



UPPER UWCHLAN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP, MEETING

June 12, 2025

Minutes

Approved

LOCATION: Township Building, 140 Pottstown Pike, Chester Springs 19425

Attendees:

Sally Winterton, Chair; Joe Stoyack, Vice-Chair; Chad Adams, David Colajezzi, Jeff Smith (Meeting), Taylor Young

Chris Garrity, RGS (Workshop)

Gwen Jonik, Planning Commission Secretary

6:00 p.m. Workshop

Sally Winterton called the Workshop to order at 6:02 p.m. There was 1 citizen in attendance.

Landscaping / screening regulations. The Commission reviewed landscaping / screening regulation amendments prepared by Chris Garrity of RGS via a slide presentation, highlighting suggestions that could reduce the number of waivers requested and to simplify the regulations.

Discussion included:

1. compensatory tree replacement requirement – woodland disturbance. There are too many categories and size / quantities of replacement trees; simplify the tree replacement chart, increase the size range of each category, allow different types of trees and shrubs – some shade, some evergreens -- dependent on the site; for the commercial district uses on wooded lots, perhaps leave restrictions out of that zoning district; we won't be able to avoid all waiver requests; developer to make a conscious effort to replace trees being disturbed; allow other required trees to count toward the tree replacement requirement; only require replacement trees for those that were healthy, viable trees. In the villages, focus on landscaping with shrubs and screening rather than just planting trees; perhaps a hedge and berm combination. When an area is too heavily planted, they crowd out each other, requiring removal. Screening between zoning districts needs to be balanced. Plant trees of value.

2. buffer tree requirement. Existing code can be vague regarding quantities, and when and where they're needed; propose a land use chart to clarify when and where a buffer is needed, specifying quantities and types, different "levels" depending on the use. Perhaps a performance standard to measure such as within "x" years, this is what it'll look like". Heavy landscaping causes issues with underground infrastructure – sanitary and storm sewers, etc. Require and enforce a pleasing, appealing buffer between districts.

Suggestions:

Remove compensatory tree replacement from commercial (C3) and industrial districts and the remaining landscaping ordinances take care of it. Keep the compensatory replacement in C1 Village District and all Residential Districts.

Chris Garrity suggested a list similar to PECO's that says what types of trees are good along roads and under utility lines; use other amenities to enhance landscaping, such as fencing, flowers, etc. He suggested replacement trees should be 2.5" so they establish quicker.

Consensus reached regarding tree replacements: require replacement of healthy, valuable trees, not 'junk' trees. Buffers between districts are needed and if categorized by a land use chart can provide flexibility. Examples of land use charts were provided in Mr. Garrity's February 2025 draft.

Briefly discussed was the type of trees for parking lots; perhaps a smaller leaf that doesn't clog storm drains.

3. Standards and Guarantees. There are a lot of repetitive or scattered standards in our subdivision/land development (SALDO) and zoning ordinances (ZO). Propose moving them to one section, everything in one spot. It was discussed to move them to SALDO where it's easier to modify as needed. Guaranteed plantings should be within the 18-month maintenance bond period.

4. Approved Tree List. Chris proposes removing the approved tree list and instead, reference DCNR's, Cornell's, or Penn State's as they are constantly updating those lists. There will be native trees on those lists. Perhaps a certain percentage can be ornamental, non-native trees.

Next steps. Chris will prepare a 'clean copy' of our ordinance and compare it with an existing project. Neal Fisher offered Eagleview Lot 1A, currently under construction as the test project.

If Commission members have any further comments, send them to Chris. He'll return to the Commission's August 14 Workshop.

Sally adjourned the Workshop at 6:59 p.m.

7:00 p.m. Meeting

Sally Winterton called the Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. There were 3 citizens in attendance.

Conditional Use Application – 705 N. Reeds Road.

The Applicant, Michaela Kolbe attended to answer questions. The Commission reviewed the Application. There are 2 cottages on the property. Currently one is a short-term rental and she's living in the other, but she confirmed her plans are to rent both in the future. She is seeking approval for both cottages to be used as short-term rentals. She has 90% occupancy of the one, which is a 1 bedroom, 2-guests cottage, typically couples getting away from the city or holiday visitors.

Joe Stoyack moved to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the Conditional Use Application for parcel 32-5-15 as presented. Taylor Young seconded and all were in favor, motion carried.

Byers Station Parcel 5C Lot 2B Commercial Phase 2.

Alyson Zarro, Esq., summarized the previous approval for Lot 2B which included a drive-through restaurant and access to Pottstown Pike. The Phase 2 ~ Amended PRD Plan includes Celebree Daycare, the 6-space retail building, extension of the parking, elimination of the restaurant and Route 100 access, and another 10,500 SF 6-space building parallel to Route 100. There has been interest from medical office users. It might not be retail. Some leases have been signed for the previously approved retail building; no leases yet for anything medical. The aesthetics of Celebree will be repeated on the newly proposed 10,500 SF building. Parking was evaluated using small retail shops and 2 restaurants; 143 parking spaces are proposed which exceeds the maximum need.

Discussion included:

- Consider left turn signals at Park Road and Station Boulevard;
- The trash enclosure is next to the playground – can it be relocated?
- The retaining wall on the north side is concerning. It looks like it's only 8' from the building.
- Alyson Zarro noted the retaining wall is not as high as previously planned, and there is 2,000 SF less impervious coverage with this plan.

Jeff Smith moved, seconded by Taylor Young, to accept the Plan for consultant review. David Colajezzi inquired of the Phase 1 construction completion date. Ms. Zarro noted they are targeting occupancy beginning early 2026 for Celebree. Gerry Stein asked if parking can be used by the public off-hours. Ms. Zarro noted yes, that's part of the original approval. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Meeting Reports

Environmental Advisory Council (EAC). There was no report.

Historical Commission (HC). The next Lecture is June 17 regarding transportation.

Sally noted that Jessica has been serving on the Eagle Mobility Study, looking at enhancing all transportation modes; please fill out the public survey; discussing reconfiguring both ends of the Village; discussing how to improve traffic flow.

Approval of Minutes

Sally Winterton had a correction to the May 8 meeting adjournment time – 8:10 p.m.

Chad Adams moved, seconded by David Colajezzi, to approve as corrected the minutes of the May 8, 2025 Planning Commission meeting. All were in favor, motion carried.

The Commission's next meeting is July 10, 2025, 7:00 p.m. There will not be a 6:00 Workshop.

Open Session

The Township Block Party is this Saturday, June 14, 2025.

Gerry Stein asked if the Commission had seen the proposed 160-180 Park Road development that was coming before the Zoning Hearing Board later this month. Sally Winterton said it had not. Gerry asked what could be developed there by-right. Chad Adams believes there would be limitations regarding sanitary sewer capacity.

Sally Winterton questioned the Supervisors approving the updated Comprehensive Plan. Gwen Jonik confirmed it had been approved at the Board's April 2025 meeting and it would be posted on the website in the near future.

Adjournment

Jeff Smith moved to adjourn the Meeting at 7:48 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen A. Jonik
Planning Commission Secretary