt to use the graveled entrance as a through street. It appears on some maps and on MapQuest. The Commission agreed that the gravel area should be covered by topsoil.

The Commission reviewed the waivers that are being requested. Mr. Canales expressed concern that the well on the Dishmon property is not shown. Mr. Szarko said that he is seeking only a partial waiver. He will identify the well on the Dishmon property. He asked that he be permitted to show the other required features on an aerial photograph.

The Planning Commission agreed that the Board of Supervisors should consider waivers from providing curbs, sidewalks and streetlights, and recommended that the Board consider a fee in lieu of providing these features.

In response to Mr. Meyer's question, Mr. Szarko said that Note #8 on the plan prohibits further subdivision of the lot.

Mr. Szarko reviewed his plans for the outside appearance of the existing building. The Commission Members agreed that the building is much improved.

*Mr. Fowler moved to recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve the Preliminary/Final Plan for Szarko Minor Subdivision with the conditions that:*

- *The plan comply with the Boucher and James, Inc. letter of August 19, 2005;*
- *The plan comply with the Pickering Corts and Summerson, Inc. letter of August 24, 2005;*
- *The plan comply with the Bucks County Planning Commission letter of July 21, 2005;*
- *A partial waiver should be granted from SALDO Section 404.B.(1)(o), and the plan should identify all existing wells, septic systems and driveways on area contained within the plan. All other such features within 500 feet of the proposed subdivision should be identified on an aerial photograph;*
- *Waiver from Section 521, requiring curbs;*
- *Waiver from Section 522, requiring sidewalks and pedestrian paths;*
- *Waiver from SALDO Section 606, requiring streetlights.*
- *Waiver from SALDO Section 503.H*

*A fee in lieu of compliance with these sections should be collected at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors. The plan should note that the Zoning Officer has determined that the garage on the property is an existing non-conformity. The plan should note that*

*buffer planting is not required because of an existing non-conformity. The stone entrance to Lot #2 via Wooley Run should be covered with topsoil and seeded.*

*Mr. Halderman seconded and the motion passed 6-0.*

**Proposed Outdoor Lighting Ordinance:** Mr. Davis reminded the Commission Members that the Township has no outdoor lighting ordinance at this time. He said that a draft ordinance had been prepared by Mr. Canales and Ms. Bradley, based in part on the Limerick Township Ordinance.

Ms. Goldstein and Mr. Canales said that they have reviewed lighting ordinances from other nearby Townships and from other parts of the country. The draft before the Commission has borrowed from Limerick and from North Coventry, and it attempts to be fair in allowing safe illumination. Ms. Goldstein said that the Jointure prefers that each municipality have its own ordinance.

The Commission Members all were concerned about the use of the word “shall” in section 1B. Mr. Halderman said that the Board of Supervisors should have some discretion to require lighting for safety, but that the entire Township should not have streetlights. It was agreed that the wording should be “shall, at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors”.

Mr. Fowler and Dr. Mark expressed concern about residential lighting of fronts of houses, tennis courts and pools. They would like to see some limitations of residential lighting.

In discussing Section 2A, Mr. Davis noted that he would not like the Township to use high-pressure sodium vapor lights. He said that these lights can be harmful to trees, and can make it difficult for police to identify the true color of cars. After a brief review of the various types of lights currently available, the Commission agreed that it would be better to just recommend that sodium vapor lights not be used, rather than to suggest what lights should be used. This way, new products can be used when they become available.

Mr. Keating said that he has some concern about the requirement that existing lighting would have to be made to comply within the next ten years. Ms. Goldstein suggested that she could look into grand fathering clauses.

The Commission reviewed and approved sections 3B, with some rewording of 3E, 3F, 3G and 3H. Mr. Canales agreed to investigate 3J, to establish a maximum for architectural lighting. Mr. Canales suggested that rather than using the word “seasonal” the ordinance should use the word “holiday” in section 3K. He also suggested putting a timeframe on the use of holiday lighting.

Mr. Fowler suggested that the ordinance eliminate from Section 5, provisions C, D, E, F, G, and H.

Mr. Canales suggested that the Commission Members continue to review this draft and e-mail any further suggestions to him. He will prepare a second draft to be reviewed at the next meeting.

*Mr. Halderman moved to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. Mr. Fowler seconded and the motion passed 6-0.*

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Mary Donaldson  
Recording Secretary**