

PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING
August 2, 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, 7:30 p.m., prevailing time as previously advertised and posted.

ROLL CALL

Officials Present: Richard Meier, Chairman; Donald Siegfried, Vice-Chairman, Frank Karoly, and David River. Also in attendance were Jill Smith, PE, Hanover Engineering; and Jill Nagy, Esquire, Solicitor.

ATTENDANCE

Dan Winkler, Representative for 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

Richard Meier called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 5, 2011 meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Don Siegfried and seconded by Frank Karoly to approve the minutes as written. All in favor.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The Engineer's Report for the July 5, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting was read as follows:

Board of Supervisors Meeting of July 12, 2011:

1. The Board of Supervisors passed motions to grant the waivers and grant conditional Final Plan approval for the Wilson Minor Subdivision as recommended by the Planning Commission at their July meeting.
2. The Board of Supervisors passed a motion to grant a six-month extension for conditional Final Plan approval to January 13, 2012 for the Topton Ambulance Facility Project.
3. The Conditional Use Hearing for the Silbermann property located at 275 Centennial Road was continued until August 9, 2011 at 6:00 p.m., since the Silbermanns were not able to attend the scheduled hearing. The Silbermanns are requesting approval to create an accessory apartment, i.e. second dwelling unit within an existing residential structure.

4. The Township Solicitor noted that the reopening of the Agricultural Area Security District has been advertised and that any residents interested in having their property considered for admission or modification need to submit their application to the Township by August 31, 2011.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of July 26, 2011:

Meeting cancelled.

NEW BUSINESS

East Penn Manufacturing Topton Facility Parking Expansion – Sketch Plan Review

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

An overview of the proposed parking expansion project was provided by Mr. Mazeika referencing the two (2) sheet Sketch Plan submission (Job No 1007511.000 - Sheets SK-1 and SK-1A), dated July 5, 2011, and comments from Hanover Engineering's Review Letter dated July 27, 2011.

Mr. Mazeika presented the proposed plan noting East Penn Manufacturing's need to reconfigure the existing parking areas at their Topton facility for both car and tractor-trailer parking. Existing car parking spaces are located along Jefferson Street with 136 delineated spaces along the south side of the street and an additional non-delineated paved area for overflow on the north side. Much of the existing parking is used by personnel now working in the new warehouse, approximately 900 feet south of existing parking areas, causing long walking times, as well as safety concerns for these employees.

In addition, the existing 57 tractor-trailer parking spaces is currently located in the loading dock area along the warehouses, resulting in unnecessary and inefficient shuttling of trailers between Topton and Lyons.

Jim Mazeika noted the Sketch Plan submitted is a "master plan" showing the overall changes which are proposed to be completed in two phases (not delineated in these drawings). Phase I would include a new 104 car parking lot adjacent to the new warehouse building on the east side, and a delineated 48 space tractor-trailer parking area to be located on the northeastern end of the property. Phase II would add an additional 144 tractor-trailer spaces in the future, for a total of 192 spaces. The Developer is proposing to design the stormwater facilities to accommodate the required capacity for both phases, so that Phase II could be completed without disturbing the previously installed improvements.

Phase II, which is estimated to be completed in approximately five years from now, may also include a garage and inspection area or fueling station. No buildings or structures are proposed in Phase I of the plan. Mr. Mazeika noted the final layout is subject to an NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System) permit from DEP and Berks County Conservation District, which currently expires in two (2) years, sooner than Phase II's proposed startup date.

Chairman Meier asked Township Engineer Jill Smith about the typical procedure for approving/recording drawings in a phased project. Ms. Smith stated that the Phase I drawings should incorporate all proposed improvements in both phases if stormwater facilities are to be designed and approved for the both phases.

A question regarding lighting using "shielded fixtures" and lighting height resulted in assurances they would be carefully considered to meet ordinance requirements and protect adjacent properties.

A discussion was held regarding the proposed traffic impact. The Developer noted the intended improvements will help alleviate congestion and reduce traffic, since there will be less need for shuttling tractor-trailers to/from the Lyons facility, where the tractor-trailers are currently being stored. The Developer will provide documentation of existing and proposed traffic patterns and number of existing and proposed vehicles to compare information and determine any impact. It was further explained, currently filled trailers travel to Lyons for pre-trip inspections. The proposed improvements will eventually allow inspections, etc. to be performed at the Topton facility, thus reducing trips back and forth between facilities.

Mr. Winkler noted that average shipments from Topton are 600,000 units per week. Shipments in January and February of 2011 were 700,000 units per week, which is almost the maximum volume of the Lyons manufacturing facility.

It was noted the plan has been submitted to Topton Borough for their review, since the project is adjacent to the Borough and some minor paving improvements are proposed within the Borough limits. Mr. Mazeika said they will submit all subsequent revisions to the Borough as a courtesy.

Don Siegfried inquired about the screening requirements, since the area to the north is zoned residential. It was noted existing and proposed screening will be reviewed to ensure adequate protection is/will be provided.

Since the plan was a Sketch Plan submission, no action was required to be taken by the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Don Siegfried at 7:57 p.m. and seconded by Frank Karoly. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
David Q. River, Recording Secretary