

Board OK's B&B use for Stonebridge

By RICHARD SCHWARTZMAN

It's a done deal. The dwelling at 681 Webb Road may be used as a bed and breakfast.

After three hearing sessions, Chadds Ford Township supervisors voted 3-0 last week, granting conditional use of the property — known as Stonebridge — as a B&B to property owner Don Weiss.

Weiss had filed to subdivide the seven-plus acre property — on the corner of Route 1 and Webb Road — into one small parcel just larger than two acres and to convert the remaining mansion on the other 4.9 acres into a B&B.

Several residents had argued against the combination, saying one or the other would be fine, but not both. The primary spokesman for that group was Peter Jesson of Atwater Road who said that the B&B ordinance required a property to be at least four acres, but that the larger lot would be less than that since the Baltimore Pike Overlay netted out a variety of sensitive features.

After the net outs, the larger lot is roughly 3.8 acres.

Jesson also said he wanted it stipulated that the HARB must approve whatever home type was to be built of the subdivided parcel.

Mike Power, the attorney representing Jesson, Lana Sheer as well as Rob and Robin Newman — who live across Webb Road from Stonebridge — urged supervisors to deny the request.

Supervisors' Vice Chairman Deborah Love D'Elia called the site a "crème de la crème" of properties for

a B&B and that the spirit of the B&B ordinance was to help maintain properties. That, she said, supercedes the acreage issue.

Fellow Supervisor Garry Paul said he agreed with D'Elia, but added that HARB recommendation would be required for the second lot.

Supervisors' Chairman George Thorpe said he heard nothing that would indicate they should not approve the application for the B&B.

The sole condition — under township control — is that Weiss tap into the public sewer system for mansion and for a second house to built on lot subdivided from the current property. All state and county requirements must also be met.

Weiss had previously testified that cost estimates from his engineer showed that hooking up to the public sewer system would have cost him at least \$50,000 more than redoing an on-site septic system for the two parcels.

Last week, however, Code Enforcement Officer Richard Jensen said the figure was closer to \$35,000 to \$37,000. "Not more," Jensen said.

Township engineer Joe Mastronardo also said the variance between the numbers was closer that estimated and that Stonebridge was "one property away from the village."

He noted that the village has often flooded, that no new septic fields could be installed there and that an on-site system can't be installed near a flood plain if alternatives were available.

An alternative is available, he said, because the property adjoins the public sewer system.