

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
VILLAGE COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 18, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

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. Borai, Mr. Comroe, Mr. DiPaolo, Mr. Ferraro, Mrs. Maris, Mr. Ozorowski and Mr. Stemple.
- b) Mr. Hager and Mrs. Satterwhite were absent.
- c) Also present was Watson Olszewski from the Montgomery County Planning Commission, and Mr. Michael Siegel, Director of Community Development.

3) Discussion of map changes in the Audubon area:

- a) The committee reviewed previously distributed colored maps of the Audubon area with the label "2791 Egypt Road."
- b) Mr. DiPaolo noted that previous discussion regarding map changes to the Audubon area resulted in the Village Commercial Committee (VCC) deciding to leave the VC zoning as it currently exists. However, several neighbors in the area have expressed interest in having their properties rezoned to VC. Some of these residents are in attendance this evening.
- c) Mr. Olszewski discussed the current map and zoning in the Park Avenue, Pawlings Road and Egypt Road area. He noted that according to County tax records, the County is unaware of certain existing businesses. The parcels in this area are not as deep as those in the Evansburg area, however they could be combined and provide parking in the rear of the lot. Some lots back up to existing residences, which could present problems in the Wren Road area.
 - i) Mr. Ozorowski asked if there were any sidewalks in this area? Mr. DiPaolo noted that there are not, this is the same scenario as Evansburg.
 - ii) Mr. Siegel remarked that he would like to see the VC zoning continue along the North side of Egypt Road extending from lot 2793 through 2783. It was noted that 2790 Egypt Road is also VC, however this is not labeled on the map. On Pawlings Road, parcels 1110, 1106 and 1104 are also VC, but not labeled on the map.
 - iii) Mr. Comroe noted that extending VC up to parcels 2781 and 2779 on Egypt Road would bring the zoning to a stop at a "landmark" with Culp Road. Mr. Stemple expressed concern on the impact this would have for 7 Culp Road.
- d) Several residents in attendance presented their opinions on the rezoning:
 - i) Mr. & Mrs. John and Maria Perese, 2791 Egypt Road, noted they were also representing a request from Mrs. Nora Keplinger at 2793 Egypt Road, in requesting their property be rezoned VC. Mrs. Perese commented that the fast moving traffic makes it difficult to exit her driveway, and brings noise and dirt into her home. The vacant bar is an eyesore with a potential for crime. She is surrounded by businesses. The area is dangerous, and she would never want to see anyone with a child living in one of these houses along Egypt Road for safety reasons.
 - ii) Mrs. Jackie Kakos, 2788 Egypt Road, is also in favor of rezoning, and stated she cannot get out of her driveway.
 - iii) Mrs. Jean Woltemate, 2785 Egypt Road stated that she is also in favor of the rezoning, as are the neighbors on either side of her property.
 - iv) Mr. Perese noted this was the third time he has come to a Township meeting to request the rezoning. He has done this at various points in time prior to this current rezoning discussion.
 - v) Mrs. Woltemate questioned what the restricted uses in Evansburg were? Mr. DiPaolo explained the proposed Evansburg VC ordinance, and the uses were discussed. It was noted that there

would be different ordinances for Evansburg and Audubon, so the uses could be tailored to each section of the Township.

- vi) There was a discussion of the impact rezoning the parcels that back up to Wren Road would have on residents. Deliveries, parking, noise etc. could present problems, as these parcels do not have direct access to Egypt Road.
 - vii) The parcels leading up to the Wren Road parcels that do not back onto Wren Road include 2790, 2788, 2786, and 2784. These four parcels could use cross access easements to create a parking area in the rear and have one access onto Egypt Road if they were rezoned.
 - viii) There was further discussion about extending the VC rezoning to parcels 2781 and 2779, but again concerns about 7 Culp Road were voiced.
 - ix) **MOTION** – Mr. Stemple made a motion to recommend that the following parcels be rezoned to VC: 2793, 2791, 2789, 2787, 2785, 2783, 2790, 2788, 2786, and 2784 Egypt Road. Mr. Comroe seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 8-0.
 - x) **ACTION ITEM** – Mr. Siegel will contact the property owners at 2781 and 2779 Egypt Road, and 7 Culp Road to solicit input on how they view rezoning the Egypt Road parcels.
- e) There was a discussion relating to the possible rezoning of additional parcels along Park Avenue. Specifically, parcels 1028, 1024, 1022 and 1020, and then parcels across Park Avenue – 1033 and 1027.
- i) The issue becomes, where do you stop the rezoning?
 - ii) The 1033 and 1027 parcels also back up to residential areas, whereas the ones across the street back up to the other parcels considered for rezoning on Egypt Road.
 - iii) Mr. DiPaolo is concerned about spreading commercial businesses along Park Avenue beyond the intersection.
 - iv) **ACTION ITEM** – Mr. Ferraro requested that the residents of the parcels being discussed along Park Avenue be invited to the next VCC meeting.
 - v) Mrs. Maris and Mr. Borai believe the rezoning should be restricted to the parcels along Egypt Road.
 - vi) Mr. Ozorowski noted they have already doubled the VC district in this area of the Township.
 - vii) Mr. Siegel has concerns about widening Park Avenue and having to take part of people’s front yards.
 - viii) Mr. DiPaolo reviewed the governmental process that must be followed to amend the district, noting it will probably be 2-3 months before this goes to the Board of Supervisors for a vote.
- 4) Discussion of VC District on Ridge Pike near Parklane Drive, and Evansburg:**
- a) Mr. DiPaolo explained that the neighbors on Ridge Pike felt that rezoning these parcels to RPBD was too intense of a use for the area, however VC does not make sense for this area either. Perhaps PBO would be a good use. This area backs up to residential housing.
 - b) There was a general discussion of what RPBD could do to this area.
 - c) Mr. Siegel questioned if the parcels in Evansburg Historic District near Grange Avenue and Germantown Pike were being rezoned VC? Mr. DiPaolo indicated that it was. Mr. Siegel needs to know what map changes have to be made.
 - i) Mr. DiPaolo noted they are currently HC, and are specific parcels. The parcels from Terra Landscaping up to the electric shop, and from Mobile Lift up to the sign shop. They took the recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan for these zoning changes. This would include Bridaltown, a woodworking shop, a sign shop, Corbo, Prezey, CDI Lawn & Landscape.
 - ii) The problem is that it is HC, and should be neighborhood commercial.
- 5) Discussion of VC District at Pinetown & Egypt Roads:**
- a) Mr. Siegel noted the property owner did get a flood plane elevation, and these parcels are above it.
 - b) Mr. Olszewski reviewed the parcels being considered in this area. There is nothing there that qualifies it as VC. The existing businesses are not in character with VC, nor are there homes in character with VC.

- c) Mr. Comroe noted that the property owner came in a few years back with a strip mall for that location. That property was zoned VC, specifically to keep things like WaWa or fast food out of there. If the zoning is changed, it could open Pandora's box. The past office plan proposal was approved, and Mr. Comroe reviewed the details he had of that plan.
 - d) Mrs. Maris suggested zoning this PBO. Mr. Comroe stated that the area was rezoned.
 - e) Mr. Siegel explained that the developer received a variance to construct an office building in VC because neighbors were in favor of it.
 - f) Neilson could still come back and build a shopping center on that property as well.
 - g) Mr. Siegel suggested rezoning it PBO. PBO would also fit well with the White property.
 - h) Mr. Olszewski commented that if it is VC on the opposite side of the road and that does not make sense, the White side of the road should not be VC either. He thinks it would make sense for Mr. White to apply for a use variance, however he already did this and was turned down. Mr. Comroe stated that Mr. White has no hardship; he knew the zoning when he bought it. Also, he stated he lived in the house, and he doesn't.
 - i) Mr. Ferraro asked how much weight was being given to traffic on Egypt Road? The traffic keeps it from being residential. Mr. Olszewski noted that there are a lot of very nice homes on busy roads in the County; traffic does not preclude residential zoning.
 - j) Mr. Ozorowski thinks this area of the Township would be better zoned PBO rather than VC.
 - k) Mr. Ferraro does not see a reason to restrict Mr. White if there is already a business across the street. It was pointed out that Mr. White knew the zoning when he purchased the property, it is residential, and he just put a business in there without proper procedure being followed.
 - l) There was further discussion of the impact rezoning the White property, plus his three neighbors, to VC. The Comprehensive Plan recommends PBO. The potential impact of having the park behind these parcels was also discussed. Mrs. Maris and Mr. Borai voiced opposition to rezoning these parcels.
 - m) **MOTION** – Mr. Borai made a motion to leave the White parcel as it is currently zoned. Mr. Comroe seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 7-1. Mr. Ferraro opposed the motion.
 - n) **MOTION** – Mr. Ozorowski made a motion to rezone the seven parcels from the Richard Shaw property to 2841 Egypt Road from VC to PBO. Mr. Borai seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 7-0-1. Mr. Ferraro abstained from the vote.
- 6) Continued Discussion of VC District on Ridge Pike near Parklane Drive:**
- a) Mr. DiPaolo reviewed the parcels currently zoned VC in this area of the Township. The Township owns 3323 and 3329. The Wicker Shop, the Dance Studio, and the Music Studio are split zoned with VC in front and R1 in back. These parcels are surrounded on three sides by residential areas. There are also several homes on Bittersweet Circle that are zoned VC and not R1.
 - b) Mr. DiPaolo asked the committee to reconsider this area and make recommendations on what would best fit that area.
 - c) It was suggested that they at least rezone the residences to R1.
 - d) **ACTION ITEM** – Mr. Siegel will look into the history on when this section of the Township was originally zoned VC.
 - e) There was a discussion of the properties, and the impact various zoning districts would have on the existing property owners. It was suggested that the Township land be zoned for municipal use.
 - f) It was decided to rezone the houses to R1, and leave the remaining parcels VC for the present time.
 - g) **MOTION** – Mr. Borai made a motion to remove the VC zoning from the residential houses, and zone them R1, for Bittersweet Circle parcels only. Mr. Comroe seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 8-0.
- 7) Upcoming Meeting:**
- a) The next meeting will be March 25, 2008 at 7 p.m.
- 8) Adjournment:**
- a) The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.