

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP  
VILLAGE COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MAY 6, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

---

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

- a) Supervisor DiPaolo called the public meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2) Roll Call:**

- a) The following committee members were present: Mr. DiPaolo, Mr. Ferraro, Mr. Hager, Mrs. Maris, Mr. Ozorowski, and Mrs. Satterwhite.
- b) arrived late.
- c) Mrs. Bateman, Mr. Borai, Mr. Comroe, and Mr. Stemple were absent.
- d) Also present were Mr. Watson Olszewski from the Montgomery County Planning Commission, and Mr. Michael Siegel, Directory of Community Development.

**3) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

- a) **MOTION** – Mr. Hager made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 15, 2008. Mrs. Maris seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0-2. Mr. Ferraro and Mrs. Satterwhite abstained from the motion because they were not in attendance at that meeting.

**4) Discussion of Standards in the Village Commercial Ordinance for the Audubon area:**

- a) Mr. DiPaolo commented that he would like to discuss the additional requirements for specialty uses that Mr. Siegel distributed via e-mail.
- b) Mr. Olszewski distributed a slightly revised draft of the proposed Audubon VC Ordinance, with a draft date of May 6, 2008, which includes new standards.
- c) Mr. Olszewski also displayed a large map of the Audubon Village area depicting how these properties could be developed with the draft standards.
- i) Mr. Olszewski noted that he calculated the size of the buildings and then added onto them to make 2,000 square feet. Then he figured the maximum building size based on the number of parking spaces that could fit on each lot. A building with the total square footage of 4,000 sq. ft. on two floors would need 16 parking spaces. Each of the lots depicted on the map has a 24' wide driveway.
- ii) Mr. Hager asked where the common driveway in the rear of the properties would fit? Mr. Olszewski explained that this map depicts how each lot looks if developed separately, and shows that the lots can be developed under the proposed standards. It does not take stormwater management into consideration. Mr. Olszewski showed how the interconnected parking could work on the parcels to create a loop for traffic flow.
- iii) Mr. Olszewski then showed how lots across the street could be combined and would fit on the various parcels.
- iv) Mr. Ferraro asked how impervious coverage would work? Mr. Olszewski explained that 30% is permitted, but that could go up to 50% when the applicants grant easements etc.
- (1) Mr. Ozorowski asked if you just had to offer the easement to get the relief? Mr. Olszewski indicated that is basically how it works. This is addressed on page five of the ordinance, under section 143-77.A.6.
- (2) Mr. DiPaolo remarked that they would show the stub that would cross property lines.
- (3) Mr. Siegel stated that they put cross access easements in and show them on the plan, and they are noted on the deed for the property.
- (4) Mr. Ozorowski asked if they make the property owners go back in and redo their parking lots when the easements come into play? Mr. Olszewski explained that they have to install the stub during original construction and cut it off so that is already exists.

- v) There was a discussion on the mechanism that would spur shared driveways, and if this should this be included in a resolution. Shared driveways cannot be forced upon residential homeowners, but is related to the development process.
  - (1) Mr. Siegel suggested they could give an incentive thru the conditional use, which would stay with the property forever. He also commented there could be something in the ordinance that forces a developer to tie into the connections.
  - (2) There was a discussion regarding if an ordinance could require the connections versus making this a requirement during conditional use. Not all properties would necessarily require a conditional use.
  - (3) The driveway width was debated, 24' vs. 30'. Mr. Ferraro suggested it might be easier to have two one-way driveways to enter and exit the properties.
  - (4) PennDOT requirements relating to road improvements such as curbs, road widening, burying of utilities etc. may also come into play.
- vi) The committee members concurred that the proposed standards would work with regard to size.
- d) Discussion of changes to the draft ordinance:
  - i) Mr. Olszewski explained that the draft changes to Section 143-80 (conditions of approval) are to tailor the ordinance to Audubon, which his different from Evansburg. He has used the year 1945, and not 1899, in reference to existing structures.
  - ii) Mr. Ferraro questioned how they lost fitness center as a use? Mr. Ozorowski stated this was voted on at the last meeting.
  - iii) Discussion of Section 143-75.C:
    - (1) Mr. Olszewski questioned how item four in this section should be finalized. Does the group want multiple buildings on one of these lots? Or, do they want multiple uses permitted within one building?
    - (2) The group debated these topics.
    - (3) Mr. Ozorowski noted that this is permitted in Evansburg.
    - (4) Mrs. Maris questioned how anyone would go to the expense of developing one of these small lots for a small business.
    - (5) Mr. Hager commented that he thought the group had previously agreed to not allow multiple buildings on one lot, which the committee concurred with.
    - (6) Mr. DiPaolo questioned if they should permit multiple buildings only where the existing structure is being retained? The group found this agreeable, however the ordinance needs to be clear that multiple buildings are not permitted unless the original building is retained.
    - (7) **ACTION ITEM** – this section should be modified to read: Multiple buildings are not permitted except when retaining the existing structure.
    - (8) Mr. Ferraro questioned why places of worship were removed from the uses? The committee reviewed previous discourse on this topic, pointing out that religious uses are permitted by right in many areas of the Township, this particular area is small and there is not room for corresponding parking, and this is similar to the funeral home use in that it would generate a lot of traffic.
    - (9) The committee began to discuss the impact of tax-exempt uses. Mr. Siegel remarked that 33% of the Township is tax exempt, from parks, schools, churches, County property and open space. New changes to the law will provide a portion of the liquor tax (up to 10%) to areas where tax-exempt properties exceed 17%, which would apply to Lower Providence.
  - iv) Further Discussion of Standards:
    - (1) Mr. Ferraro asked who was responsible for maintaining a common driveway? Mr. DiPaolo explained that there would be a maintenance agreement between the applicable property owners.
    - (2) 143-79.B.3 – There was discussion on various ways to modify the wording of this item. Mr. Hager stated that rather than put the Board of Supervisors in a position to decide this, it should be written as a requirement.

- (a) Mr. Ozorowski came up with new wording for this section:
- (b) **ACTION ITEM** – This section should be modified to read: Access easements or other legal mechanisms shall be provided for common driveways and common parking areas.
- (3) For 143-79.B.2, Mr. Siegel suggested changing the word “encouraged” to “required.”
  - (a) Mr. Ferraro commented that there should be a mechanism to encourage common driveways.
  - (b) Section 143-77.6 was referenced and perhaps should be added in here.
  - (c) Mr. Hager commented that if they want common shared driveways and parking areas it has to be required in the ordinance. If things are only encouraged, they tend to be ignored.
  - (d) **MOTION** – Mr. Hager made a motion to change the word “encouraged” to “required” for Section 143-79.B.2. Mr. Ferraro seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 7-0.
  - (e) There was a question if 143-77.A.5 was now unnecessary. Mr. DiPaolo does not think changing the wording as indicated in the motion negates this section.
- (4) **ACTION ITEM** – Section 143-79.A.4 – the word “historic” should be removed.
- (5) Mr. Hager questioned if the “Historic Preservation / Adaptive Re-use” section from page one of the ordinance should be removed?
  - (a) This began a discussion of preserving the existing homes in the Audubon village area. Mr. Ozorowski questioned if they needed to add all of Section 143.80 from the Evansburg Ordinance to the Audubon VC Ordinance?
  - (b) There was some discussion regarding the value of preserving these homes and who would buy them. Mr. Hager commented there are different building styles associated with different periods in history that all have value. He would like to see the bungalow style homes preserved.
  - (c) Mr. Ozorowski questioned if it was really necessary for someone to have to go through all the steps in 143-80.1.a by going to a non-profit historical agency to try to sell it etc.? Mr. Olszewski does not think this makes sense in this version of the ordinance.
  - (d) Mr. Hager does not want to see someone coming in and tearing down all the buildings in that area of the Township.
  - (e) Mr. Ferraro questioned the value of preserving these 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings. Mr. Hager commented that it is our history.
  - (f) After further discussion regarding preserving the look and feel of the area, it was decided they should try to provide incentives for re-use.
  - (g) Mr. Siegel commented that the group was going in the right direction with regard to how they are viewing existing buildings.
- (6) There was discussion of what type of style should be used when rebuilding in this area. Do they use something to match the Audubon Inn, or similar to the bungalows?
  - (a) Mrs. Maris asked if they should keep the “pre-1945” wording as listed in 143-80.A?
  - (b) Perhaps items 1, 2, and 3 should be removed from 143-80.A
  - (c) Mr. Ferraro suggested if someone tears down a building, they must use a similar style in the new building.
  - (d) There was a discussion of stylebooks. Mr. DiPaolo asked for design standards for bungalow and craftsman style homes.
  - (e) **ACTION ITEM** – the design standards for bungalow and craftsman homes will be provided for review.
- e) Mr. Siegel’s document with Additional Requirements for Specialty Uses will be looked at first for the next meeting.
- f) Mr. Siegel commented that the committee needs to decide what they want to see in the VC zone.

**5) Upcoming Meeting:**

- a) The next meeting will be May 20, 2008 at 7 p.m.

**6) Adjournment:**

- a) **MOTION** – Mr. Ferraro made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Satterwhite seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.