

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Consider a revised landscape plan for the development at 1345 Conshohocken State Road, Gladwyne.

Prepared by: Chris Leswing, AICP, PP, Assistant Director, Planning

Date: September 13, 2016

I. Action to Be Considered by The Board:

The Board of Commissioners is being asked to review and approve a revised landscape plan for this five-lot, open space preservation subdivision plan.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The applicant removed trees that were shown to remain and as a result a revised landscape plan is required to show where those trees will be replaced.

III. Current Policy or Practice (If Applicable):

N/A

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

Staff required the applicant to update the tree survey that was submitted with the approved subdivision/land development plan to determine which specific trees were improperly removed. The updated survey indicated that approximately 20 trees that were shown to remain were removed and a few trees that were shown to be impacted by the development were also removed.

Several trees shown on the original survey also no longer exist or are not viable. Staff could find no evidence that some of these trees ever existed, or were removed, but is requiring that these trees be counted for the purpose of establishing the required number of replacement trees to be planted as compensatory plantings. The revised landscape plan details the location, size and species of all missing or removed trees.

Staff met at the site with the project landscape architect to review site conditions and determine an appropriate compensatory planting plan to account for the trees improperly removed from the site. One of the goals of this site meeting was to review appropriate locations to plant new trees to provide an improved level of screening between the developed property and the adjacent properties.

A revised landscape plan prepared by Lisa Thomas, of Glackin Thomas Panzak, has been submitted showing the planting of additional trees to compensate for the trees removed and/or shown on the original survey plan. The plantings shown on the original landscape plan will be installed and supplemented by the additional plantings shown on the revised landscape plan. Staff has also required compensatory plantings to be increased in size to account for the larger trees removed from the site.

V. Impact on Township Finances:

There is no impact on Township revenue.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the revised landscape plan subject to the following conditions:

1. The new trees along the southern property line (abutting the two Waterford Court neighbors) shall be located a minimum of 15 feet from the property line. A berm shall also be installed along this property line as required by the Township Engineer.
2. All new plantings shall be installed the Fall of 2016 unless plant materials are not available from the supplier in which case installation will be completed in the Spring of 2017.
3. Any new trees planted on the property shall be maintained in perpetuity by the Homeowner's Association. Any tree that falls shall be removed and replaced by the Homeowner's Association. If a tree falls onto an adjacent property, the Homeowner's Association shall remove the tree subject to obtaining approval from the adjacent property owner to gain access to the property.
4. A revised grading plan shall be submitted that is compatible with the revised landscaping plan provided. The final grading for landscape berms shall be as shown on the revised grading plans and shall be subject to the approval of the Township Engineer.
5. The plantings shall be installed as shown on the plan prepared by Glackin Thomas Panzak dated March 14, 2011, last revised September 13, 2016.