


October 30, 2009

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Christopher Leswing, PP, AICP, Assistant Director, Planning 

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN – 1601 Spring Mill Road, Philadelphia Country Club, Gladwyne, LD# 3631, Ward 2.

Proposal

The applicant, Janine Budzius, the General Manager of the Club, is seeking Preliminary Land Development Plan approval for the following:

- Removal of an existing 5,171 square foot maintenance building and two 993 square foot trailers;
- Construction of a two-story (12,628 square foot) addition with a 6,598 square foot footprint to the existing Class 2 barn;
- Renovation of the existing Class 2 barn;
- Construction of a 1,967 square foot storage building;
- Conversion of an existing Class 2 garage to a metal shop;
- Installation of a material bins and a dumpster;
- Removal of portions of an existing driveway;
- Expansion of existing gravel parking areas adjacent to proposed buildings;
- Installation of two underground stormwater management seepage beds; and
- Installation of new gas and water lines to the Class 2 barn.

The first floor of the addition to the barn will be used for storage and the second floor will be used for offices. Chemicals, such as fertilizers, fungicides, herbicides and insecticides, are presently stored in the barn and with the construction of the chemical building the Club will now have a dedicated chemical storage space.

The proposal is illustrated on the accompanying set of plans that includes five (5) sheets, prepared by Momenee Associates dated May 15, 2009, last revised October 16, 2009. A Lighting Plan, dated October 6, 2009 prepared by Visual and a Landscape Plan, dated October 8, 2009, prepared by McMan Nursery and Landscaping were also submitted.

Property Description

The property is 306 acres and includes a private country club, with a 27-hole golf course, clubhouse, swimming pool, racquet and paddle courts and related maintenance buildings. The property has frontage along Spring Mill Road, Lafayette Road and Stony Lane, and is bordered on all sides by residential properties. The property is split zoned RA Residence and RAA Residence. This development application is located in the south central portion of the property along Lafayette Road and is zoned RAA.

Background

On August 5, 2009 the Lower Merion Township Board of Commissioners approved the Tentative Sketch Plan and a partial waiver of Subdivision & Land Development Code Section 135-16.A.16, to provide topography for the project area and not the entire property.

Expansion of clubs is permitted by special exception approval from the Zoning Hearing Board. On June 11, 2009, the Zoning Hearing Board granted a special exception from Zoning Code Sections 155-11S(1) and

155-11X to construct the proposed improvements. The relief was granted conditioned on adherence to the plans and testimony presented at the hearing and on the Applicant maintaining sufficient square footage in the structures that existed as of June 17, 1998 to support all post-1998 expansions under Section 11S(1).

Historical Commission Review

On May 28, 2009 the Historical Commission reviewed the Club's proposal to renovate the existing barn and construct an addition. The Historical Commission recommended approval of the application as submitted in the drawings prepared by Phillip Jordan Architects, dated April 17, 2009, subject to staff review of window details and provided that exterior muntins are included on all replacement windows and the cement fiber board at the second floor is a smooth rather than textured finish. The Commission also required the applicant to salvage one historic window, provided that all of the windows are not beyond repair.

Montgomery County Planning Commission Review

In their review letter, the County did not identify any significant land use, design, or other issues with the proposal.

Issues

1. Open Permits

During the Tentative Sketch Plan review, the Township Engineer noted that improvements from previous land development approvals were never installed by the Club, most significantly a stormwater management system on the northern portion of the site near the club house. The Board of Commissioners imposed a condition of approval that the applicant shall complete work from any open permits as directed by the Township Engineer.

Subsequent to the Board's Tentative Sketch Plan approval, staff met with the applicant to discuss open items from previous land development applications. Staff requests that the applicant establish a schedule of completion and has incorporated this as a condition of approval.

2. Modifications from Tentative Sketch Plan

An issue raised by staff at the Tentative Sketch phase dealt with the removal of several trees to widen an existing driveway leading from Lafayette Road up to the maintenance facilities. A Tentative Sketch condition of approval required the applicant to investigate redesigning the driveway to preserve two trees. The applicant has chosen to not widen the driveway therefore no trees will be removed or impacted in that area.

3. Landscape Plan

The applicant's landscape plan and the site plan are not consistent with respect to which existing trees are proposed to remain. While the site plan shows 12 existing trees around the existing buildings to remain, these same trees are not shown on the landscape plan. The applicant should clarify this discrepancy. Staff recommends these trees be preserved. In addition, several of the trees and shrubs shown on the applicant's landscape plan do not meet the size requirements in the Natural Features Code. Any required plant material must meet the following size requirements:

- Deciduous trees – 2-2.5 inch caliper and 12-14 tall
- Evergreen trees – a minimum of 8 feet tall
- Shrubs – a minimum of 24 inches tall

In addition a compliance chart as required by Natural Features Code Section 101-9A must be added to the plan indicating the landscape requirements.

4. Gladwyne Civic Association

The Civic Association submitted a letter to staff indicating their support for the project. Specifically, the Civic Association indicated that the plan significantly improves the landscaping of the project area. The Civic Association also noted that the applicant contacted and worked with all surrounding neighbors on the project.

5. Waiver

A portion of Saw Mill Creek passes through the property. Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Code Section §121-4.A.23 requires a stream buffer to be maintained at a minimum of fifty (50') feet from either side of the stream. The buffer area is also required to provide appropriate native vegetation. Since this Code section was enacted subsequent to the development of the Country Club, there are areas of the site that are nonconforming to this requirement. As such, staff suggests the applicant not mow the grass for a width of up to 50 feet on either side of the stream where feasible, more than two times per year. Subject to this condition, staff would support a partial waiver of the applicable Code section.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

LD# 3631
12F-1

1601 Spring Mill Road, The Philadelphia Country Club, Ward 2.

Expiration Date – 12/13/2009.....Zoning – RA/RAA/HROD

Consider a Preliminary Land Development Plan dated May 15, 2009, last revised October 16, 2009 prepared by Momenee and Associates, Inc. showing the restoration of an historic barn and the construction of a 6,598 square foot addition to the barn for use as a maintenance building, the construction of a 1,967 square foot storage building and modifications to the driveway and gravel areas adjacent to the proposed buildings. The following conditions shall be complied with by means of plan revision, completion or financial guarantee, unless specifically exempted. The plan is referred to the Planning Commission with attention called to the following conditions:

Architectural Elevations:

1. The final elevations shall be consistent with the drawings prepared by Philip Jordan Architects dated April 17, 2009 subject to staff review of window details. Exterior muntins shall be included on all replacement windows and the cement fiber board at the second floor shall be a smooth rather than textured finish. The applicant shall salvage one historic window provided that all of the windows are not beyond repair.

Open Permits:

2. A schedule shall be provided for the completion of work proposed under all existing open permits for the site. The schedule shall be approved by the Township Engineer.

Access:

3. It shall be demonstrated that the existing drive provides the minimum safe stopping distance required by Penn DOT Publication Title 67, Chapter 441. Calculations shall be provided and it shall be noted what improvements are necessary to achieve minimum safe stopping distance. Turn restrictions shall be mandated as required by the Township Engineer. The Traffic Safety Unit of the Lower Merion Police Department shall approve the final drive configuration.

Stormwater Management:

4. The grade of the swale behind the maintenance building shall be adjusted to match the calculations or the calculations/design of the swale shall be adjusted.
5. The label on temporary diversion berm No. 3 shall be corrected on the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

6. Discharge from recharge basin No. 1 shall be converted from a concentrated flow to a sheet flow. An overflow shall be piped to a level spreader or bubble-up spreader. A detail shall be added to the plans.
7. Drainage area maps for the swale analysis shall be provided with the calculations for verification of data used in the qualification.

Utilities:

8. The proposed trash dumpster shall be fully enclosed with a solid material. The location and design of the enclosure shall be shown.
9. Documentation shall be submitted verifying the adequacy of the existing on-lot sanitary disposal system prior to recording the Final Plan.

Construction Details:

10. Additional detail is required in the sequence of construction activities. Installation of protection fence for the on-lot sanitary facilities shall be listed prior to any construction activity.
11. An NPDES Permit shall be obtained from the Montgomery County Soil Conservation District prior to the issuance of any permit.
12. The runoff crossing to the adjacent properties during the construction phase of the project shall be managed so that adverse impact to water quality/quantity is minimized. Diversion berms, stoned construction staging areas, and inlets/piping shall be provided in order to ensure acceptable conditions during the construction phase. Notes shall be added to the plan with these requirements.

Landscape Plan:

13. A revised planting plan complying with Natural Features Code Sections 101-9, 101-5B, Zoning Code Section 155-167.7 and conditions herein shall be prepared and sealed by a Registered Landscape Architect and approved by the Township Arborist prior to recording the Final Plan.
14. The proposed gas and water lines shall be relocated out of the dripline of any tree to remain.
15. Where feasible, the grass on either side of Saw Mill Creek shall not be mowed for a distance of 50 feet more than two times per year.
16. Vines shall either be removed from existing trees to remain within 100 feet of the proposed improvements or at a minimum shall be cut at ten feet above ground level and painted with an herbicide.
17. New plant material shall be native to the greatest extent feasible. The applicant shall work with Township staff to select appropriate native species for the site.

Standard Plan Items:

18. The existing driveway for 1615 Lafayette Road shall be clearly indicated.
19. Concrete road control monuments shall be noted to be installed at the right-of-way at the intersection of each property line and at all changes in direction if or when requested by the Township.
20. Curb/driveway locations shall be provided on the cartway of Lafayette Road within two hundred (200') feet of the property.

Standard Conditions of Approval:

21. The lighting plan shall be approved by the Director of the Building and Planning Department. The location, luminaire type, wattage, pole height and illumination patterns shall be indicated. The lighting shall be designed to reduce the off-site migration of light, to shield the source of illumination and to prevent glare on adjacent properties. The lighting plan shall be sealed by a responsible design professional.
22. All buildings shall have approved radio coverage for emergency responders within the building based upon the existing coverage levels of the public safety communications systems at the exterior of the building.
23. New and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers, building numbers or approved building identification placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting on the property. The address numbers shall be a minimum of four (4) inches (102mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch (12.7mm).
24. A copy of the revised plan shall be submitted with any changes highlighted and a letter shall be provided indicating how each requested revision has been addressed.
25. Revisions shall address the Township Engineer's October 23, 2009 review letter.
26. The Final Plan, complying with all applicable requirements, shall be filed with the Department of Building and Planning within twelve (12) months from the date of the Preliminary Plan approval.
27. The owner shall make payment of fees and expenses of the Township's professional consultants who perform services on behalf of the Township with respect to these plans and the work contemplated thereunder and will establish and maintain with the Township those escrows for the payment of such fees required by Township Code. Owner agrees that any statement from the Township for such fees which remain unpaid for a period of 30 days may be recorded against the property as a municipal lien.
28. The owner shall make payment of the Township Engineer's and/or Clerk of the Works' inspection fees within 30 days of presentation. A penalty of 1.5% per month will be due for late payments from the date of presentation. If any shares are not paid within 60 days of presentation, the Township may elect to suspend any outstanding permits until all pending charges are settled.

29. The property owner(s) shall comply with all applicable federal, state, county, local and Lower Merion Township ordinances and laws regardless of specific mention herein.

In addition, the application requires the following waiver:

1. A partial waiver of Stormwater Management & Erosion Control Code Section 121-4A(23) to not provide a stream buffer to a minimum of fifty (50') feet.

I, Janine M. Budzius, applicant for LD# 3631, do hereby accept the recommended conditions of approval as listed for the property at 1601 Spring Mill Road, The Philadelphia Country Club.

Janine M. Budzius, General Manager

Date



LOWM 0239.39

October 23, 2009

Christopher Leswing, Assistant Director of Building and Planning
Township of Lower Merion
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, PA 19003

**Re: The Philadelphia Country Club
Maintenance Building Improvements
Preliminary Plan Review**

Dear Mr. Leswing:

In accordance with your request for the above referenced submission, we have reviewed a set of eight (8) plans dated 05-15-09, latest revision dated 10-16-09, and associated stormwater management calculations dated 08-21-09, prepared by Momenee and Associates, Inc. We offer the following comments for your consideration:

A. MAJOR ENGINEERING ISSUES

- ❖ **Tentative Sketch Conditions**—Several conditions of the Tentative Sketch approval that require submission of certain information with the Preliminary Plan have not been addressed.

With the resolution of the above major engineering issue and the remaining comments in this letter incorporated, we recommend that the Preliminary Plan be approved.

B. ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Section 101-6A(1)—All woody vegetation to be retained within twenty-five (25') feet of a building site or disturbed area shall be protected from equipment damage by fencing placed at the driplines. Since the tree protection fence has not been shown at the driplines of all trees to remain, the Township Arborist must approve the location of the tree protection fence shown on the plan.
2. Section 101-6A(5)—No impervious cover shall be permitted within the driplines of trees to remain without approval from the Township Arborist. The Township Arborist must approve the location and extent of the proposed structures and paving if the trees are scheduled to remain.
3. Section 101-6A(6)—Grade changes around the driplines of trees to be retained shall be minimized. Treatment of the trees prior to construction to protect the root system shall be performed. The Township Arborist must approve the procedure.

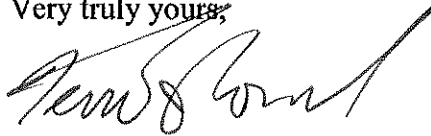
4. Section 101-6A(8)—Should any trees not scheduled or permitted to be removed be irreparably damaged during construction and die within eighteen (18) months of the conclusion of construction activities, those trees will be required to be replaced in accordance with the provision of Section 101-9A(2). Escrow shall be posted to guarantee the survival of the impacted trees until the allotted time has expired.
5. Section 121-4A(23)—Since a perennial or intermittent stream passes through the site, a stream buffer must be maintained to a minimum of fifty (50') feet to either side of the top-of-bank of the channel. The buffer area shall provide appropriate native vegetation. Appendix H of the Pennsylvania Handbook of Best Management Practices for Developing Areas shall be used for the plant list. Not all areas of the stream maintain a buffer such as this. However, since there is no development proposed near the existing stream, we recommend a waiver of this requirement be granted.
6. Section 121-4E(1b)—Discharge from recharge basin No. 1 shall be converted from a concentrated flow to a sheet flow. An overflow shall be piped to a level spreader or bubble-up spreader. A detail shall be added to the plans.
7. Section 121-6D—Drainage area maps for the swale analysis shall be provided with the calculations for verification of data used in the qualification.
8. Section 121-6J—Additional detail is required in the sequence of construction activities. Installation of protection fence for the on-lot sanitary facilities shall be listed prior to any construction activity.
9. Section 121-12—An NPDES Permit must be obtained from the Montgomery County Soil Conservation District prior to issuance of any permit.
10. Section 121-15—The runoff crossing to the adjacent properties during the construction phase of the project shall be managed so that adverse impact to water quality/quantity is minimized. Diversion berms, stoned construction staging areas, and inlets/piping shall be provided in order to ensure acceptable conditions during the construction phase. Notes shall be added to the plan with these requirements.
11. Section 135-17B(1)—The existing driveway for 1615 Lafayette Road has not been shown as required by this code section and the Tentative Sketch Conditions of Approval. The drive location must be clearly indicated.
12. Section 135-19B(8)—It shall be demonstrated that the existing drive provides the minimum safe stopping distance required by PaDOT Publication Title 67, Chapter 441. Calculations shall be provided as necessary. It shall be noted what improvements are necessary to be performed to achieve minimum safe stopping distance. Turn restrictions shall be mandated as required. The Traffic Safety Unit of the Lower Merion Police Department must approve the final drive configuration.
13. Section 135-32—Concrete road control monuments shall be noted to be installed at the right-of-way at the intersection of each property line and at all changes in direction if or when requested by the township. This shall be made a Condition of Plan Approval.

C. ENGINEERING COMMENTS

1. The Planting Plan must be approved by the Planning Department and the Township Arborist prior to recording the Final Plan.
2. The location and design of the proposed enclosure for the dumpster must be provided in accordance with the Tentative Sketch Conditions of Approval.
3. Documentation shall be submitted verifying the adequacy of the existing on-lot sanitary disposal system. This was a Condition of Approval of the Tentative Sketch Plan.
4. The Lighting Plan must be approved by the Director of Building and Planning prior to recording the Final Plan.
5. A schedule for completion of open permit items shall be formalized as required by the Tentative Sketch Conditions of Approval.
6. The grade of the swale behind the maintenance building shall be adjusted to match the calculations or the calculations/design of the swale shall be adjusted.
7. The label on temporary diversion berm No. 3 shall be corrected on the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.
8. A copy of the revised plan shall be submitted with any changes highlighted. A letter shall also be provided with the revised plan indicating how each requested revision has been addressed in the re-submission.

Please advise if we may be of further assistance in this matter.

Very truly yours,



Kevin J. Bowers, P.E.
PENNONI ASSOCIATES
Township Engineer

Cc: Robert E. Duncan, Director of Building and Planning
Momenee and Associates, Inc.
Philadelphia Country Club



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

box 311 • norristown • pennsylvania • 19404-0311 • (610) 278-3722
office location: suite 201 • one montgomery plaza • swede & airy streets • norristown pa
FAX (610) 278-3941 • Website www.montcopa.org/plancom

October 28, 2009

Mr. Christopher Leswing, Assistant Planning Director
Lower Merion Township
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, Pennsylvania 19003

Re: MCPC # 04-0317-003
Municipality # 3631
Plan Name: Philadelphia Country Club
Preliminary Land Development Plan
(1 lot comprising 306.85 acres)
Situate: Spring Mill Road (East)
@ Woodmont Road
Lower Merion Township

Applicant's Name and Address
Philadelphia Country Club
1601 Spring Mill Road
Gladwyne, PA 19035

Contact: Janine Budzius
Phone: 610-525-6000

Dear Mr. Leswing:

We have reviewed the above-referenced preliminary land development plan in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested by letter received on September 8, 2009. We forward this letter as a report of our review and recommendations.

Background

This plan proposes to make several improvements to facility and maintenance buildings on the grounds of the Philadelphia Country Club. The proposed changes will result in an impervious surface decrease of 1,829 square feet. This includes the already demolished Beaver House, which had been designated a Class 2 Historic Resource by the township. The applicant was granted a special exception to allow for the expansion of an existing use. This tract is located in the township's R-AA Residence District.

Recommendation

We have not identified any significant land use, transportation, design, or other issues that should be addressed in this plan. Therefore, we have no substantive comments. Nevertheless, the municipal staff should ensure that the plan meets all appropriate municipal land use regulations and other codes prior to granting plan approval.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature prior to recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files.

Sincerely,



Scott France
Principal Planner
610-278-3747
sfrance@mail.montcopa.org

c: Philadelphia Country Club, Applicant
Momence and Associates, Inc., Applicant's Engineer
Doug Cleland, Township Manager
Gilbert P. High, Jr., Esq., Twp. Solicitor
Edward P. Pluciennik, P.E., Twp. Engineer

Attachment: Reduced Copy of Applicant's Plans