

**WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2007**

The Wrightstown Planning Commission met on Thursday, September 27, 2007. In attendance and voting were Frank Davis, Chairman; Joseph Conroy, John Fowler, Ann Mark, James A. Peruto, and Lary Whalen, members. Also in attendance were Rick Tralies, Township Planner and Mario Canales, Township Engineer.

**Call to Order:** Mr. Davis called the meeting to order at 8:00PM.

**Approval of Minutes:** *Dr. Mark moved to accept the minutes of September 13, 2007. Dr. Conroy seconded and the motion passed 6-0.*

**JMZO 2007 -04 – POS to EIR (Newtown Township):** Newtown Township Solicitor Paul Beckert and Park and Recreation Board Chairman Andrew Levine were in attendance to review plans for the development of the Woll Tract on Durham Road for active recreation. Mr. Levine said that the engineered plans include baseball, softball, and rectangular fields, tennis courts, a playground and pavilion for concessions, storage and restrooms. The property is behind Newtown Elementary School, and access is planned through the Council Rock School District property. There is also emergency access through Eagle Road. At this time, it is not known whether a traffic signal will be warranted at the Durham Road entrance site. It is possible that a signal would be installed that would only operate during hours when the park is in use.

Mr. Beckert said that both Newtown Elementary and St. Andrew's Elementary Schools have approached the Township about their problems with parking along Wrights Road when events are held at the schools. The Township is anxious to reduce some of the congestion by making Woll tract parking available to the schools.

Mr. Beckert reviewed the current zoning for the Woll tract, which is comprised of two parcels which are to be consolidated. A ten-acre portion of the park, to remain as passive recreation with only a trail and emergency access, is to remain zoned CM conservation management. The 37 acre active recreation portion is currently zoned POS, which has an 8% impervious surface ratio. The Township is seeking to rezone only the POS portion to EIR, educational, institutional, recreational, which has an impervious surface ratio of 35%. The engineered plans show an impervious surface ratio of 14%; most of the impervious is the parking area. The plans have already been reviewed by Newtown Township's Planning Commission, who recommended approval.

In response to Mr. Fowler's questions, Mr. Levine said that four fields will have lighting that complies with International Dark Sky Association standards. Newtown Township's Ordinance requires that there be no glare, and the total control lighting will have spillage of 1/10 of 1 foot candle at the border to any residential property. This lighting has recently been installed at Macclesfield Park in Lower Makefield. The fields closest to residential neighborhoods will not have lights. The Park and Recreation Board plans to have timing on the lights, so that they would

automatically go off at a specific time, possibly 9:30 PM, with parking lot lights remaining on for an additional ½ hour for safety in exiting the park.

Mr. Fowler asked about impervious surface and stormwater management plans. Mr. Levine said that the plans have 14% impervious surface, which includes the parking lot, a measured mile of walking trails, and the restroom/concession area. Bio-retention basins are planned to help with run-off, which it is hoped will also reduce erosion at the 57 acre Clark Nature Center on the opposite side of Durham Road.

In response to Dr. Conroy's questions, Mr. Levine said that if access is provided at Durham Road, a deceleration lane and a left turn entrance lane would probably be needed. If a traffic signal is not warranted, it is possible that the Wrights Road entrance could be the only entrance. In response to further questions from the Commission, Mr. Beckert said that the plans would be approved for a total of 20% impervious surface. As shown there is a 14% impervious surface ratio, and no additional paving is planned. It is possible that at some point artificial turf could be used for some of the fields, so additional impervious surface would be needed. The Park and Recreation Board would only have approval for 20% impervious surface, not the full 35% that is permitted in the EIR zoning district. The plans show 250 parking spaces, with an additional 75 spaces in reserve. In order to comply with the permitted 8% impervious surface ratio of POS zoning, parking could not be paved.

Mr. Levine noted that the 1999 Comprehensive Plan had anticipated this active recreation use with lighted fields. As the community is growing, there has been a need for additional playing fields. Developing this site will serve the sports organizations whose members include Upper Makefield and Wrightstown children, as well as Newtown's children. Interviews and studies were conducted with the sports organizations to ascertain the current and projected future needs, and it was found that there is already a serious shortage of playing fields to accommodate the children in the community. Mr. Levine noted that Upper Makefield Soccer has an enrollment of 1200 children, of which 400 are Upper Makefield residents. Developing this site for active recreation could also help to preserve Township owned open space at the Wiggins tract on Washington Crossing Road. In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Levine said that the park would be open to the public throughout the day, with field use allocated through the Park and Recreation Department. The park entrance would be gated at night.

Mr. Fowler asked about plans for fertilizers and nutrients for the fields. Mr. Levine said that the Newtown Township Park and Recreation Department, in cooperation with the sports organizations, would be involved in field maintenance. In response to Mr. Fowler's further questions, he said that the park would be served by public water and sewer. Rosebank Winery will be hooking up to these lines, and Rosebank is eager to cooperate with the park efforts.

Mr. Fowler noted that Wrightstown has been very careful in its efforts to limit entrances onto Durham Road. A traffic light is to be installed at Worthington Mill Road and Durham Road within the year. He said that he would prefer the access to be limited to Wrights Road.

The Commission discussed possible traffic congestion, but felt that since a Wrights Road entrance could be accessed by both Durham Road and Eagle Road, and the Wrights Road/Durham Road intersection already has a traffic light, it might not cause too much congestion. The members also agreed that if any access is provided onto Durham Road, it should be limited to right in/right out.

Dr. Conroy expressed some concern about safety issues with children playing close to Durham Road. He asked that plans include either a fence or a planted berm to prevent children running into the road.

Mr. Peruto also asked about fencing near the retention basins.

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Tralies said that he did not think there should be any concern about precedents; this situation would not come up very often.

Mr. Levine said that the adjoining school properties are already zoned EIR. He then reviewed the POS properties in Newtown Township, many of which are developed as parks and would not need additional impervious surface. He said that the retention basins will have plantings around them to prevent children from falling into them. He suggested that Wrightstown's Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors draft a letter to Newtown Township expressing the preference for no access through Durham Road. Mr. Levine said that the Park and Recreation Board had no strong preference for an entrance on Durham Road. There had been some discussion about a signalized entrance providing some pedestrian access to the Clark Nature Center.

Mr. Fowler said that he is very impressed with the plans, which have been very carefully thought out. All of the members were very supportive of the plans; the entire community will benefit from the additional playing fields.

*Mr. Fowler moved to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt JMZO 2007-04, POS to EIR, Newtown Township, with the following comments:*

- 1. The Commission would prefer that no access to the proposed park facilities be through Route 413/Durham Road;*
- 2. Total Control field lighting be should used, which would be turned off at 9:30 PM, with parking lot lights turned off at 10:00 PM;*
- 3. A Safety berm and planting be used along the Route 413/Durham Road side of the park for safety of children using the park;*
- 4. Best practices for fertilization of fields and stormwater management should be used.*

*Mr. Whalen seconded and the motion passed 6-0.*

**JMZO 2007-03 Electronic Graphic and Video Signage:** The Commission discussed the provisions of this proposed ordinance. There are no proposed locations in Wrightstown where these signs would be permitted.

*Dr Mark moved to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt JMZO 2007-03, Electronic Graphic and Video Signage. Dr. Conroy seconded and the motion passed 6-0.*

*Dr. Mark moved to adjourn at 9:15 PM. Dr. Conroy seconded and the motion passed 6-0.*

**Respectfully submitted**

**Mary Donaldson  
Recording Secretary**