

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP  
VILLAGE COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING IN EVANSBURG  
FEBRUARY 18, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

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**1) Public Meeting: Call to Order**

- a) Supervisor DiPaolo called the public meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**2) Roll Call:**

- a) The following committee members were present: Mrs. Bateman, Mr. Comroe, Mr. DiPaolo, Mr. Ferraro, Mrs. Maris, Mr. Ozorowski, and Mr. Stemple.  
b) Mr. Borai, Mr. Hager and Mrs. Satterwhite were not in attendance.  
c) Also present was Watson Olszewski from the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

**3) Discussion of Proposed Evansburg Village Commercial Ordinance:**

- a) Copies of the following document were made available for the public at the meeting:  
i) Proposed Evansburg Village Commercial Ordinance Draft dated November 13, 2007, eleven pages.  
b) Mr. DiPaolo explained that this was an informal public meeting to review the proposed Village Commercial (VC) ordinance for Evansburg. The Village Commercial Committee (VCC) has been working on re-drafting the VC ordinance, which was forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors (BOS) for input. The BOS asked that the VCC meet with neighbors in the Evansburg area to solicit their input as well.  
c) Mr. DiPaolo thanked Rev. Hallanan for hosting the meeting, and noted that they would focus on the Evansburg VC draft ordinance. He reviewed a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the work done on the VCC to date, and provided copies of the draft ordinance to the audience.

**d) Public Comments:**

- i) Mrs. Shawna Damato, 3827 Germantown Pike, expressed her concerns with Germantown Pike already being a busy road, and having difficulty getting out of her driveway. She questioned where people would park, and the impact of additional traffic on the area. Mrs. Damato is concerned with store hours running into the night, and noted that she does not want to have a beer distributor near her home. She asked if the Township would be taking frontage from homeowners to install sidewalks?  
(1) Mr. DiPaolo remarked that the sidewalks are a hard issue for Evansburg. He indicated that as properties come in for land development, over time, they would be asked to install sidewalks or other improvements.  
(2) Mr. Olszewski remarked that he is not sure sidewalks had slowed traffic in Skippack. The Township wants to provide opportunities for new businesses and houses while maintaining the village of Evansburg. Mr. Olszewski suggested that new traffic flow can be mitigated through the use of interconnective access, whereby adjoining redeveloped properties will share a common driveway.  
(3) Mr. Ozorowski explained that the concept also includes parking in the rear of the building so people will not be backing in and out of parking spaces directly onto Germantown Pike.  
ii) Mr. Joe Didomenic, 2797 Egypt Road, asked for clarification on the difference between the Class 1 and Class 2 uses.  
(1) Mr. DiPaolo explained that Class 1 uses are by right and Class 2 uses are by conditional use. For Class 2, the BOS holds a public hearing and has a say in permitting the use prior to the application going through the regular land development process.  
(2) Mr. Didomenic questioned how the uses were split into the two classes, stating it does not make sense that a small cheese shop would have to go through a conditional use, but a funeral

home, library or museum are allowed by right. He remarked that the uses were fantastic compared to the uses in the current ordinance, but the difference between the classes does not make sense.

- (3) Mr. DiPaolo explained that the Class 1 uses listed in the draft ordinance are also in the existing ordinance. The Class 2 uses are broken out from the specialty retail category, and they have listed specific types of businesses rather than the more general specialty retail.
  - (4) Mr. Didomenic continued to comment on the need to reconsider how the uses are broken down, noting that a funeral home could bring 500 cars to the area in a 24 hour period, where a small bakery would have less strain on the community.
  - (5) **ACTION ITEM** – The VCC will review the Class 1 vs. Class 2 uses in relation to their impact on the community.
- iii) Mr. Ferraro commented that limitations in the ordinance would stop a larger museum etc. from going to the BOS as Class 1. He questioned what the community wants to see as their vision for the future of Evansburg?
- (1) Mrs. Damato remarked that they need to provide places for people to walk, and not have late night stores in residential areas.
  - (2) **ACTION ITEM** – The VCC will review the hours of operation in the ordinance.
- iv) Mr. David Maris, 3856 Germantown Pike, commented that this sounds more like a business district than a residential district. There are currently more homes than businesses. Mr. Maris noted that years ago there were only sidewalks on one side of the street, and asked if they were now proposing them on both sides of the street?
- (1) Mr. DiPaolo indicated that this had not yet been determined. He explained that they do not want this to be just a business district, nor do they want to push people out. They are trying to achieve a balance that allows for both uses.
  - (2) Mr. Maris asked about a 20% tax credit for fixing up historic structures. Mr. DiPaolo noted that there is a federal tax credit program for businesses that fix up these structures.
  - (3) Mrs. Damato asked if it allows for businesses to come in and tear down historic structures? Mr. DiPaolo explained they are trying to encourage people to preserve the historic structures by using density bonuses.
- v) Mrs. Elaine Simone, 3847 Germantown Pike, asked for clarification on what comprised the VC district.
- (1) Mr. DiPaolo reviewed a map of the area and identified the boundaries. He explained that as part of the process, the VCC did recommend rezoning several parcels.
  - (2) **ACTION ITEM** – Mr. Comroe requested that the VCC review the relationship between some of the proposed uses in relation to parking requirements, and suggested that they limit some of the uses in relation to parking.
- vi) Mr. Ralph Gambone, 3890 Germantown Pike, suggested that for the sidewalks, perhaps they could reduce the speed from 35 mph to 15 mph, narrow the roadway, and install a macadam walkway on either side of the road.
- (1) There was a discussion of area neighborhoods and sidewalk connectivity. Mr. DiPaolo noted that any changes to the speed limit would go through the Township, and they would see what could be done; however PennDOT determines this.
- vii) Mr. Didomenic remarked that the dimensional standards were doubled for the Class 2 uses, and perhaps this should be switched with some of the Class 1 standards.
- (1) Mr. DiPaolo explained that they reviewed the square footage of existing retail shops in the area when setting the dimensional standards.
  - (2) Mr. Ozorowski noted that dimensional coverage goes with new construction, but if someone wants to use an existing structure and turn it into a business they could.
  - (3) Mr. Didomenic questioned if the people of Evansburg wanted it to become another Skippack Village, and suggested they concentrate on the Egypt Road area where people want change.

- viii) Mr. Maris asked if someone had a use, such as his automotive garage, could it be sold as an automotive garage? Mr. DiPaolo indicated that yes, the use would be grand fathered with the property.
- ix) Mr. Ozorowski asked if there were any uses listed that the residents did not like?
  - (1) Mr. Chet Houseal asked if the pharmacy use would permit a drive-thru? Mr. Ozorowski indicated that a drive-thru was not permitted.
    - (a) Mr. Houseal asked if there was a fine for razing a historic building? Mr. DiPaolo noted that there is only a fine if you do not obtain a permit to raze a building. He explained that this was why the VCC is trying to give an incentive to developers to retain their historic structures.
    - (2) Mrs. Damato asked if any big box pharmacies would be able to come in? Mr. DiPaolo noted that there is a 5,000 sq. ft. footprint limit that does allow for multiple structures on the property. There are also dimensional standards limiting the building width, etc. that try to take scale into consideration.
      - (a) Mr. Olszewski commented that the limits in the ordinance would prevent a WaWa or CVS from coming in because they want bigger areas.
      - (b) Mrs. Damato commented that she likes the existing ordinance.
- x) Mr. Maris questioned how the lighting for pedestrians would impact the residents? Mr. DiPaolo indicated they had not worked on the lighting standards yet.
  - (1) **ACTION ITEM** – The VCC will develop lighting standards for the ordinance.
- xi) Mr. Ferraro commented that some neighbors will eventually move, and some will be replaced by businesses. This ordinance will help control what happens when that does occur.
- xii) Mr. Olszewski noted that the specialty retail term was originally invented for uses that would fit into an old house, so they could run a business out of the house. He suggested they consider placing some performance standards in to limit how big the use can be.
  - (1) Mr. Didomenic remarked that he would rather have a County planner tell him he couldn't put something in an area, than to tell him they could put in a museum. He would rather they be up front with the uses and not limit the size of things.
  - (2) Mr. Olszewski noted that a County planner couldn't tell you what to do with your property, but can provide ideas and help bring them together.
- xiii) Mrs. Simone commented that there is an area behind Germantown Pike where Stewart & Conti built homes, and there was to be green space at the rear of these parcels. She remarked that there is no green space there, complaints were made but the Township did nothing about it.
  - (1) **ACTION ITEM** – Mr. DiPaolo will have the Township look into the green space between Germantown Pike and Vincent Drive.
- xiv) Mr. Stemple commented that he does not want people leaving the meeting and thinking that the speed limit will be reduced to 15 mph. He stated that it is difficult to reduce a speed to 25 mph, which is usually for residential areas only. The Township could pursue reducing the speed limit, but there has to be a special exception in order for PennDOT to approve a speed reduction in an area.
- xv) Mr. Conrad Frederick, 3765 Germantown Pike, asked what he needs to do to have a speed limit sign posted on his property, because everyone speeds down the road.
  - (1) Mr. Stemple explained placement requirements for speed limit sign installation, but commented that if there had previously been a sign that was knocked down, they should replace it.
- xvi) Mr. Didomenic asked if massage parlor was permitted under personal service use? Mr. DiPaolo stated it was not, that personal service was more like hairdresser or tailor, and is defined in the ordinance.
- xvii) Ms. Lisa Jost, 3851 Germantown Pike, commented that her vision for the area would be for no thru traffic to be permitted in the area, because the truck traffic is worse than the cars.

- (1) Mr. Ferraro asked if it would be possible to get one-way traffic on certain parts of Germantown Pike?
  - (2) Mr. Olszewski commented that this would probably be as likely as getting no thru traffic, it would be highly unlikely.
- xviii) Rev. Sunny Hallanan requested the aerial view be brought up again, and Mr. DiPaolo reviewed the VC area on this photograph.
- (1) Mrs. Damato pointed to one area on the map and asked if this was an area where businesses would go?
  - (2) Mrs. Simone commented that the area in question is the area that was promised as green space.
  - (3) Mr. DiPaolo remarked that a lot of the lots are too narrow (100' x 200') and would require lots to be combined in order to develop the land. Additionally, new DEP standards require stormwater to be controlled on site.
- xix) Mr. Frederick questioned if his lot was on the part of the map zoned VC? He thinks he is not VC, and is concerned with parking his truck in his driveway. Mr. DiPaolo noted that the new ordinance does not affect anything with Mr. Frederick's vehicle.
- xx) An unidentified resident, who owns the property where Mile Hill Wicker is located, questioned if his parcel was going to be rezoned RPBD? Mr. DiPaolo noted that the VCC has made recommendations for some parcels to be rezoned, but he is not sure when that would occur.
- xxi) Rev. Hallanan thanked the members of the VCC for all of their efforts, which she stated are important for the future of the community.

**4) Adjournment:**

- a) The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.