

North Wales Borough Planning Commission
September 4, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Commission members present were Gregory J. D'Angelo, Lillian Higgins, Greta Martin-Washington, Linda McAdoo and Mark Tarlecki; Alan Guzzardo, Assistant Borough Manager/Zoning Officer, Christine Hart, Borough Manager, Maggie Dobbs Donnelly, Senior Planner MCPC, and Melissa Prugar, P.E., Borough Engineer, were also in attendance. There were four people in the audience.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tarlecki at 7:04 P.M.

Mr. Tarlecki outlined the procedure for presenting an agenda item: The applicant will make a presentation, questions and/or comments will then be made by the Borough staff, the Planning Commission, and the public.

Mr. Tarlecki announced that the Planning Commission had met previously this evening from 6:00-7:00 PM in a workshop meeting to continue the review of the Transit-Oriented Development District (TOD).

1. Summary of workshop discussion – Mrs. Donnelly presented a summary of the workshop discussion as follows:
 - a. She reviewed the draft development schemes prepared by the MCPC that identified how the development standards of the TOD, as amended, would impact existing properties within the district as well as additional properties, not currently within the TOD but identified for inclusion in the district by the Comprehensive Plan. Planning Commission members reviewed the data and provided feedback on the zoning text language.
 - b. Building height:
 - It was noted that there is no minimum required height in the district. However, based on density, parking, and land use requirements, any new development would inherently be at least two stories, so it may not be necessary to define this requirement specifically.
 - Previously, a bonus fourth floor was discussed as a development possibility. However, due to the parcel sizes, impervious cover, and parking requirements, it is highly unlikely that a developer would be able to meet the standards of the district with a fourth floor. Therefore, the district will limit all buildings to three stories.
 - c. Architectural standards:

- The draft development schemes included some building elevations to serve as a preliminary visual to aid in the visioning process. From this basis, the Planning Commission had a few questions clarifying the architectural design standards and requested that the standards include strong language to guide architectural designs toward a more historic look and feel to match other areas in the Borough.

d. Density:

- Based on the draft development schemes, it was determined that single-use multifamily buildings may be able to achieve a density of up to 35 DU/acre. This will be the standard for multifamily only, and a reduced density of 30 DU/acre will be used for mixed-use buildings (which have different parking requirements and increases the overall number of parking spaces that need to fit on a lot).
- Parking:
 - The Planning Commission approved of the shared parking calculations, which require one parking space for a one-bedroom residential unit, 1.5 parking spaces for a two+ bedroom residential unit, three parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail/commercial space, and shared parking at a ratio of one space for every two residential parking spaces (exclusive to mixed use buildings).

e. Site Circulation:

- The Planning Commission discussed the need to have up to two curb cuts to facilitate site circulation in developments and what the preferences are for full-turning movements versus restricted turning movements depending on location on the site and proximity to an intersection. MCPC will confirm what the SALDO requirements are regulating the minimum distance of a driveway entrance from an intersection.

f. Next steps: The Planning Commission has asked MCPC to continue making the edits, as discussed, to be reviewed at the next workshop meeting (October 2). It is anticipated that all final comments will be received during this workshop for incorporation into a final draft to be reviewed and recommended to Council by the Planning Commission in either November or December.

2. Public comment – There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. D'Angelo, seconded by Mrs. Higgins, to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2019 meeting. The motion passed 5-0.

4. LD #19-02 – Final Land Development Review for North Wales Area Library, 233 S. Swartley Street

Present for the applicant: Greg Landis, Library Board Member
Jayne Blackledge, Library Director

The proposal is to add six (6) parking spaces to extend the existing parking lot on the east side of the Library property.

Boucher & James letter dated August 21, 2019

Mr. Landis reviewed the Library's responses as follows:

- a. Revised plans have been submitted addressing the SALDO comments on pages 2 through 4 of the Boucher & James review letter.
- b. New lighting in the parking expansion will match existing LED lighting on the site.

Borough Engineer Comments

- a. Item #4 – A note must be added to the plan that the Library will cover the cost of replacing all vegetative materials for a period of at least 18 months.
- b. Item #10 - A partial waiver will still be required.
- c. Item #18 – Applicant can request a waiver of financial security but the development agreement cannot be waived.
- d. The stormwater management calculations need to be provided for review.

Planning Commission Comments

- a. Mrs. Washington asked if the Borough Engineer agreed with the 9 foot wide off-street parking spaces – Zoning Ordinance Comments #1 – and Ms. Prugar said yes, this was consistent with what was presented to the Borough Zoning Hearing Board in 2007.
- b. Mr. Tarlecki said he would like to see Library staff encouraged to use the new parking to allow Library patrons to park closer to the building entrance on S. Swartley St. Mrs. Hart suggested a “Staff Parking Only” sign be considered.
- c. When asked when construction would begin, Greg replied that once land development approval was granted the Library would begin raising the necessary money and they hope to start construction in the spring or summer of 2020.
- d. Mr. Tarlecki stated that applicant needs to submit a stormwater management plan for review by the Borough Engineer.

MCPC letter dated August 21, 2019

Mr. Landis reviewed the Library responses, noting where the Library would comply with the recommendations. MCPC had suggested extending the existing concrete sidewalk but the Library believes the existing sidewalk along the east side of the building is adequate. MCPC had also suggested some type of pathway be considered to access the Library entrance on Pennsylvania Avenue but the Library wants patrons to use the main entrance on S. Swartley Street.

Mrs. Dobbs stated that the Library will need to request a waiver from the SALDO, Section 184-26.F.(1), Screen buffer. She also asked that a signature block be added to the plan for MCPC to include the MCPC project #19-0202-001.

Resident Comments

Cathy Decherney, 319 Washington Avenue, said that based on her observations most patrons do not use the existing parking lots but instead park on both sides of S. Swartley Street. With this new parking, she would like to see patrons able to use the entrance door to the Library which is now used by staff only. Mrs. Blackledge said this would have to be studied, since from a security standpoint patrons would be using hallways which enter into the community rooms, kitchen, and administrative offices before reaching the public rooms of the Library.

Herb Schlegel, 301 West Montgomery Avenue, said since the Library moved to its present location he and his wife have experienced numerous issues with parking in front of his barn, blocking the alley, and inability to find a parking space by their home which is at the corner of W. Montgomery Avenue and S. Swartley St. He said that better enforcement of parking along S. Swartley Street would definitely help.

After discussion on how to proceed, the Planning Commission asked that the applicant prepare the required stormwater management plan and letter listing the requested waivers and submit these documents to the Borough for staff review and comment. Mr. Landis agreed to do so.

A motion was made by Mrs. Washington, seconded by Mrs. Higgins, that the Planning Commission recommend that Borough Council approve the final land development plans as revised contingent upon receipt and review of stormwater management plans by the Borough Engineer and a letter listing the requested waivers to ensure that the revised plans are in compliance with the Borough's Zoning, SALDO, and Stormwater Management Ordinances. The motion passed 5-0.

5. LD #19-01 – Preliminary/Final Land Development Review for 690 East Walnut Street

Present for the applicant: Edward M. Wild, Esq.
Thomas Guy Jadico, P.E.
Keith Kroeger, KKR Properties
Ryan Petersen, KKR Properties

Mr. Wild reviewed the proposal to add a second story and convert an existing one-story non-residential structure of 3,300 square feet into a six-unit apartment building. The property is located in the TOD District. The variances requested in Z-19-01 were granted by the Zoning Hearing Board on September 3, 2019 and a written decision will be issued within 45 days. There is a shared access driveway with the adjacent property. No change will be made to the building footprint. Plans include a curb cut, apron, and driveway for the dumpster on North 6th Street.

Boucher & James letter dated August 29, 2019

Mr. Wild reviewed this letter and indicated applicant would comply with the following items:

- a. Zoning - #2, 5 and 6

- b. SALDO - #7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27
- c. Stormwater Management Ordinance - #28, 31, and 32
- d. Streets and Sidewalks Ordinance No. 181 - #35 and 36
- e. Sewers and Sewerage disposal - #37
- f. General Comments - #38, 39, and 40
- g. Plan Revision Comments - #41, 42 and 43

Staff Comments

Mr. Guzzardo noted that applicants will still need to request waivers for items #8 and 13, even though the Zoning Hearing Board granted variances for similar requirements in the Zoning Code. The applicants agreed and stated they would request the waivers.

SALDO comment #13, Shade trees waivers – 3 are required on Walnut Street and 1 on North 6th Street. One suggestion was to provide a bench, see if the SEPTA bus stop could be relocated to here. If the bench is provided and bus stop relocated, Mrs. Dobbs suggested that trash cans be provided to encourage deposit of trash.

SALDO comment #17, land reserved for park or recreation purposes. Mr. Guzzardo advised that in lieu of this Borough Council can consider a donation for a park amenity, the type and amount determined by Council.

Ms. Prugar noted that applicant will still need to request a waiver as noted in Item #21 under SALDO comments.

With regard to the new sidewalks proposed along the lot frontage on East Walnut Street, Mrs. Hart noted that the existing curb line along the E. Walnut Street frontage is low and that having the sidewalk right up to the street would probably not work; she asked that the plans consider a verge between sidewalk and street because of grade.

Stormwater management plans and drainage plan issues need to be resolved with Borough staff.

MCPC Comments – Mrs. Dobbs

- a. Suggested buffer alternatives to soften the thick buffer of evergreens which is currently proposed along E. Walnut Street.
- b. Requested that the site plans be revised to show the parking calculations used to arrive at the number of 14 required parking spaces.
- c. Consider plantings adjacent to the vinyl fence.
- d. Asked if curb wheel stops will be installed at the end of the parking spaces and the reply was this would be shown on the plan.

Planning Commission Comments

Mr. Tarlecki would like to see buffering around the dumpster area.

Resident Comment

Mark Oullette, 701 East Walnut Street, asked about the type of apartment complex planned. Mr. Petersen replied it would be 2 bedroom, 1.5 baths, 2 story units with monthly rent of \$1,500. He expressed concerns about where guests would park. Would like to see a buffer between sidewalk and apartment building. Asked how far the fence extended and Mr. Petersen replied the fence ends at the front of the building.

Mr. Guzzardo asked that the applicant submit a letter requesting an extension to the plan review timetable. Before the October meeting, applicant will resolve stormwater management plans and drainage plan issues with Borough staff and submit revised plans and a letter with requested waivers to be reviewed by Borough staff.

A motion was made by Mrs. McAdoo, seconded by Mr. D'Angelo, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Tarlecki, Chair