Bath Township Zoning Commission
February 27, 2025 - Work Session MINUTES

Approved: 4/22/25

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Richard Bradner, Joy Kosiewicz, Emily Hete, Marshal Pitchford, Kristin Sanchez, Legal Counsel Bob Konstand, Planning Director/Zoning Inspector Bill Funk and Zoning Secretary Nanci Noonan. Residents Joann Alexander and Michael Ackermann were also present. Vice Chair Maryellen Burnham and Kyle Craven were excused.

I. Call to Order – Roll Call

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of February 13, 2025 Minutes: Motion to approve by Mrs. Hete; seconded by Mrs. Kosiewicz. All in favor; motion carried.

IV. Zoning Report – N/A

V. Unfinished Business:

a. Ghent Overlay District draft language from Envision – Mr. Smalley presented a redlined document prepared from what was discussed at the last meeting. First noted was the recommendation to change the Ghent Interchange Overlay District subareas from three areas into two, giving a substantial buffer on the north boundary. He presented a map reflecting this and noted the setbacks for a property that abuts the northern boundary of this district they need a 50' rear yard setback, with a 50' buffer beyond that to the edge of the district. Further discussion was had on buffering and the base code language and it was recommended to put the 50' buffer in stone, with no opportunity for a variance. However, a variance could be sought for the backyard 50' setback. Mr. Smalley continued through on Subarea 1 and the members were comfortable with the standards, permitted uses, the changes for Table 604-1 and 604-2. Regarding building heights, discussion was had on implementing a stronger language to keeping any roof line at 35 feet. However, it was explained that the way it is written and defined is for a typical zoning resolution. It was agreed to leave the language as is for the GI Overlay district. Mr. Smalley talked on the square footage standards for detached and attached units. It was noted that only Subarea 1 allows for attached dwelling units. Section 604 – D(D) was discussed, as it related to development of the U.H. property, stating that proposed development shall be not less than 20 acres of contiguous land, etc. Mr. Smalley walked the Commission through the thought process of the 30 acres within Subarea 1. Mr. Konstand recommended defining the total of subarea 1 and Subarea 2 to be the 20 acres, with the minimum size for a project being 12 acres. He said because we want the overlay to apply to all of the properties; but the minimum size for the project just be 12. Moving on to (E) Private Street Construction, the language comes from the base zoning regulations. Section (F) Sidewalks – lengthy discussion was had by the Commission. Putting in a trail was suggested, but this will not necessarily apply to this area, but we can revisit it in the future for walkers and dog walkers. During the comprehensive plan discussion on sidewalks there was no desire for them other than in the Hamlet's. Ultimately, it was decided to strike the sidewalk Section F.

If a developer wants to do them that's fine but, we will not require them. Continuing on to Section G Parking Requirements – a couple different caveats were added for Subarea 1 in terms of the mixed-use area, potentially allowing off-street parking that should be oriented to the side and rear of the building. The statement "Parking may be located in the front yard with approval by the Zoning Inspector" was voted to be deleted. But parking in the front wasn't favorable by the members. So, the hope is to write code whereby parking is in the side or rear, not along Ghent Road and buffered somehow. But if you are a commercial development (Subarea 2) you will want parking in the front. Mr. Konstand did note that we could limit that. Possibly state that 50% of the parking is to be in the back of the parking lot. We are limited as the size of the land makes it tough for us. Mr. Konstand would rather give them some parking in the front so that they don't ask for more. Mr. Smalley commented to say that either way you're going to have a similar amount of parking, and assuming the development is the same size, whether it's in the front by Ghent or in the middle of the development, it will take up the same the amount of area; probably more if you split the parking because now you have to provide roadways both ways. We also have to consider the gradients of the property and a commercial use. After much discussion, it was suggested to permit parking spaces adjacent to the building with suitable isolation around it and to define what the front is. Also recommended was to add architectural standards for all four building façades so that parking may be shielded from the roadway and residential view. Mr. Smalley referred to the Rosemont Greens' design standards included in the presentation and walked through it on screen. Driveway and garage loading positioning was discussed and Mr. Smalley will work those edits. On signage, we will reference back to the base zoning standards. But regarding lighting, Mr. Chairman stated we are losing our dark sky like crazy. This has become a topic of conversation with the Bath Homeowner's Association. Kristin Sanchez and others feel that businesses in the Township should respect not lighting areas when the businesses are not open for business. Mr. Chairman felt we needed to tighten up the regulations on lighting. Mr. Konstand and Mr. Funk felt that we have the language in there, but realize we have a problem with commercial next to residential, and with LED versus old-school lighting. Additional conversation was had, and Mr. Funk said we will tighten the language here for the overlay and the next step will be to go into the zoning resolution.

Mr. Smalley stated that we have done a good job this evening and they will take the comments make the revisions ahead of time. If anyone has comments on things talked about, please send them to him before the next meeting so they can get them into the design standards.

VI. New Business: Trash Receptacles

a. Mr. Chairman brought up the subject of trash receptacles to say that we need to tighten up language on them specifically for commercial areas. The doors/lids need to stay closed. The trash containers are not being shielded from view per our code.

VII. Miscellaneous: N/A

a. Committee discussion – N/A

VIII. Citizens' Comments – JoAnn Alexander, 270 Harmony Hills Dr., spoke to say she thought we should visit the idea of a community path around Subarea 2. She also asked to keep the idea

of a courtyard in that area. Lastly, she shared that a phrase she heard a couple times tonight was “developers aren’t going to want that.” She thinks the question that needs to keep being asked is “What does Bath want?”

Mr. Mike Ackermann, 649 Westridge, spoke regarding high end, dense developments and referred to Glencairn’s cluster units. They have garages that are off to the sides on some of them. Some of them have one driveway for two units, so you cut down on the number of driveways needed. He felt the Richfield one that keeps being shown was hideous and felt that we could do better. Glencairn also has the paths, no sidewalks and recommended the Commission members drive through it if they had a minute.

IX. Next Meeting – Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 6 PM

X. Adjourn