

**WHITPAIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**June 2010**

A work session of the Whitpain Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at 7:00 PM at the Whitpain Township Building, 960 Wentz Road, Blue Bell, PA for the purpose of reviewing the agenda of the public meeting to be held that evening. Planning Commission members Kenneth Corti, Richard Shorin, Daniel Kluger, Mark Clemm, and Harry Phifer, were present. Township Engineer, Roman M. Pronczak, Assistant Township Engineer, James E. Blanch , Assistant Zoning Officer, William McManus, Township Planning Consultant, E. Van Rieker, and Recording Secretary Michele Alifano were also present. Planning Commission member Yongli Min was absent.

1. Zoning Text Amendment for the VC – Village Commercial District.

After considering the information that was received from a presentation that was given by the applicant in the month of May, Chairman Corti called for any feedback from the members of the Planning Commission.

Chairman Corti had several comments in reference to the proposed changes. Regarding the main free-standing ground sign, which was to contain changeable copy, Chairman Corti suggested that it should be limited to containing only two colors, no graphics, and shall contain text only. He also noted that the requested height of 25 feet for the main sign was slightly excessive. Also, he stressed that there should be a limit placed on the size of the façade signs containing the silhouette edge lighting feature. There was also some discussion in relation to the thickness of the silhouette edging. The Planning Commission was in agreement that further clarification was needed on the specific language of the proposed Ordinance.

Mr. Rieker stated that in reviewing the proposed sign regulation Ordinance, he found the last paragraph to be objectionable because it was too vague. The paragraph refers to the maximum sign sizes, and states that they may be exceeded when authorized as a conditional use. A more desirable scenario would be to define the circumstances where deviation from the requirement would be acceptable, with the use of specific language contained in the Ordinance.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the means of regulating the size & number of allowable directional signs, and ultimately it was agreed that relief cannot be granted in advance without knowing all specific details. Mr. Pronczak stated that the Planning Commission needs to express its concerns to the applicant, who can then submit a finalized version of the Ordinance. The Planning Commission would then have another opportunity to review the Ordinance prior to a vote for adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

2. Zoning Hearing Board cases.

- a. #1865-10. This application is to allow a Pilates Studio to occupy 2,800 sq. ft. of the existing 6,395 sq. ft. building, and the balance of 3,595 sq. ft. being used for office use, thereby decreasing the minimum required parking spaces from 36 to 26 at the subject property.

Mr. Blanch stated that the office building, located at 1179 DeKalb Pike, is requesting relief for ten less parking spaces than is currently allowed at the location.

Mr. Shorin commented on the lack of overflow capacity for parking at the location.

Mr. Reiker commented that it is the applicant's responsibility to establish the conditions that would govern and control an approval.

Mr. Phifer stated that the Citrus Salon, which is adjacent to the subject property, has parking issues, and he advised that the neighbors have complained about overflow parking on Fairview Avenue.

Mr. Pronczak advised that Citrus Salon had contacted the Township to say that they were looking into the possibility of leasing land owned by PECO to be utilized for additional parking.

Mr. Kluger expressed his concern about the parking situation in the event that an additional tenant was to lease space at the subject property.

- b. #1866-10. This application is to allow an addition to the rear and the side of the house reducing the minimum required rear yard from 50 feet to 26 feet 3 inches, and reducing the minimum required side yard from 25 feet to 11 feet, 6 inches and reducing the minimum required aggregate side yard from 60 feet to 46 feet 6 inches, and also to allow a 16' x 20' car port.
- c. #1867-10. This application is a request a variance from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-191.F and Zoning Hearing Board Decision #677-88 to replace the existing "Madison Bank Building" façade sign with a new 20 inch x 10' 4" "Vist Financial" façade sign at the subject property.
- d. #1868-10. This application is for variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-191.F and Zoning Hearing Board Decision No. 801-90 to change an existing 24 square foot flag from "PMA Group" to "PMA Companies"; to

Whitpain Township Planning Commission – Work Session

June 8, 2010

Page 3

allow a 36.24 square foot three-sided monument sign in private driveway;  
and, to allow (2) two 2.25 square foot wall signs at the subject property.

Mr. McManus stated that the applicant had a sign on the premises for which they did not have approval. As this was an oversight on their part, they were seeking to be in compliance.

The work session adjourned at 7:30 PM, at which time the Planning Commission members left for the public meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Alifano, Recording Secretary

**WHITPAIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**June 2010**

The fifth meeting of the Whitpain Township Planning Commission for the year 2010 was held on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at the Whitpain Township Building, 960 Wentz Road, Blue Bell, PA. Chairman Kenneth Corti presided with Commission members Richard Shorin, Daniel Kluger, Mark Clemm, and Harry Phifer present. Township Engineer, Roman M. Pronczak, Assistant Township Engineer, James E. Blanch, Township Planning Consultant, E. Van Rieker, Assistant Zoning Officer, William McManus, and Recording Secretary Michele Alifano were also present. Commission member Yongli Min was absent.

Chairman Corti called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. The members of the Planning Commission introduced themselves to the members of the public that were present.

1. Approval of minutes.

A motion was made by Mr. Clemm, seconded by Mr. Shorin, to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2010 meeting of the Planning Commission. The motion passed 5-0.

2. Informal presentation regarding signage and requested zoning text amendments for the VC-Village Commercial District.

Present for the applicant: Mr. Joseph Gambone  
David Dratch, Esquire  
Chris Eisenberg, Esquire

Mr. Gambone advised the Planning Commission that there was no new information to present, but he would answer any questions that may remain regarding the proposed text amendments.

Planning Commission comments:

Chairman Corti explained, for the benefit of the audience, that the Planning Commission had taken the time to review the points that were proposed at the informal presentation that was given in the month of May, and there were specific changes and additions to the wording of the proposed Ordinance, which included the striking of item #14 of the proposed document.

Mr. Clemm asked if there were any specific circumstances of which the applicant was aware that would require the need to exceed the requirements for signage that had been requested for relief.

Mr. Rieker stated that the Planning Commission was in agreement that the proposed idea of the edge-lit lettering design, or silhouette design, was a favorable concept.

Following some further discussion, Mr. Pronczak advised that the next step would be for the Ordinance to be composed in its final form, and with the additional comments and recommendations from the Planning Commission, the matter would be placed on the Board of Supervisors' agenda to receive authorization to advertise for a future public hearing to adopt the Ordinance. He advised that there would not be a need for a motion this evening from the members of the Planning Commission.

3. Zoning Hearing Board Applications.

- a. #1865-10. Application filed by Jayshreeram, LLC, as owner of the property located at 1179 DeKalb Pike, Blue Bell, PA, 19422 for variances from the terms of Article XXVII, Section 160-192.B.(2)(i) and (p) to allow a personal service use (Pilates Studio) to occupy 2,800 square feet of the existing 6,395 square foot building and the balance of 3,595 square feet being used for office use, thereby decreasing the minimum required parking spaces from 36 to 26 at the subject property. The zoning classification of the subject property is "C" Commercial District.

Present for the applicant:     Neil Stein, Esquire  
                                          Robert E. Blue, Jr., P.C.  
                                          Michael Shoplin, ReMax Realty

Mr. Stein provided some background information stating the 30,000 sq. ft. triangular lot, located at 1179 DeKalb Pike, is located in the "C" – Commercial Zoning District, and the two-story building on the lot has 26 existing parking spaces. He advised that the applicant is seeking relief to obtain a mixed use, with the second story housing a pilates studio, and the first story would remain as an office use.

Mr. Blue provided details regarding the hours of operation at the pilates studio, and he stated that they will be off-peak hours, and they will not be in conflict with the hours of operation of an office use at the same location.

Mr. Clemm expressed his concern over a conflict in the peak hours of the two uses, and a shortage of parking spaces that may arise. Mr. Shorin added that there is no overflow capacity for parking on either Route 202, a main thoroughfare, or on Fairview Avenue or Cherry Street which are residential areas.

There was some discussion regarding the possibility of a lease restriction to regulate the type of tenant that would be allowable on the first floor, as

well as a suggestion that parking spots could be allocated to each tenant, and the problem of enforceability by the Township. Mr. Reiker specified that the Zoning Ordinance indicates that the location is ten parking spaces short prior to the variance request.

Ms. Jennifer Boyle, client of the pilates studio, suggested that the start times for the pilates classes could be staggered by 15 minutes, as opposed to beginning every hour on the hour. She felt this suggestion could solve the problem of overlap parking at the location.

Following some further discussion, Mr. Stein advised the Planning Commission that the applicant would request a continuance from the Zoning Hearing Board, in order to allow time to revise and refine the plan.

- b. #1866-10. Application filed by Melanie Birger-Bray as owner of the property located at 1618 Sullivan Drive, Blue Bell, PA, 19422 for the following relief at the subject property:
  1. Variances from the terms of Article VII, Section 160-34, Article XXVIII, Section 160-203, Article VII, Section 160-36 and Article XXVIII, Section 160-204 to allow an addition to the rear and the side of the house reducing the minimum required rear yard from 50 feet to 26 feet 3 inches, and reducing the minimum required side yard from 25 feet to 11 feet 6 inches and reducing the minimum required aggregate side yard from 60 feet to 46 feet 6 inches.
  2. Variances from the terms of Article VII, Section 160-33, Article XXVIII, Section 160-202, Article VII, Section 160-34 and Article XXVIII, Section 160-203 to allow a 16' x 20' car port reducing the minimum required front yard from 50 feet to 42 feet, reducing the minimum required side yard from 25 feet to 5 feet and reducing the minimum required aggregate side yard from 60 feet to 40 feet.

The zoning classification of the subject property is “R-2” Residence District.

Chairman Corti noted that there was no one present to represent the applicant.

A motion was made by Mr. Shorin, seconded by Mr. Phifer to remain neutral on the subject application. The motion passed 5-0.

- c. #1867-10. Application filed by Vist Financial, as tenant of the property located at 1767 Sentry Parkway, Blue Bell, PA, 19422 for a variance from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-191.F and Zoning Hearing Board Decision #677-88 to replace the existing “Madison Bank Building” façade sign with a new 20 inch x 10’ 4” “Vist Financial” façade sign at the subject property. The zoning classification of the subject property is “AR” Administrative & Research District.

Chairman Corti noted that there was no one present to represent the applicant.

A motion was made by Mr. Clemm, seconded by Mr. Phifer to remain neutral on the subject application. The motion passed 5-0.

- d. #1868-10. Application filed by Pennsylvania Manufacturers’ Association Insurance Company, as owner of the property located at 380 Sentry Parkway, Blue Bell, PA, 19422 for variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-191.F and Zoning Hearing Board Decision No. 801-90 to change an existing 24 square foot flag from “PMA Group” to “PMA Companies”; to allow a 36.24 square foot three-sided monument sign in private driveway; and, to allow (2) two 2.25 square foot wall signs at the subject property. The zoning classification of the subject property is “AR” Administrative & Research District.

Chairman Corti noted that there was no one present to represent the applicant.

A motion was made by Mr. Clemm, seconded by Mr. Shorin to remain neutral on the subject application. The motion passed 5-0.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Mr. Clemm, and seconded by Mr. Kluger to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Shorin, Secretary