



**JENKINTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**September 17th, 2018**  
**6:30pm-8:30pm**  
**700 Summit Avenue, Jenkintown Pennsylvania**

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendance**

Members Present: Gabriel Lerman – Chairman, Glen Morris, Joe Hentz, John Krebs, Jon McCandlish  
Members Absent: Emily Wicks, Phil Zimmerman  
Others Present: George Locke – Borough Manager, Borough Engineer

**Public Comment**

See Below.

**Reports**

August 2018 Planning Commission (PC) meeting minutes were approved.

PC Chairman Gabe Lerman conveyed that there were no new updates regarding SEPTA's plans for renovations to the Jenkintown train station, although this discussion item would remain on the PC agenda for the foreseeable future.

**New Business**

**Sub-Division Land Development (SALDO) Presentation – 610 Summit Ave**

The development team for the 610 Summit Ave project, including representatives from Roizman Properties (RP) and relevant consultants/subconsultants, presented for the second time to the Planning Commission (PC) as part of the project's Sub-Division Land Development review. Following the presentation and discussion, RP sought PC recommendation for Borough Council preliminary approval. Representatives from RP reviewed borough engineer comments and explained their responses. They conveyed that a second letter had been provided to the borough engineer for his further review and comment. The PC was then given the opportunity to ask questions and request clarifications.

RP representatives clarified the following engineer letter responses:

Related to the engineer recommendation to make the sidewalk along Summit Ave wider by reducing planting strip, RP will consider this long as this arrangement still complies with stormwater requirements.

Related to the request to provide more specific descriptions of proposed commercial tenants and to provide a designated loading area, RP responds that they cannot provide any more specific information about proposed commercial tenants, and are not required by apartment use zoning requirements to provide designated loading areas and will continue to maintain compliance with commercial use zoning requirements that dictate only that loading be located to the rear of the building.

Related to the request for full street milling and paving be provided to the centerline of the street, as opposed to spot repaving of any street trenching for utilities, the item is to be considered exempt from PC recommendation for preliminary approval and consider part of final approval while this is being considered by RP.

All responses to stormwater related comments will be addressed prior to recommendation for final approval in the October PC meeting.

Related to the request for the implementation of a traffic study, RP agreed to comply and has consulted with Pennoni Engineers to determine that peak traffic is relatively low and additional project traffic will not significantly add to congestion or queuing along Summit Ave.

RP has agreed that in addition to the vehicular sightlines currently being shown on plans, pedestrian sightlines shall also be shown on plans reviewed for final approval.

In addition to the Borough engineer's comments, RP considered Montgomery County Planning Office comments and requests. The county planning office has recommended preliminary approval of the current plan pending developer comment review.

Regarding fence height, perimeter fencing shall remain 6' as shown in current plan and is required.

Regarding the integration of benches and gazebos, the developer has reiterated that they are open to providing these, and will integrate them into future design plans.

Regarding transformer location, the developer has showed this in plans and elevations. The location is limited as PECO is dictating the placement of the equipment. The PC inquired again about screening and the possibility of locating the transformer in an underground vault. RP stated they could review this issue further.

Jon McCandlish inquired about the viability of using the existing service alley to the rear of the site for utility access and transformer location. RP stated that because of the proposed site modifications, drainage and collected water would prevent continuing to use this area for utility access or as a location for the transformer on the backside of the property. They furthermore stated that access would be limited and PECO simply couldn't get to a transformer located on the rear of the site. Mr. McCandlish reiterated that because an access easement currently exists and is being used as a location for utilities and utility access, he would encourage reconsidering utilizing this area to avoid placing utility equipment at the front porch of the site. He furthermore stated that the project's siting has created a gateway to the borough, with primary views along Leedom Street, and that it would be a loss if that view would be to a transformer. RP reiterated that PECO wouldn't be able to properly access the lower rear area; that there just isn't the space and that its significantly lower elevation would be compromised by stormwater drainage. The Borough engineer recommended that RP provide a letter from PECO stating what options for the transformer location and access would be viable.

Mr. McCandlish inquired about the relationship between the vehicular and pedestrian entries and the sidewalk? The developer team clarified that the openings for vehicular access had been maximized and shifted to corner of building/site to increase vehicular and pedestrian views and sightlines. Mr. McCandlish asked for clarification regarding the function of the garage door and its proximity to the sidewalk. RP stated that there is 6' from the door to the concrete entry apron and then 5' to the back of the curb cut, with a total of 11' from the entry to the street. The PC expressed concern over the garage door's close proximity to the sidewalk, which would put the onus of responsibility regarding traffic safety on the pedestrian walking in front of the building as opposed to exiting vehicles. The PC suggested that a more preferable parking access location would be to the far west of the building, although the current configuration is preferable to open and fully visible surface parking.

The PC inquired whether the garage would be closed at times or remain physically open at all times of the day/night. RP clarified that the garage would remain physically open at all times.

Mr. McCandlish inquired about lighting type and lighting levels in the garage. The developer responded that lighting levels have been studied and designed to meet local and national code for maximum allowable glare. They also clarified that all exterior lighting would be full cutoff and garage lighting would be recessed.

The PC members inquired about the project materials and exterior finishes. RP clarified the following items:

Exterior Stucco – Three-coat stucco system and not EIFS.  
Masonry veneer at base of building – Manufactured, thin-veneer stone – limestone look.  
Site fence – Aluminum with high-performance coating.  
Retaining Wall - Split face block.  
Roofing – Standing seam metal at locations where roof is visible or gabled.

The developer stated that the building's primary façade had been designed and organized to break down the mass of the building. Mr. McCandlish requested that due to the high visibility of all building elevations, articulated side and rear facades be considered as part of the design, with materiality and massing to be carried around the building.

Mr. McCandlish asked for clarification regarding the location of mechanical equipment and HVAC units. RP replied that each unit would have its own mini-split system comprised of interior equipment located within each apartment and relatively small, exterior condensers located on the roof. The developer elaborated that sightlines had been considered and that all mechanical equipment has been organized along center of the building so that no units are visible.

The PC asked about rooftop access and specifically whether any stair would extend up to a penthouse at the roof level. RP responded that one stair, located at the rear of the site, would extend up to the roof but clarified that it also wouldn't be visible from the street.

RP stated that windows to be used on the project would be energy efficient and likely either be PVC, vinyl or composite. Mr. McCandlish furthered the discussion by asking, in the context of the sustainability benchmarks of the Borough's newly adopted 2035 Comprehensive Plan, what other sustainability measures would be included as part of the project. RP responded that other sustainability strategies have been considered, such as zero VOC construction materials and the use of recycled or local materials, measures that have been built into the project through its specifications and design. The developer furthermore stated that a significant portion of project funding made available through the PA Housing Finance, requires adherence to relatively high levels of sustainability initiative. The PC inquired about onsite renewables/photovoltaics and onsite stormwater management/recycling. RP clarified that no additional renewable or sustainable stormwater strategies had been implemented due to lack of payback or viability. Mr. McCandlish inquired about the developer's intentions to benchmark the project against the LEED sustainability rating system. The developer also confirmed that they would not be pursuing this project as LEED certified in any way due to the associated costs. Mr. McCandlish asked that RP reconsider pursuing LEED certification as a means of accountability, community education, and to align the project with the mission of the borough's 2035 Comp Plan.

**Public Question/Comment:**

There was a public request for clarification to the borough engineer request that the sidewalk along Summit Ave be reduced. The Borough engineer clarified that although zoning requires 8' sidewalk width in these areas, the developer is providing a 4' sidewalk and 4' of planting strip. His recommendation asked for a reduced planting strip width – 3.5', and an increased sidewalk width. These measures would make the planted strip a more manageable scale and could promote ease of walkability at the sidewalk. The PC stated that it would be preferable for the planted strip to not be just grass, but taller, native plantings and interspersed pavers, adding variety and texture to this area. RP pointed out that a parklet and building mounted plaque had been included as part of the current plan to memorialize the importance of the site as the former location of Salem Baptist Church.

Borough Councilwoman Kieran Farrell asked if there were plans to salvage materials from Salem Baptist Church and the relatively new adjacent community center. RP responded that materials would be salvaged and reused to whatever extent possible. Farrell requested to see the plans for use of these materials once they were developed.

Borough Council President Deborra Sines-Pancoe expressed resident concern about views from Cedar Street houses to the rear of the project and parking lot. The developer explained that views directly to the surface parking areas would be screened by fencing and a planting buffer, with only the upper floors of the building visible beyond. RP further clarified the height of these planting as up to 10' taller than the fence, with 18' of screening total.

Council President Deborra Sines-Pancoe inquired into whether the developer had considered further study of traffic at the intersection with Old York Road and the impact of the project's proposed additional traffic on this main thoroughfare. The developer responded that no additional study would be necessary as the traffic generated by this site is so minimal that it should have no significant impact. The point was made that there is currently congestion at this location and concern expressed that any new traffic would be just adding to an already existing problem. The Borough engineer stated that he would confirm that no concerning traffic study findings would be identified in the final traffic study for the site and that additional burden to traffic in the area would indeed be minimal.

**Recommendation for Borough Council Preliminary Approval:**

The Borough engineer clarified that the PC was expected to vote to recommend preliminary approval by Jenkintown Borough Council. He further clarified that this recommendation would exclude the developer's request for a waiver related to complete milling and repave to centerline of street – which will be discussed further and approved as part of final approval. In addition, final approval would be pending satisfactory responses to borough engineer's review letter comments as well as additional feedback regarding utility access and transformer location.

Joe Hentz recused himself from the PC vote due to a potential conflict of interest.

Glenn Morris motioned to recommend preliminary approval.

Jon McCandlish seconds the motion.

Recommendation for preliminary approval passes with all present and voting PC members in favor.