

The Easton Planning Commission met on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 in the 6th Floor Council Chambers, Easton City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Charles Elliott. Present: Charles Elliott, Robert Sun, James Bloom, Dennis Lieb and Ronald Shipman. Also in attendance were staff members Becky Bradley, Director of Planning & Codes; Brian Gish, Chief Planner; Carl Manges, City Planner; and Tina Woolverton, Secretary. Joel Scheer, City Solicitor, was present.

The agenda was approved.

A motion to approve the revised minutes of the May 4, 2011 meeting was made by Mr. Lieb, seconded by Mr. Shipman, approved by all.

Privilege of the Floor. None

Land Development – 1280 Bushkill Drive – College Hill Auto Sales. Mr. Manges said the applicant, Robert Ziegenfuss, has proposed to demolish an existing repair garage and shed, and construct a one-story vehicle repair garage and office area on a site consisting of two parcels located at 1280 Bushkill Drive (College Hill Auto Sales). These two parcels, L924 2B & L924 2C, are to be consolidated into a single parcel with this proposal. The new vehicle repair garage, approximately 1665 square feet, will be used for the servicing of vehicles that will be sold at the dealership and for maintenance of vehicles owned by clients. The office area will be used as a customer waiting area, and for transactions associated with vehicle sales. The building will consist of a metal roof and metal siding. Other improvements with this proposal include the repaving of a driveway and a parking area located on the lower level of the property. Currently, the lower area is unimproved. The parking area will be used for vehicles that are to be serviced. There will also be new steps that will provide access from the proposed parking area to the upper lot where the vehicle repair garage will be located. Mr. Manges explained the proposed improvements are located in the River Corridor and Other Green Areas Zoning District, Street Corridor Enhancement Overlay District, Block Class B. The proposed C10-Automotive Parts and Accessories use is not permitted in the River Corridor and Other Green Areas Zoning District. However, a C10-Automotive Parts and Accessories use is permitted as a Special Exception in the Street Corridor Enhancement Overlay District. The I2-Accessory Office is a permitted use in the River Corridor and Other Green Areas. There are steep slopes located on the site; however, no steep slopes will be disturbed with the proposed improvements. Mr. Manges said the transition between this property and the future development of the Silk Mill site is critically important. The applicant has indicated on the plans that there will be a 6' high shadow box fence installed between the properties to help mask the parking area. He said staff had a conversation with the applicant's engineer concerning the lack of landscaping around the proposed building and they agreed to provide additional landscaping. The revised plans indicate that there will be 7 evergreen trees (4 American Holly and 3 White Pine) around the back and the side of the proposed garage. The applicant, Robert Ziegenfuss was present, as was Steve Glickman, the project's architect. Mr. Ziegenfuss said the expansion would allow him to offer more employment opportunities. Mr. Glickman said the new building would match the existing building and would be landscaped. Mr. Lieb noted the business had been there for quite a while and asked if the adjacent property, the truck repair shop, was also used by Mr. Ziegenfuss. Mr. Ziegenfuss said he did not use the adjacent lot, and that he has called the City on numerous occasions to complain about the state of property. Mr. Sun asked if there was currently a repair shop on the premises. Mr. Ziegenfuss said there is currently a two bay garage used for cleaning the vehicles and storage. Mr. Sun questioned what would be different in the new facility. Mr. Ziegenfuss said there would be a lift, and it would be larger. Mr. Sun asked if only clients' cars would be serviced. Mr. Ziegenfuss said the garage would service the business's cars as well as the cars of their customers. Mr. Sun asked if the increased traffic demands had been looked at. Mr. Ziegenfuss said the change would be insignificant, as he would only anticipate 5-8 cars daily. A motion to approve the resolution granting conditional final approval for the land development and reverse subdivision as well as recommending approval to the Zoning Hearing Board for the special exception was made by Mr. Lieb, seconded by Mr. Shipman, approved by all.

Watson Hall Development Plan Update – Lafayette College. Ms. Bradley said there have been multiple meetings with the College and staff in which many of the concerns have been addressed. Mr. Mitchell Wein, Vice President of Business Affairs for Lafayette College was present. He said the meetings have been very beneficial, he said the College is looking at safety and welfare concerns along with aesthetics. He said it is still the College's hope to complete the heavy construction prior to classes resuming in fall. Jonathon Ceci and Stephen Young of Ayers/Saint/Gross were present to answer questions. Mr. Ceci said the College is working to satisfy the Fire Department's concern while making the area more pedestrian friendly and lower the impervious surface area. Mr. Elliott questioned the width of the roadway near Pardee Hall. Mr. Ceci said he has been working with the fire department to have the area narrower than the rest of the roadway in order to save a stand of trees. Mr. Sun questioned how the college was working with the fire department. Mr. Ceci said they had met with them again today, and have been providing specifications on the proposed materials as well as working with them to determine critical staging areas. Mr. Bloom asked if the reinforced turf is a solid material buried under topsoil and grass. Mr. Young said it is. Jim Hatfield, the Civil Engineer said the reinforced turf is an open graded stone material for drainage with surface turf. He said he is working with the planning and the emergency responders and believes the width issues on Pardee have been satisfied. He said he is still working on getting geotechnical information on the product to the engineer. Mr. Shipman asked if the manufacturer of the product specified the load capacity. Mr. Hatfield said it is 47,000 psf. Mr. Shipman asked if that is sufficient for the weight of the outriggers. Mr. Hatfield said it is. Mr. Sun asked, if once built, there would be a test with the fire equipment. Mr. Hatfield said there would be additional testing before completion of the project, including plate testing during construction.

Land Development Plan 701 Pierce Street – Lafayette College. Mr. Manges said the applicant, Lafayette College, has proposed to create two surface parking lots on adjacent parcels along Pierce Street, between Hamilton and Coleman Streets. The parcels are separated by Catherine Street, an unimproved street. The applicant's proposal is to pave a portion of Catherine Street (1,200 square feet) and use it as an access point for the lower parking area. This project includes the demolition of the existing tennis courts and the removal of the current fencing on both parcels. The proposed parking lot on Lot #1 is to have 10 spaces and the proposed parking area on Lot #2 is to contain 32 spaces. The parking spaces will be for Lafayette College students and personnel. The proposed parking lots will be lit, and that the lighting will be shielded to prevent light from reaching adjacent properties. The applicant has provided a luminary plan sheet indicating that the lighting will not shine directly onto adjacent lots. This proposal also provides landscaping, in the form of trees, shrubs, and groundcover along the periphery of both parcels. The proposed improvements are located in the College Hill Zoning District, Block Class B. The proposed H3 – Parking Lots are not permitted in the College Hill Zoning District and this application requires a Use variance from the Easton Zoning Hearing Board. A variance for Lot #2 is required for continuous rows of parking stalls exceeding 10 without one separate planter. Both parcels are also required to obtain variances for not accessing a driveway from an alley, and for the amount of landscaping being proposed. The plan received conditional preliminary approval at the Easton Planning Commission meeting of May 4, 2011. Mr. Wein said the staff report was an accurate summary of the plan and said this submission included a lighting detail sheet. Jonathon Ceci and Stephen Young of Ayers/Saint/Gross were present to answer questions. Mr. Ceci said the photometric plans extend 5 and 10 feet north of the property line. He said without a planted screen the light spillage at 5' beyond the property line is 2.5 foot candles. He said a denser planting screen would be installed at that area. Mr. Sun asked how long it would take for the plantings to reach the size where they were an efficient screen. Mr. Ceci said to be conservative, three to four years. Mr. Elliott asked if the analysis is cumulative of all the new fixtures. Mr. Ceci said it is. Mr. Lieb asked if the photometric calculations took into account the light shields. Mr. Ceci said it did. Ms. Jan Aponavicius of 621 Coleman Street questioned why the light poles could not be lower than 12'. Mr. Ceci said 12' is the lowest commercial height available. Ms. Mary Ann Barrett of 627 Coleman Street agreed

that she would like to see lower posts. Mr. Sun asked if there were objections others than the lights. Ms. Barrett said the lights were her biggest concern. Mr. Sun asked Mr. Wein if liability issues were the force behind the need for lighting. Mr. Wein said the college was trying to balance the need for public safety while minimizing the affect on neighboring properties. Ms. Barrett suggested a combination of lower light posts and ground lighting. Mr. Ceci replied that lower posts would require additional fixtures. Ms. Barrett asked what would be done if the lighting plan did not work as planned. Mr. Wein replied the college always wants to work with neighbors and said, if necessary, more trees could be added. Ms. Barret asked if taller trees could be planted. Mr. Wein said the college would be willing to do that. Ms. Barrett asked what height trees would be planted. Mr. Ceci said they would look for trees 12-14', but most likely availability would be for 10-12'. Michael Nesheiwat of 613 Coleman Street said once the light is there, nothing can be done. He also said he is concerned about traffic, and the impact of two more entrances onto Pierce Street. He added the tennis courts were open to the public, but will now be a private parking lot, and he does not believe it will resolve the parking problems. Mr. Sun asked the college if a better solution would to be making the smaller lot into a park and only developing the larger lot. Mr. Sun asked Mr. Wein if he knew the space was used by the neighbors. Mr. Wein said he was aware of it, and the idea is not to take away from the neighborhood. Mr. Sun said he feels there was no depth of thinking on the neighborhood impact. Mr. Wein said the college cares about community relations, as shown in the larger tress they had just agreed to install, but in this case they were taking underutilized land and creating parking. Mr. Wein said while only developing one parking lot would be less expensive, he did not have the authority to decide that for the college, and the matter would need to go before the Board of Trustees. Mr. Shipman said he feels the college has given consideration to all issues. Mr. Nesheiwat said the college developed the 3rd Street parking lot, which is usually empty. Mr. Sun asked Mr. Shipman if he was not troubled by the pushing of parking onto public streets. Mr. Shipman said the parking lots would not resolve parking issues during athletic events, but it will solve the eyesore and will help with parking concerns. Mr. Sun said the elimination of parking on Pardee Drive pushes parking into the lot. Mr. Wein said the parking being lost on Pardee Drive has been reassigned to S. College Drive, which is part of the interior core of the campus. Mr. Elliott questioned if the college changed its policy of not allowing freshman to have cars on campus. Mr. Hugh Harris, Director of Public Safety, said the freshman are offered the opportunity of having their cars off-campus on a leased lot in Forks Township. Mr. Elliott asked if the policy was enforced. Mr. Harris replied a lot of tickets are issued. Ms. Bradley informed the Commission that in 2008 City Council passed a Park, Recreation and Open Space fee. Every approved development pays into the fund, which in turn gets used to add or improve to parks in the area of the development. She added in this case, Lafayette College would be paying a fee of almost \$16,000 into the fund. Mr. Shipman said he was not aware of that, and thanked Ms. Bradley for updating the Commission. A motion to approve the resolution for conditional final approval was made by Mr. Shipman, seconded by Mr. Bloom, agreed by Mr. Sun, and Mr. Elliott, opposed by Mr. Lieb.

Special Exception – Cell Tower at 311 Paxinosa Rd. Mr. Gish said the applicant, Pegasus Tower Company, LLC, has proposed to construct a 195' Communications Tower (Monopole) at 311 E. Paxinosa Road. The property is owned by the City of Easton, and the applicant is leasing the land where the proposed Communications Tower will be placed. There will be an 80' x 80' area surrounding the Communications Tower that will have an 8' chain link fence. The fence is for protecting the communication facilities equipment. There will be four carriers associated with the proposed Communications Tower, each having twelve 7' x 14" panel antennas. The carrier's equipment cabinets will be located on the ground within the fenced area on 10' x 20' and 10' x 16' concrete pads. The property is located in the College Hill Zoning District where H5 - Communications Facilities are permitted by Special Exception. However the parcel that the Communications Tower is being proposed is classified as a Block A, and per Article XL §595-269(B), communications equipment buildings and communications antennas shall not be located on any parcel classified as Block Class A in the College Hill Zoning District. A variance is required from the Zoning Hearing Board for the Communications Tower being located on a Block Class A parcel. There is an existing Communications Tower is on this property currently, and is located approximately 150' east of the proposed Communications Tower. Mr. Mike Grab,

the attorney representing the applicant was present. Mr. Shipman asked if the property was leased from the City. Mr. Grab said it was, to Pegasus Tower Company. Mr. Lieb asked how it was determined that the proposal had no negative affect on neighboring properties. Mr. Grab said that determination was made by federal and state agencies who review the proposal. Mr. Sun questioned whether the rating for wind speed of 90 miles per hour with no ice load was for the tower only. Mr. Grab said it was for the tower fully loaded with cabinets. Mr. Sun asked what limitation was put on the possible number of carriers on the tower. Mr. Mario Callabretta, representing the applicant, was present and said the number of carriers was not the limiting factor, but rather the number of antennas. Mr. Sun questioned the 90 mile an hour wind standard. Mr. Callabretta said it is the standard as determined for Northampton County. Mr. Sun noted the tower is designed, should it fail, to crumble into a 65' radius and questioned how often the tower would be inspected. Mr. Callabretta said annual inspections and maintenance would be performed, with a physical walk up of the tower every other year. Mr. Sun asked how many towers Pegasus had erected if there had been any issues. Mr. Callabretta said they have erected over a hundred, and that there have not been any incidents. He added that there is a huge liability and safety is the top priority. Mr. Bloom asked the structure's ability to withstand an earthquake. Mr. Callabretta said code sets the seismic criteria. Mr. Bloom asked staff what the code was for camouflage. Mr. Gish said the code requires stealth antennas and Pegasus was seeking a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board on that requirement, which is more applicable when the antenna is being installed on an existing building. Mr. Elliott asked the height of the existing tower on the site. Ms. Bradley said it is 160'. Mr. Thomas Walters of 403 East Paxinosa Rd. said his property is immediately to the east of the proposal. He said there is no evidence of proposed landscaping or buffering and said it seem reasonable to create a buffer zone. He added, within the drop zone is a public street, East Paxinosa Rd. He added it is very windy on that ridge. Mr. Sun asked if buffering could be a requirement. Ms. Bradley said it is not a requirement of the special exception, but it can be requested. Mr. Walters said he would like to see buffering around the entire property, not just the tower base. Mr. Grab said Pegasus does not have the legal right to do so, as part of the property is leased to a separate entity, but he would be willing to work with Mr. Walters and the City on the screening. Mr. Grab said he was willing to take the time necessary to work out the landscaping issue and was willing to sign a continuance waiver. He added it appeared there were still people present who wished to speak on the matter and he would like to hear of their concerns so that they could be addressed timely. Attorney Theresa Hogan was present to represent neighboring property owners. She said there are many issues that require closer scrutiny. She said the other tower, an eyesore, should be removed. She said across the way is Forks Township open space, a pretty area that will be adversely effected by the tower. She added the tower would be the third principle use on the land, the others being the reservoir and the other tower. She also expressed concern over the 90 mile an hour wind rating, saying this area was a micro-climate with possibilities of exceeding the rating. Mr. Shipman commented that if the request was for staff to verify the accuracy of other agencies' data, it was not possible. Mr. Ed Shaughnessy of 315 Paxinosa Rd. was present. He said he is more concerned now, after hearing these questions and concerns than he had been prior to the meeting. He added winds of 40 miles an hour with an inch of ice is a condition that happens yearly. He said it appears there was no due diligence on this ridge and said a wind study is needed. Mr. Grab said the tower design complies with national standards, which are much higher then when the existing tower was built, and it is still standing. Mr. Shaughnessy said the design engineers have no idea if special conditions exist. A motion to accept the continuance waiver was made by Mr. Lieb, seconded by Mr. Shipman, approved by all.

Land Development Plans 512 March Street – Lafayette College/Radnor Property Group.

Mr. Gish said The applicant, Radnor Property Group, has proposed to demolish the existing three-story apartment building located at 512 March Street and construct a four-story Residential Midrise building consisting of twelve dwelling units, intended to house 31 students. The current building has six dwelling units intended to house 18 students, and is located at the southwest corner of March Street and Cattell Street. 512 March Street is owned by Lafayette College, and

the Residential Midrise will serve as student housing for Lafayette College. Radnor Property Group will own and operate the building while Lafayette College will continue to own the land. The applicant is also providing landscaping in the form of two Yoshino Cherry and one Bloodgood Sycamore trees. The proposed building will be four stories (approximately 42 feet in height), fully sprinklered, and constructed with firewalls of a minimum rating of 2 hours. As proposed, the first one to three feet (depending upon the portion of the building) would be site cast concrete with a sandblasted finish. Above this will be Hardi Plank siding, lapped on the first three floors, and with a mixture of Hardi Plank corner board and diamond patterned siding on the fourth. All of these will provide a mixed exposure with mitered corners. 30-year architectural shingles will be used on the roof. Windows will be constructed of aluminum clad wood, and will be on all sides of the building. Larger, "storefront" windows are found along March Street, aligning roughly with a central elevator column. Excluding the large pane windows at the building's center, 24 windows will face March Street and 16 will face Cattell Street. As with the previous building, entrances will be found along both March and Cattell Streets, but with an additional entrance along the side facing southeast. Combined, the applicant considers this to be a much more aesthetically pleasing design than the existing building, a more efficient use of the lot, and a positive addition to the community. Conditional preliminary approval had been granted at the May 4, 2011 Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Gish said this submission differed from the previous one in that an additional stairwell had been added, eliminating four rooms. Mr. Bloom commented the current design is much better fit to the environment. Mr. Elliott added that the rendering looked good. Mr. Gish read an e-mail from a resident, Joe Milutis, which expressed concern over increased density, congestion, parking issues and noise. A motion to approve the revised resolution recommending conditional final approval of the Development Plan was made by Mr. Lieb, seconded by Mr. Bloom, approved by Mr. Shipman and Mr. Elliott, Mr. Sun abstained from voting.

EAC Update. None

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 PM.