

PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING
December 6, 2011

The monthly meeting of the Longswamp Township Planning Commission was held at the Longswamp Township Municipal Building, 1112 State Street, Longswamp Township, Mertztown, Pennsylvania, 7:35 p.m., prevailing time as previously advertised and posted.

ROLL CALL

Officials Present: Frank Karoly, Cathy Kratzer, and David River. Also in attendance were Jill Smith, PE, Hanover Engineering and Jill Nagy, Esquire, Solicitor.

ATTENDANCE

Dan Winkler, East Penn Manufacturing
James Mazeika, Barry Isett & Associates, Engineer for East Penn Manufacturing
Christopher Williams, Barry Isett & Associates, Engineer for East Penn Manufacturing

CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chairman Frank Karoly called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The approval minutes of the August 2, 2011 meeting was tabled, pending final review.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The Engineer's Reports for the October 4, November 1, and December 6, 2011 Planning Commission Meetings were read as follows:

Board of Supervisors Meeting of September 13, 2011:

1. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion to accept the Final Plans for signing and recording for the Wilson Minor Subdivision contingent upon payment of all outstanding fees to the Township. The Board also passed a motion to accept the right-of-way offered for dedication by the property owner along Longsdale Drive, Hidden Valley Road, and Tower Road in conjunction with the subdivision.
2. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion authorizing the Township Solicitor to advertise a Special Meeting to be held on Thursday, September 22 at 2:00 p.m., for consideration of adoption of the Perkiomen Creek Headwaters Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance.
3. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion allowing Mr. Gross to provide a lot consolidation plan meeting the general drafting requirements of the Township's SALDO and granting waivers for the remaining sections of SALDO. The plan is required to be provided as a condition to the issuance of a building permit applied for by Mr. Amos Gross to construct an accessory structure bordering the common property line of two (2) adjacent lots owned by Mr. Gross.

4. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion accepting the decision to deny the Silbermann Conditional Use application to create an accessory apartment within an existing residential structure.
5. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion to close the 2011 Agricultural Security Area application proceedings since the deadline to apply expired and no requests for consideration to be included or removed were received by the Township.
6. The Board of Supervisors passed a resolution adopting regulations and requirements for the inspection of sewer connections for properties within the Township currently connected to the Borough of Topton sewer system. The ordinance was required to be passed in order to comply with Pennsylvania DEP's requirement to conduct inspections of all connections to the Borough's system for compliance and to inspect for illegal connections.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of October 11, 2011:

1. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion authorizing the Township Solicitor to advertise an Ordinance to establish regulations for noise nuisances and provide enforcement and penalties for violations for the Board's consideration at their meeting in November.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of November 9, 2011:

1. The Board of Supervisors passed the Noise Nuisance Ordinance establishing regulations to control noise nuisances and providing enforcement and penalties for violators.

NEW BUSINESS

East Penn Manufacturing Topton Facility Parking Expansion – Preliminary/Final Plan Review

Christopher Williams, Engineer, along with James Mazeika (both of Barry Isett & Associates) were in attendance representing East Penn Manufacturing Topton Facility. Dan Winkler from East Penn Manufacturing attended as spokesman for the Applicant.

An overview of the proposed Parking Expansion project was discussed referencing the nine (9) sheet Preliminary/Final Plan submission (Job No 1007511.000), dated November 7, 2011, and comments from Hanover Engineering's Review Letter dated November 30, 2011.

Mr. Williams provided an update of their progress since the submission of their Sketch Plan in July. It was noted the Project Engineer will be meeting with the Township Engineer on December 7th to discuss some of the issues contained in the review letter issued by Hanover Engineering, particularly stormwater comments. The Applicant also requested a waiver to allow them to submit their plan as a Preliminary/Final plan.

Frank Karoly asked Jill Smith if they should act on the Waiver Request at this meeting. Ms. Smith indicated it would be appropriate for the Planning Commission to address the request at this meeting, so the Board of Supervisors could consider it at their next regular meeting on December 13th, and the Developer would then know how to proceed with their next submission.

Jill Smith noted that many of Hanover Engineering's comments were related to stormwater, hence the reason for the meeting scheduled the following day. In addition, a discussion was held regarding possible Traffic Impact Fees. Based on the information submitted to date by the Developer, it is still unclear as to the actual change in traffic volume that will occur as a result of the proposed project, as well as the impact on various intersections, as noted in Comment 6 on Page 3 of the Engineer's Review Letter.

In addition, the placement and timing of landscape screening was discussed and will be further reviewed. Jill Smith noted additional screening may be needed to meet screening requirements, but that some may be more appropriate for providing in Phase II. Proper screening will be needed along the Topton Borough line and along the residential parcel to the north of the Developer's parcel, which is not yet developed. Jill Smith noted her office will make another site visit to review the issue prior to the next review. It was also noted screening is addressed in two separate Sections: (1) the requirement to screen parking lots; and (2) the need to screen industrial/commercial developments adjacent to residential uses. It was suggested a note could be included on the Plan stating the Developer agrees to place such plantings as necessary to provide adequate screening from adjacent properties.

Dave River asked for a clarification as to the use of the spray irrigation area on the east side of Old Topton Road. It was explained that the detention pond will collect and detain runoff to be used for the spray irrigation. This will provide groundwater recharge as required by DEP. The use of spray irrigation was determined to be the best alternative for this particular site, due to the existing soils and limiting zones on the site. It was noted that the system would be shut off in the winter months, with the lines drained to prevent freezing and cracking, and that this is acceptable to DEP.

Frank Karoly asked if the proposed lighting has "fully-shielded fixtures", and the Developer confirmed they were being used.

Mr. Williams confirmed the plans have been submitted to the Borough of Topton for review. Based on a discussion held with the Borough's Engineer (Great Valley Consultants), the Borough did not intend to provide comments on the plan due to the limited work being completed within the Borough. It was suggested for recording purposes that a signature block be placed on the plan for the Borough to acknowledge deferment of review to Longswamp.

Jill Smith inquired about a section of parking spaces shown on the plan, but not included as proposed spaces. The Project Engineer noted these were existing spaces that would be re-stripped. For clarification, Jill requested these spaces be designated as existing parking spaces on the plan.

Jill asked about the status of the Highway Occupancy permit(s) and if the Developer had any discussion with PennDOT regarding the issue. The Project Engineer noted they will be applying for the applicable permits from PennDOT for the stormwater conduit and access driveways.

The waiver request for SALDO Section 302.C to allow the Plan to be reviewed concurrently as a Preliminary/Final Plan was addressed. A motion was made by Cathy Kratzer and seconded by David River to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that this waiver be granted. All in favor.

The Plan was tabled, pending further information.

Closing of Longswamp Elementary School

A letter was received from the BHASD notifying the Township that Longswamp Elementary School was closed and the 12-acre parcel is being sold through sealed bid. In addition, Berks County sent a letter, providing their comments. It was noted since schools are addressed in the Regional Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission should acknowledge receipt of the letter and comments from Berks County, and defer any action to the Board of Supervisors. Since it is anticipated that a Regional Comprehensive Plan meeting will be held with all participating municipalities within the next year, comments regarding the property and its relationship to any future Township land needs can be discussed and addressed in the next review of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Supervisor Wyka noted that the property was sold earlier in the day, to the purchaser of the vacated Rockland Elementary School, for \$121,000.

Invitation to Comment on Proposed County Telecommunications Facility

A plan has been submitted by EBI Consulting for a County proposed Telecommunication Facility on Topton Mountain. The request was for comments related to the historical impact only. Jill Nagy noted that additional information will be provided regarding the proposed facility for the Planning Commission's official review and comment, when the Conditional Use application for the tower is submitted.

A motion made by Cathy Kratzer, seconded by David River to defer this historical impact review to the Longswamp Township Historical Society, rather than providing input from the Planning Commission.

Lower Macungie Greenways

A brief discussion was held regarding Lower Macungie's proposed Greenway Plan. It was noted historically there has been no interest from Township landowners to engage in such a plan. It was noted the Township may want to consult with the Environmental Advisory Committee if the Township decides to pursue the possibility of extending greenways/trails into Longswamp.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Cathy Kratzer at 8:20 p.m. and seconded by David River. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

David Q. River, Recording Secretary