

**WRIGHTSTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING OF DECEMBER 14, 2006**

The Wrightstown Township Planning Commission met on Thursday, December 14, 2006 in the Community Room of the Village Library, 727 Penns Park Road, Wrightstown, PA. In attendance and voting were: Frank Davis, Chair; John Halderman, Vice Chair; Joseph Conroy, John Fowler, Ann Mark, William Perry, James A. Peruto, and Lary Whalen, Members. Also in attendance were: Township Engineer Mario Canales of Pickering Corts and Summerson, and Township Supervisor Jane Magne.

Call to Order: Mr. Davis called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: *Dr. Mark moved to accept the Minutes of November 9, 2006, Mr. Fowler seconded and the motion passed 7-0-1, with Mr. Halderman abstaining.*

Courtyard at Penns Purchase – Land Development Plan: Attorney Don Marshall represented the applicants, William Messick and Christopher Messick. The property currently houses the existing ARCCA warehouse and Sterling Limousine's vehicle storage, sheds and parking areas (a temporary use). The applicant proposes to build two 25,000 square foot office buildings and an 8,500 square foot addition to the ARCCA building.

Mr. Messick said that he has spoken to Supervisor Magne about the appearance of the two office buildings, which will each be two stories high. The buildings will be identical, constructed of painted siding, stone and stucco, with colors and appearance similar to the CVS building currently under construction. All windows will have shutters. He showed samples of stone and roofing materials, noting that colors will be chosen to blend well with the existing building on the site. The Sterling Limousine building will have similar features, but with a flat roof. HVAC will be located on the ground, and screened. Each office, which will be opened from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., will have heat coils, with emergency back-up and auxiliary heating for start up. The buildings will look the same at the front and at the rear. There will be sprinklers. There is a central elevator lobby planned for each building. No loading bays are planned, but there will be loading drop-off areas. The buildings will be office condominiums of about 2000 to 3000 square feet per office.

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Messick said that he has constructed similar buildings in Newtown and there are waiting lists for tenants. He expects about 150 employees at the site. These are offices for small businesses. Each office will have private restroom facilities and internal coffee stations. There are to be no commercial uses, such as a coffee bar. There will not be a public restroom.

Mr. Marshall said that the applicant will comply with the Fire Marshal's review letter and with the Pickering Corts and Summerson review letter of November 28, 2006. Mr. Dumack is meeting with Township Planner Judith Stern Goldstein on Monday to review some of the points of the Boucher and James letter of December 8, 2006 letter regarding natural resources. He expects that the applicant will comply with this review letter also. Conditional use approval will be needed for the office, warehouse and limousine uses. Zoning Hearing Board relief is needed for parking stall size and parking in the front yard. In order to set the buildings back from Second Street Pike, and because of the steep slopes, some parking will have to be located in front of the buildings. Significant buffering is planned. Mr. Fowler asked the applicant to plant a buffer screen from the corner of Penns Park Road south along Route 232 in front of the currently developed ARCCA offices and parking lots, to match the proposed buffer for the new buildings. The applicant would consider the request.

Mr. Davis said that he would not be in favor of reduced parking stall size. He is concerned about difficulties with parking large vehicles. He asked if relief is necessary to comply with parking requirements.

Mr. Canales indicated that the relief from the 10 foot by 20 foot parking stall size requirement would be necessary to comply with the required number of spaces. The plan proposes 9 foot by 18 foot spaces.

In response to questions from the Commission Members, Mr. Dumack said that the entrance will be aligned with Hallowell Drive. He would investigate the existing street lighting. If the lighting belongs to ARCCA, the applicant would be willing to remove it and substitute less intrusive lighting. Buffering along Second Street Pike would be in keeping with existing buffering along the road.

Mr. Marshall said that a traffic study has been completed and recently submitted to the Township. A hydrogeologic study is being done by DelVal Soils, and results will be submitted upon completion.

Mr. Canales briefly referred to natural resource restriction requirements discussed in the Boucher and James letter dated December 8, 2006. He said that Ms. Goldstein questions some of the natural resource calculations used to determine woodland disturbance calculations. He noted that if Ms. Goldstein is correct, he did not know if it would be possible to comply with both Pickering Corts and Summerson's and Boucher and James's review letters.

Mr. Marshall indicated that Mr. Dumack would be discussing this with Ms. Goldstein at their meeting on Monday. He said that after the meeting, the plan would likely be revised before the applicant goes to the Zoning Hearing Board.

The Commission discussed buffering for the parking areas. Mr. Marshall said that there would be terraced parking, necessary because of the steep slopes. Retaining walls would be constructed with E. P. Henry style blocks. It was suggested that rather than allow parking in the front yard, the buildings could be placed closer to the road with all parking at the rear.

Mr. Marshall said that the applicant was trying to create an aesthetically pleasing arrangement, in keeping with the current streetscape and with the existing buildings on the site. He also was hoping to keep parking close to all offices. For this reason, he had not considered locating the buildings closer to the street, with all parking to the rear.

Mr. Halderman commented that Mr. Marshall had made a good argument that locating the buildings closer to the street would be unsightly due to their bulk and the location of the existing ARCCA building, but that he could be convinced otherwise. He noted that the property owner closest to this property, Mr. Bozak, was in attendance, and asked him to discuss the proposed buffering.

Mr. Bozak said that he has no problem with the building locations as proposed, but was concerned that some of the parking is right next to his property line. He would like to see heavy buffering along this side of the parking area.

Mr. Dumack said that he would suggest evergreen plantings, shrubs and trees, to provide high and low buffering.

John Donahue of Sterling Limousine, and Mr. Messick, both agreed to work closely with Mr. Bozak on buffering and noise abatement. Mr. Marshall suggested leaving the parking closest to the Bozak property in green unless or until it is needed.

The Commission agreed to support the Zoning Hearing Board request for front yard parking, but did not agree to support the reduced parking stall size.

Comprehensive Plan – Review of Chapters One, Two and Three: The members reviewed the first three chapters of the revised Comprehensive Plan. They did not recommend any changes to Chapter One. In reviewing Chapter Two, they discussed the wording of “semi-rural” and whether this term would require further definition, as suggested by the Bucks County Planning Commission. All agreed that the term should remain in the chapter, without further definition.

Ms. Magne discussed the uses in the Jointure, noting that each member municipality currently has all of the various residential/housing uses. Not all other uses exist in each municipality. She discussed the quarry use as an example of a use only in Wrightstown, although there is some land suitable for quarry uses in other municipalities. (Mr. Fowler left the meeting at this point)

Mr. Davis questioned whether any light industrial uses still exist in Newtown Township’s light industrial zoning district. It was determined that the LI district is becoming increasingly an office district, but that some light industry still exists, and that some light manufacturing of a more specialized nature, such as electronics assembly, exists in the LI district.

In reviewing Section 2.8, Village Planning, the members were enthusiastic in their support of future development in a village style in the existing small villages in the Jointure. They were very much in favor of encouraging development closer to the street with emphasis on pedestrian access when considering plans for places like Pineville and Penns Park.

Members discussed the Newtown rail line. If it could be reactivated, the Commission members would be in support. They briefly discussed transportation, and other possible transportation options for commuting to Philadelphia.

Mr. Halderman moved to adjourn at 10:10 PM. Dr. Conroy seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted

**Mary Donaldson
Recording Secretary**