Dover Township  
Planning Commission Minutes  
March 2, 2011

Chairman Wayne Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present: Monica Love, Bill Hansman, Anthony Pinto, Amy Brinton, and alternates Eric Harlacher and Carol Kaufman. Also present: Zoning Officer Georgia Sprenkel, Solicitor John Baranski, Engineer Terry Myers, Recording Secretary, and five citizens.

I. Minutes  
Motion by Love, second by Hansman, to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 2, 2011. All members voted aye; motion carried.

II. Plans  
None this month.

III. Zoning Cases  
A. ZHB 11-01 – Matthew Leitzel, 2525 Conewago Road – Request for Special Exception for Home Occupation, Fire Arm Sales, in the Conservation Zone.

Matt Leitzel was present to request a Special Exception for in-home firearm sales. It would be mostly Internet and sales to police officers. He is in the process of getting his license to sell firearms. It will be a small business. Mr. Leitzel is a York City police officer. Customers will come to the store; he will run a background check on the customers and if all checks out, he will transfer the firearm to the customer. Inventory will be very low; he anticipates mostly orders. Any firearms on site will be in a locked safe. What if someone does not qualify? That person would not be permitted to take the firearm. Some ammunition will be provided for sale in the shop, along with other accessories. Business will be by appointment only; no outside sign. The property is over three acres; there’s a large turn-around area and driveway. How about testing of firearms? No testing area will be provided on site. The difference between his shop and a general retail store will be mostly that he will not have a large inventory of firearms; he will mostly be providing the service of procuring the firearms for the customers. This will not be a retail operation for purposes of the definition in the ordinance. He’ll do a bit of specialty ordering. The name of the business will be “Tactical Edge.” All paperwork will be kept on site, in compliance to state laws. If he wants to expand into a full-blown retail gun store, this might not be a good location for that under the ordinance. The business space is an 11’ x 11’ room. Would he be permitted to provide gun smithing services in the future? He’d like to go to school to learn that skill. If he were to do the gun smithing on site, yes; he’d also be permitted to have one non-resident employee. What types of firearms will he deal in? All types. It was noted that police officers do indeed have to “go through the same hoops” as a regular citizen to obtain a gun.

Motion by Love, second by Hansman, to recommend approval of the application by Matthew Leitzel for Special Exception for in-home business of selling firearms. All members voted aye; motion carried.
IV. **Other Business**

Discussion on Grandview Golf Course concept – Douglas Barton

Doug Barton, majority owner of Grandview Golf Course, 2779 Carlisle Road, was present with Stan Watroba. They would like to “save” the golf course, using a project of upscale apartments for ages 55 and up. Mr. Barton noted that this is the oldest golf course around and it cannot survive on its own as it is. The applicants are presenting two proposals. One involves a building with 9 stories (8 above-ground) and the golf course. The other proposal involves 7 stories (6 above-ground). The existing mansion will be removed. The plan is to keep the golf course going, at least with 18 holes (executive). Parking requirements will dictate how large the building will be. The dilemma is how high to make the building; more height leaves more golf course. A wider building will leave less golf course, which is a drawback for the applicants’ plan to keep a decent-sized golf course and all that accompanies it.

Stan Watroba, 2337 Denninger Road, York, presented information on similar projects in other areas. He feels that this project (golf course, apartments) is ideal for the 55-and-up crowd. There will be a gym, library, hair salon, indoor pool, and restaurant. Indoor garages will also be available to some residents. These apartments will be 950 to 1200 square feet, ornate with a Tudor theme. The rent will be about $1300 per month which will include everything, utilities, etc. They want to make the building as attractive, elegant, and classy as possible as it is the first thing travelers see coming into the southern end of the Township.

Is this a residential endeavor? Yes. But this is a commercial zone which could be a problem. Height is also a problem; the Township’s maximum is 40 feet. Nowhere in the Township except farm structures is a building permitted to be this high. Why did the Township decide on 40 feet? Fire regulations have a bearing on this restriction. How about spot zoning? Either 291 or 276 units are proposed. Mr. Myers calculated the density and came up with a reasonable number. It was noted that of the total parcel about 15 acres is located in West Manchester Township; another 18 is in the flood plain. That leaves about 60 acres of commercial land to develop; the golf course is commercial, and the apartment use is obviously residential. The Mixed Use zone in this Township is being discontinued in the new Zoning Ordinance/SALDO.

Mr. Barton invited the Planning Commissioners to check the view from the Pizza Hut on Carlisle Road to imagine a building of this height on the golf course location.

Mr. Hoffman asked how could this proposal be done legally? Mr. Myers feels that if it’s something that the Township wants to entertain, it would be up to the applicant to propose wording changes/text amendments to the ordinance to help them comply. Is it possible to create a zone or modify an existing zone to permit them to proceed? Mr. Baranski noted that this type of project/request is a good candidate for a text amendment.

Mrs. Love noted that there are only 250 EDUs available for this area. This could be a problem. Which area, specifically? Does this include the interceptor area as well? Also, traffic could be a real issue for peak morning and evening travel. There is no other access onto Route 74. They are proposing a traffic light, which met with Planning Commission opposition tonight. The traffic is a project issue, not a concept issue. Mr. Barton feels that the traffic study for this project will indicate fewer trips per day as
compared to a regular development.

Is there a need for this type of residential unit in this Township? Does this speak to the character of the Township? Is it feasible to think that these units will be filled for that rental price? Is there something similar in this area? How about the Comp Plan and the Zoning Ordinance requirements? How about the neighbors?

Why this many units? Fewer units would not pay for the expenses for this project and the golf course. Mrs. Sullivan feels that this type of project does not fit the character of the Township. How about selling the golf course and building? Also, what will all that paving do to the local environment? The applicants would, of course, need to comply with all the storm water requirements.

What would it take to make the golf course profitable? Probably a liquor license. The applicants feel that the banquet facility, the sale of alcohol, the increase of the price of golf would all contribute to increased profitability.

How about fewer units? Mr. Barton feels that they could make it work with some fewer units, but, cost-wise, it works better with more. Discussion was held on the difference between the different types of golf courses, executive or championship.

From the audience, in response to a question from one of the Planning Commission member, Madelyn Shermeyer noted that there is a future 55 and over community planned for the Township (along Bull Road).

In general, the Planning Commission members had mixed feelings about this proposal. There were concerns from some members about esthetics and height, traffic, and sewer. Eight stories high is 90 feet.(?)

It would be nice to see a color picture or rendering of the building. The applicants can certainly provide such a picture.

The EDUs will likely come under scrutiny if this project goes forth. The traffic issues will be an even larger hiccup. The applicants will work on the proposal and address the concerns of the Planners. They accepted Mr. Hoffman's invitation to bring further information to a future Planning Commission meeting.

Motion by Hansman, second by Brinton, to adjourn. All members voted aye; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie B. Maher,
Recording Secretary