

Borough of Malvern  
Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes  
June 18, 2009  
Approved Minutes

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A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Thursday, June 18, 2009 at the Malvern Municipal Building. Members present included: Christopher Mongeau, Diantha Stevens, Cecelia Oswald, Evangeline Linkous, Vicki Sharpless and William Coffey.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mongeau called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

*SEPTA Parking Lot Islands*

Chairman Mongeau asked that the Commissioners postpone approval of last meeting's minutes and the Officers' Reports until after the discussion of the SEPTA parking lot islands and Patriot's Path.

For the discussion of the SEPTA parking lot islands, Mr. Michael Gill, attorney for SEPTA, described four alternative parking lot islands designs that provide additional areas for landscaping over the previously-submitted site plan while minimizing impact to the overall number of parking spaces. Mr. Gill described how the previously-submitted site plan provided 311 parking spaces.

Alternative Option 1 is based on the previously-submitted site plan, but with six new areas where islands could be added without losing parking. This alternative requires minor modifications to the drive aisle widths, but nothing below what it is in the currently proposed ordinance modifications. The additional islands proposed in Alternative Option 1 have been added to SEPTA's design drawings and are included in the other proposed island sketches (Alternative Options 2, 3, and Diamond).

Alternative Option 2 adds five-foot islands at the end of the western parking lots stalls. This results in the loss of four additional parking spaces for a total of 307 spaces. In this option, some of the parking spaces must be offset so that vehicles are not parked head-to-head.

Alternative Option 3 adds four 4.25-foot islands within the parking rows. The proposed width of the stalls is 8.5-foot. This option results in the loss of four parking spaces and a gain of four planting islands.

The Alternative Diamond Option provides 4x4-foot diamond-shaped planters in the parking area at the intersection of the stalls. Since the bumpers of the cars can overhang the diamonds, no parking is lost with this option. This is SEPTA's preferred option.

Ms. Oswald proposed another set of options. In the first option proposed by Ms. Oswald, four parking spots would be lost and one large, centrally-located island would be gained. In this option, Ms. Oswald also indicated that the diamond planters be included. A second option proposed by Ms. Oswald includes the large, centrally-located island that provides a loss of four spaces, plus two islands at the western edge of the parking lot that result in a loss of two spaces, and the diamond planters. This proposal results in a total loss of six parking spaces.

The Commissioners raised several questions about the types of plantings, in particular the possible vertical height of such plantings, which might be possible depending on the different island configurations. Mr. Gill did not have this information, but said he would provide it for the next meeting.

Following some discussion about the number of parking spaces that might appropriately be removed from the project for planters, Chairman Mongeau asked each Commissioner to indicate how many spaces they were comfortable with losing. All Commissioners indicated that they were willing to have up to four spaces replaced with planters, with the exception of Ms. Oswald, who recommended that up to six spaces could be replaced for planter islands.

The Commissioners discussed the benefits of centralized planter islands compared to planting islands distributed throughout the site.

Chairman Mongeau wrapped up the discussion of parking lot islands by asking Mr. Gill to come back with proposals that provide no more than four spaces lost for planting islands that would accommodate plantings with vertical height at least above car level.

#### *Other SEPTA Business*

In other SEPTA business, Chairman Mongeau stated that Ms. Wendy McClain, the borough Solicitor, is working with SEPTA to make a decision about whether a formal traffic study as described in the borough ordinance will be required as a result of the parking lot redevelopment. Mr. Coffey asked that the traffic study look into the new one-way entry/exit pattern and how it will affect traffic on King Street.

Ms. Stevens asked whether SEPTA had looked into whether handicapped spaces at the station were underutilized. Mr. Gill stated that SEPTA had put together research which indicated that handicapped spaces were underutilized along the R5 line. Mr. Gill stated that SEPTA was willing to restripe if handicapped spaces turn out to be underprovided at the lot.

Chairman Mongeau provided then provided the Commissioners with a letter dated June 18, 2009 from Mr. Andrew Gowa, attorney for the Estate of Bette Harlan. The letter reiterated Mr. Gowa's concerns raised during the May 21, 2009 Planning Commission meeting. Ms. Oswald inquired about how Mr. Gowa's concerns about the expansion of the SEPTA parking lot were being addressed. Mr. Gill responded that the all SEPTA-owned property is zoned LI. If SEPTA expands, it will have to seek a rezoning to expand its parking lot into any acquired parcels.

Mr. Gill also indicated that Malvern requires 20-foot lighting standards and SEPTA uses 27-foot lighting standards. This topic will be coming up for discussion at the next meeting.

### *Patriots' Path*

Chairman Mongeau indicated that planning is still underway for the Patriots' Path.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Mongeau called for public comment. Ms. Valerie Harlan asked whether the SEPTA traffic study and landscaping planning is being conducted based on the parcels currently owned by SEPTA or includes those proposed for acquisition on the Harlan property. Chairman Mongeau indicated the Commission is evaluating SEPTA's proposals based on the current status of what SEPTA owns and will make adjustments if and when SEPTA acquires additional properties.

### OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Mongeau stated that the LaGrie, LLC project is nearing the deadline for their last extension. A motion was made that, unless an extension is granted prior to June 30, the Planning Commission does not approve their request. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Mongeau passed out a letter regarding Applied Energy gaining an extension until September 15, 2009.

Chairman Mongeau passed out another letter indicating an extension for SEPTA Tunnel and Parking Lot Improvements until September 16, 2009.

Ms. Oswald provided an update on the status of the draft revitalization plan. Chester County is currently reviewing the plan and it should be finalized soon.

### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting from May 21, 2009 were approved as corrected.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

The Treasurer's Report is deferred to the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm

Minutes taken by Evangeline Linkous