

## WEST NORRITON PLANNING COMMISSION

### Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM

The meeting was attended by the following Planning Commission members: Kim Flanders, Jean Gambone, Gordon McMeekin, Mike Purkis, Bruce Shoupe and Doug Smock.

The meeting was also attended by Maggie Dobbs, representative of the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC).

#### AGENDA

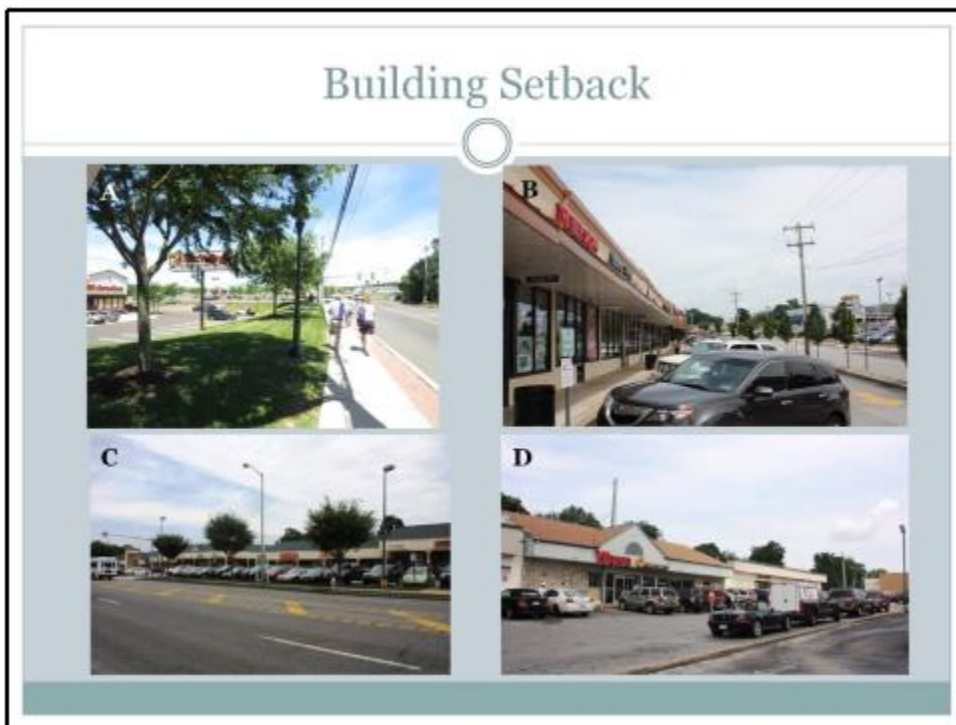
1. Meeting called to order
2. Approval of meeting minutes from January, February, and March.
3. West Main Street Study: Discussion of Western Section B. Visual preference survey.
4. Public Comment
5. Adjourn

#### MINUTES

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:43 PM.
2. Approval of meeting minutes for months of January, February and March.
  - a. January 16 Meetings-Doug mentioned, a motion to approve was made, all approved-motion carried.
  - b. February 16 Meetings-Doug mentioned, a motion to approve was made, all approved-motion carried.
  - c. March 19 Meetings-Doug mentioned, a motion to approve was made, all approved-motion carried.
3. West Main Street Study: Discussion of Western Section B. Visual preference survey.
  - a. For next meeting: May 21 • Discussion of business outreach strategies.
    - i. Will want to understand the current willingness/needs of businesses and property owners in the corridor to make changes.
    - ii. Continued discussion of greening redesign of the Western segment.
  - b. We reviewed the current setbacks. Currently, there is no standardization. The commission must decide what do want the buildings to look like, what the setbacks should be, and what amenities should be.
    - i. Maggie indicated that one option is incorporate greening and sidewalks into the current setbacks. We should understand that some options may result in the loss of parking space. To mitigate the loss of parking, we could encourage shared parking.

- c. Visual preference survey: Maggie presented a series of slides with photos of actual examples of options in each category and requested feedback on each from the commissioners. Commission then reviewed a series on options for the following categories: building setbacks, building heights, parking landscaping, parking orientation, median treatment, sidewalk widths, verge styles, parking lot buffers – fenced, parking lot buffers – landscaped, benches, signs, light fixtures, and monument signs.
- d. We should engage current business and property owners. We shouldn't present a final plan but propose ideas.
- e. We should explore the capability to meet parking requirements for outdoor dining. Outdoor dining has increased parking requirements.

Building setbacks:

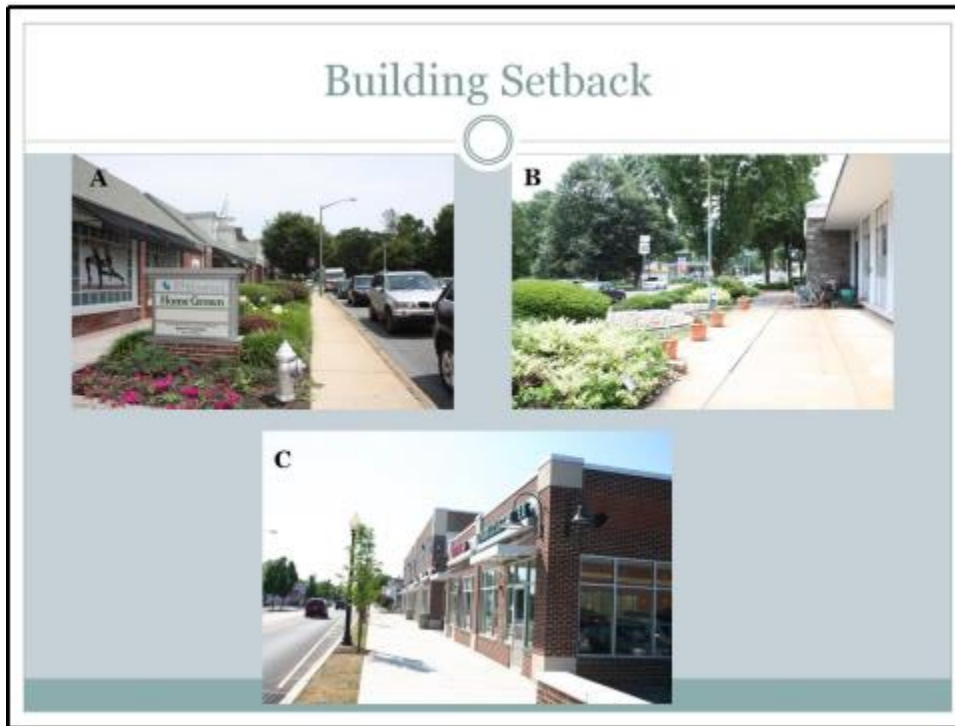


Commissioner's Visual Preferences:

- Option A would be the ideal, but B is more realistic.
- It's challenging to see businesses that are setback too far, so this should be avoided.
- Don't believe area will ever be conducive to pedestrian traffic. Make area more auto friendly and convenient to drive but with safe and attractive parking.
- Minimum setback of 35' for future development.
- Businesses are mostly "destinations" meaning no one is stopping to shop on a whim, most people plan on going to one of the businesses • Don't like cars

parked up against the sidewalk – align parking next to the building, not sidewalk.

Building Setback cont.



- Like building design of image C – brick and stone.
  - Want to create consistency in façade treatment.
- Like the landscaping of image B and the creation of social gathering space, attractiveness.
  - Outdoor dining: rooftop dining instead?
- B is nice because it is more segregated from the street, but others feel it doesn't make sense for the way that Main Street is currently configured.
- Ideal is A.
  - Most commissioners prefer no parking in front of building.
  - Some expressed concerns with loss of parking should front areas be redeveloped for landscaping or if we restrict front of building parking.
  - Maintenance of landscaping: who takes care of it and what is the maintenance cost? Some expressed concerns that upkeep would not be maintained, and the maintenance cost would be prohibitive.

Building heights:

## Building Height



- Building Height option C is preferred by all.
  - Like the mixture of roof heights, dormers as well as providing more flexible for tenants.
- Want clean looking signs and awnings. Both are fine if they are proportional to building.
- Prefer varied heights visually versus the boxy appearance of A or B.
- 2 stories leave it open, sense of openness and not “closing in” on the street.
- Would want to leave it option for 3 stories but it would be conditional – restricted to mixed use.

### Parking Landscape:

## Parking Landscaping



- Like option A but would prefer to see no curbing and incorporate more storm water management BMPs.

## Parking Orientation:

## Parking Orientation



- No parking in front if possible.

- The best alternative is to have one drive aisle with one row of parking facing the building (not facing the sidewalk).
- Want to keep parking in front to meet expectations of ease of parking/visible parking for customers close to building entrance.

Median Treatment:



- All agreed median treatments won't happen since it's state controlled. There is no expectation of change to lane configuration in foreseeable future. But if it were to happen, would go with Option B, basic brick.
  - Concerns again with landscaped median and who would be responsible for maintaining vegetation.

Sidewalk Width:

## Sidewalk Width



- Like the brick treatment of option B and the style of street lights.
- We want to create a continuous treatment along the corridor.
- Like option A also but would feel limited in feasibility of tree planting because of the overhead wires.
- Want lower maintenance options.
- Want sidewalk next to street if wide enough (rather than having a grass landscape strip) – 8 ft minimum. Brick strip would replace typical grass buffer for safety and visual interest.
- A combination of option A and B would be ideal. It would allow flexibility to create curved area to create visual interest while keeping the materials/finishes consistent to tie properties together.

Verge Styles:

## Verge Styles



- Generally don't prefer to have a verge area due to cost and maintenance. They are more likely to collect trash. Would prefer requiring wider sidewalk that go right to the curb.

### Parking Lot Buffers – Fence:

## Parking Lot Buffers - Fenced





- No commissioner preference.

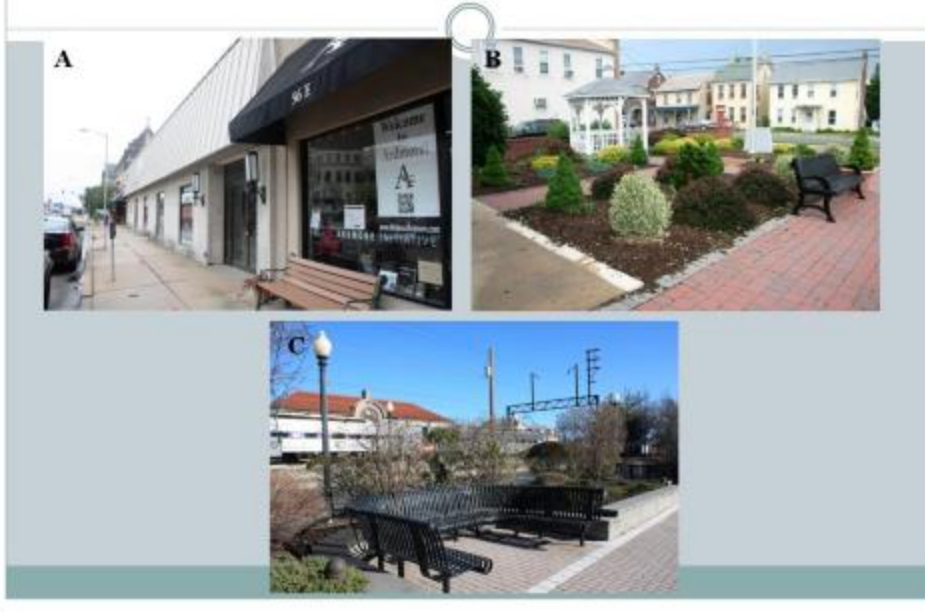
Parking Lot Buffers – Landscaped:



- Don't want to see parking against the sidewalk like what's shown. It's ok with a drive aisle if the parking row is oriented adjacent to the building façade.

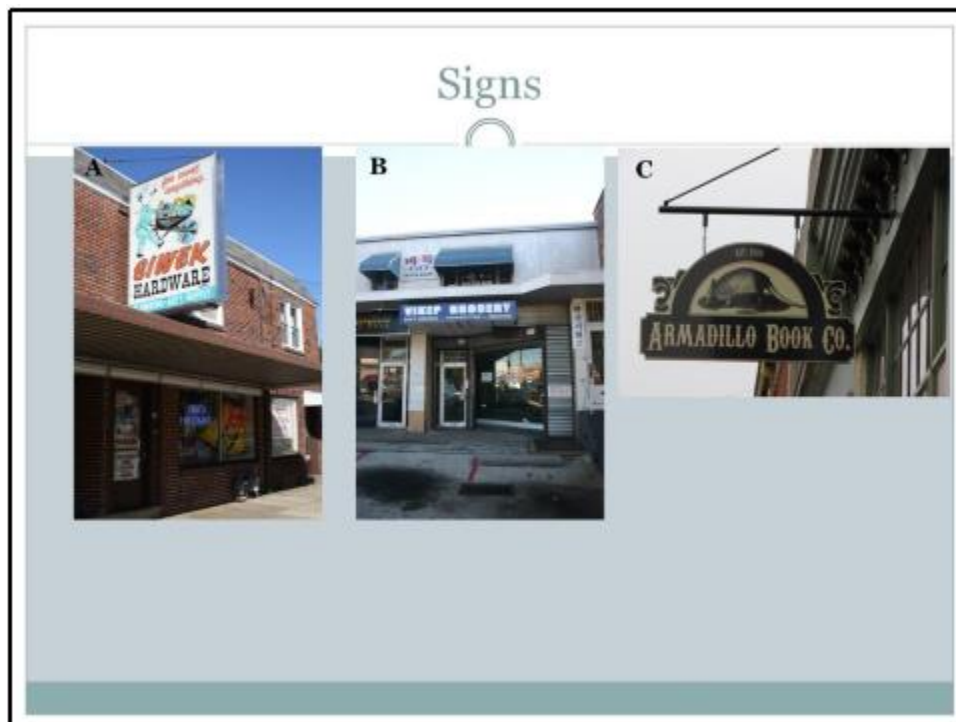
Benches:

## Benches



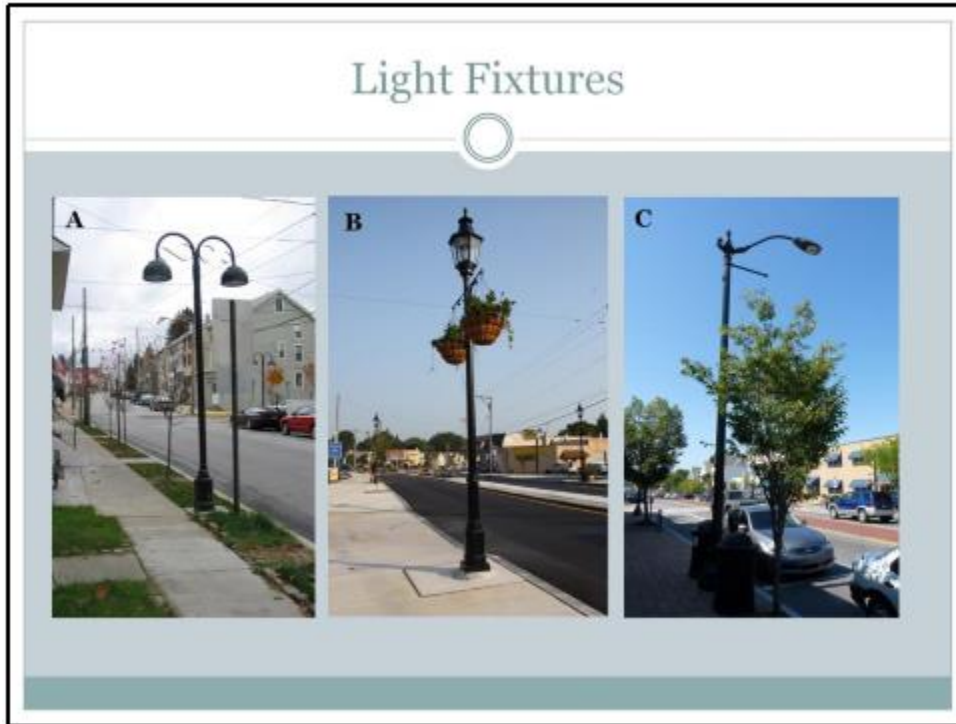
- Using benches to create destination and foster public socializing and gathering would add life to area.

## Signs:



- Signs should be proportional to size of building. An eclectic look with variety is fine.
- No neon, **LED**, flashing lights, fiber optics/excessively bright signs should be allowed.

Light Fixtures:



- Scale and light source standard should be set. Light pollution should be minimized.
- Want to continue the light style that was installed as part of the Wawa/Citadel development.

4. Public Comment:

No public comment.

Adjourn 9:13 PM.

**Immediate Actions:**

1. Assigned To: Due Date:
2. Assigned To: Due Date:
3. Assigned To: Due Date:
4. Assigned To: Due Date:
5. Assigned To: Due Date:

**New Business:**

**Next Meeting:**

Date: Monday, May 21, 2018

Time: 7:30 PM EST