

# Swarthmore Planning Commission

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Meeting Minutes:

March 15, 2016

Attending from the Planning Commission: Jon Penders-Chair, George Wilson, David Virgil, Rex Brien, Chris DeBruyn-Vice Chair and Acting Secretary

Also attending: Tim Kearney-Mayor, Mary Walk Borough Council Liaison to Planning Commission, Jane Billings-Borough Manager, Joe Mastronardo-Borough Engineer.

From Swarthmore College and the design team: Gregory Brown Stu Hain, Jan Semmler, Ross Bickhart, Nicole Kline, John Cacciola, Don Petrosa

Meeting called to order at 7:40

Don Petrosa introduced the final presentation of the long term student parking lot located next to the SEPTA parking lot on Cunningham Field.

Ross presented the details of the project, which is similar in scope with the earlier approved submission.

- Pennoni comments:
  - Highway permit has been submitted, and has been moving through the review process, 2 issues remain.
    - Traffic warning signal application requiring resolution by BC
    - Utility HOP for widening the existing roadway at the driveway entrance.
  - Moved infiltration bed to the side of the shared entrance, allowing 13' of drive to remain if excavation work on the bed were to be required in the future. The college also agreed to do the work on a weekend if possible.
  - Extensive plantings, including 700 shrubs and 53 new trees, in addition to existing mature trees and plantings to remain.
  - Evergreen trees are planted at each of the light posts on 2 sides of the parking lot.
- Pennoni comments
  - Proposed planting trees for 80% of the rate required for non-pervious asphalt

Jon noted that plans show some of the light standards do not have tree screening and that it might not be compliant with the approval language.

David noted that the 5000K temperature of the lighting bulbs was extremely white, and would likely be obtrusive; Jane Billings noted that the borough is currently using 3000 K bulbs for street lights.

Rex noted that there are flooding conditions in the SEPTA lot, and was concerned that the clogged inlets in the parking lot were potentially symptoms of a clogged storm water main. Ross noted that he had

investigated several locations downstream of the clogged inlets, and that the storm water lines in those locations were clear and free of sediment or clogging. Rex asked about the storm water system maintenance agreement and if it would apply to inlets on the SEPTA property.

Rex asked if the college would indemnify the township regarding the mid-block crossing. Don noted that it is already included in the approval agreement.

Rex asked about the issues in the Delaware County Planning Commission including the comment that “the college should justify its need for the parking lot”. He noted that the green space of Cunningham field is now, after the Inn and softball field construction, is the last open green space on Chester Road in Swarthmore, and is an essential part of the character of the town. The loss of this green space will not be taken lightly by the town.

Don Petrosa noted that the college was not legally required to provide justification for use.

Chris noted that the college is part of the community, and while they may not have a legal requirement to provide justification, the removal of a significant piece of green space, for essentially temporary use as described by the design team, is something that a community could feel should be justified. He also noted that the decision by the college to install the long term auto storage in a highly visible location for the town should be more carefully considered, and that alternatives including a parking structure on the main campus parcel were viable options, if more expensive.

Chris noted that the college had mentioned long term need for an additional 30 or so parking spaces over the course of the foreseeable future, and that most of the needs referenced by the college as “justification” for the project were temporary needs due to construction.

Motion: moved by: Chris DeBruyn, Seconded by David Virgil

I move to approve the Cunningham field parking lot development plans as presented subject to including 80% calculation of tree replacement for permeable paving areas, all additional tree shielding of light standards, revising lighting to a lower temperature (3,500K), satisfactory resolution of Feb. 10 and Jan. 20 Penonni review letters, satisfaction of the conditions of the preliminary land development approval and including a post construction borough review of the landscaping on the south side of the project.

The motion Passes 3-2,

Motion to adjourn at 9:18