

**Phoenixville Planning Commission
Minutes of August 12, 2010**

1. **Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:** The Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Ron Knabb with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America at 7:00 P.M.
2. **Roll Call:** Present: Debra Johnston, Marcia Eldred, James Evans, Jennifer Faggioli, Ron Knabb, David Saneck, Ray Ott-Bor. Planner, Albert Giannantonio-Bor.Engineer, Bev Wassel-Bor. Staff. Absent/Excused: Teena Peters-Chair, Kim Venzie-Bor.Solicitor, E.J.Krack-Bor.Mgr.
3. **Announcements/Correspondence:** None.
4. **Minutes of 05-13-10 and 07-08-10:** Minutes of 05-13-10 tabled again. Motion to accept 07-08-10 Minutes by M.Eldred, second by J.Evans, approved 5-0-1, J.Faggioli abstained.
5. **Zoning Hearing or Conditional Use Applications:** None.
6. **Old Business:** None.
7. **New Business:**

a) **PCE 2010-05, Office / Storage Buildings, Tax Parcel:15-8-2.2, Property Address: Route 23, Proposed Development: To construct storage units and/or office building, Applicant: Peter Melchiorre.** Mike Gavin, speaking for the applicant, stated that this is the land behind the Giant(Phoenix Plaza) Shopping Center. He stated that he was before the PC in 2002 and that they are here to see if PC prefers office, storage, or a mixed use. R.Knabb and M.Eldred had questions regarding access to the site. Mr. Gavin stated that the access point has changed over time, but that they have a legal access from Rt. 23 through the shopping center, past the Sears building, to their site after a court ruling. Mr. Gavin wanted to know whether the PC preferred the concept of office buildings or the concept of mini warehouses. R.Knabb commented that part of the easement/roadway access into the site is through a floodway. Mr. Gavin says that there is a court order settlement agreement with the Borough of Phoenixville, the property owner(422 Development), and the applicant, allowing the road through the floodway. R.Ott commented that when he reviews a plan that he assumes that the applicant has access to the property and that some of the uses may be interim. D.Johnston commented that use of storage buildings on the site does not create much traffic, but office buildings create more traffic. She is in favor of storage buildings. J.Evans commented that the applicant historically had access to the site with a continuing right of access and that the property owner has intrinsic rights to develop their property limited by Zoning Codes for the health, safety, and public welfare. The market will determine which decision to make. J. Evans stated that offices are needed and create a greater tax base for the community. M.Eldred commented that she would rather have storage buildings since they cause less traffic and that there is an excess of office buildings. J. Faggioli agrees with J.Evans and would prefer to see offices since Phoenixville has a need for it even if it is not downtown. D.Saneck commented that the economy will determine for the applicant whether to build warehouses or commercial office space or a combination of the two. D.Saneck also asked how the access road through the flood-way would be mitigated. Mr.Gavin responded that they had an outlet device configured on the plan to solve the problem.

***Public Participation:** Paul Kusko, Chair, Shade Tree Commission, stated that he has done much work on the Greenway Trails and that the Borough has a Greenway Ordinance that affects this project. He stated that the trail and the access road occupy the same land. He stated that the storage units cut off the trail. He wants

consideration for the Greenway Trails.

M.Eldred asked R.Ott how this proposed plan conforms to the proposed Comprehensive Plan. R.Ott stated that the Proposed Comprehensive Plan envisions the area for mixed-use development. In the Proposed Comprehensive Plan it is called French Creek Valley Re-Development. R.Ott does not see the development as a roadblock to anything envisioned down the road. He wants the developer to work with the Borough to leave space for the trails to be built. Mr. Gavin commented that he wants a decision from the PC as to what is the PC's position concerning the project because he will be going before Borough Council since the access easement is over property the Borough owns and controls. R.Ott stated that 1) PC should make a recommendation to Borough Council regarding use of the property for office, mini warehouses, or both; and 2) that the trail and the access road could be one and same at some point, since traffic would be low to make it work. R. Ott wants someone to make a motion. B.Wassel stated that a memo could be sent to Borough Council, but that most Sketch Plan Reviews are verbal. R.Knabb preferred a summation of PC points, since a recommendation was too formal at this point: 1) that the access agreement needs to be seen and that it supersedes Zoning, 2) that the PC is not strong one way or the other for storage or office and that traffic is a consideration, and 3) regarding the Greenway Trails, it needs to be determined if the Borough will give up land for the access roadway. R.Ott checked the SALDO regarding sketch plan submission which reads PC shall provide informal dialogue with the applicant. J.Evans commented that the Borough needs to look at all access possibilities especially a more eastern access from RT. 23.R. Knabb stated that a memo will be coming from PC to Borough Council regarding the Sketch Plan and that he will appoint a member of PC to attend the August 24, 2010 Borough Council Meeting.

b) PCE 2010-06:RSZ Orthopaedics, Tax Parcel: 15-14-30, Property Address:100 First Avenue, Proposed Development: Proposed 2-story building addition, Applicant: RSZ Orthopaedics. Warren Schreiner, executive director for RSZ Orthopaedics, and David Rentschler, engineer for Commonwealth Engineers, spoke for the applicants. The applicants propose a 2-story addition to their existing Medical Office Building located at the corner of Starr St. and First Ave. There is an existing 2-story building on the 0.365 acre parcel of land. They intend to bring a Spine Surgeon into their Practice and want to expand and modernize the existing office to accommodate the Practice. They state that according to Section 3304, 1.A. of the Zoning Ordinance that expansion of a non-conforming building is permitted. The Use is permitted by Right, but the building does not conform. R.Knabb suggested that the applicant may need to consider another site since the applicant has problems regarding the impervious coverage increasing from 40% to 60%, inability to meet parking requirements, and buffering requirements. Although the building is non-conforming, the Zoning allows a 50% expansion, but must conform with the ordinance. M.Eldred stated that this Medical Office will not generate as much traffic as a General Practitioner Office. D.Saneck suggested that a fence or natural screening be provided along Dean St. to minimize car lights. D.Johnston does not want a fence or screening. R.Ott states that the Use is compatible with a Residential neighborhood but that a Zoning Ordinance change may be needed. It was discussed that the applicant will most likely need to apply to the Zoning Hearing Board for variances, which may be difficult and return to PC.

***Public Participation:** Paul Kusko, Chair, Shade Tree Commission, suggested that this is an excellent opportunity to plant large trees on both sides.

8. Review of Proposed Ordinance: None

Before adjournment, R.Knabb announced that he will go before Borough Council and will offer a non-biased comment concerning the office/storage buildings.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. David Saneck, Secretary, Phoenixville Planning Commission