

SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF MONROE, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.
MEETING MINUTES

1./2. Call to Order and Members Present:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Township Planning Commissioner Chair Attorney Scott Amori. Along with Commissioner Chair Amori, Commissioners D. Strunk, R. Moses and K. Wichman were physically present in the meeting room at the Township Municipal Building. Commissioner M. Albert arrived late and attended remotely. Commissioner D. Schryver was absent. The meeting was also streamed remotely via ZOOM.

In addition to the above Commissioners (and others who may have been present for the respective plan presentation), the Township officials who attended the meeting were Township Supervisor Robert Lovenheim, Township Supervisor Jacob Pride and Township Engineer Jon S. Tresslar, PE and PLS who were all physically present in the meeting room. As the result of prior commitment, the Township Solicitor, Ronold J. Karasek, Esquire, of the Karasek Law Offices, LLC, attended the meeting via ZOOM.

3. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: was recited.

4. Minutes of the Reorganization Meeting of January 14, 2021: Upon motion of Commissioner S. Amori and seconded by Commissioner R. Moses and on a unanimous vote of 4-0, the Reorganizational Meeting Minutes were approved.

5. Public Comment: None

6. Plans to Act On:

a) Jones and Zaplishny Minor Subdivision Plan-Lot Line Adjustment

The plan proposes a lot line adjustment on properties located on the northern side of Franklin Hill Road approximately 260 feet east of the intersection of Franklin Hill Road and Music Center Drive. The property is situate in the R-1 (Low Density Residential) Zoning District. It is intended that land will be taken from the existing Zaplishny lot and added to the existing Jones lot. The existing Jones lot will increase from 1.03 acres to 2.57 acres and the Zaplishny lot will decrease from 6.11 acres to 4.57 acres.

There was a request by the Applicant's Planning Professional G. Fetch, Jr. (sic) to table the plan; and, he provided an e-mail with a ninety (90) day extension for the Township to take official action. Matter tabled on motion of Commissioner S. Amori and seconded by Commissioner R. Moses and on a unanimous vote of 4-0.

b-1) Smithfield Gateway-Major Subdivision Plan and Final and Final Land Development Plan

In 2017 this Subdivision Plan was previously approved as a five (5) lot subdivision on 91.96 acres within the ED (Economic Development) Zone located on the western side of Seven Bridges Road (SR 209) approximately 1,000 feet north of the intersection with Independence Road (SR 447). A new subdivision plan has been filed to support the proposed Phase 1A-1 Land Development Plan. There are only slight revisions; the overall plan remains the same.

The Land Development Plan is Final Phase 1A-1. The 6.01 acre lot will be developed and include a 2-story 21,459 sq.ft. medical office building and a 9,000 sq.ft. retail building with drive through service and associated parking with access from proposed Roads A and B. Utilities, storm sewer, storm water, landscaping and lighting will also be constructed.

The Applicant J. DePetris and his Engineer D.Olmstead were present and updated the Commission on the HOP, roads and storm water developments.

Since the Township Engineer's land development review comments comprise eighteen (18) pages and were just received today; and, the subdivision comments cover seven (7) pages and was also just received today, the Planning Commission has not had sufficient time to review the submissions. On motion by Commissioner Amori, seconded by Commissioner Wichman and on a unanimous vote of 4-0, both plans were tabled.

b-2) Lands of DEPG Smithfield Associates, L.P and Frank J. Riccobono Minor Subdivision Plan

The Plan subdivides the land of DEPG and joins it to the lands of Riccobono in order to correct encroachments; and, the Plan also subdivides the land of Riccobono and joins it to lands of DEPG in order to reconstruct the entrance for future land development. The plan will also create a permanent drainage easement on the Riccobono property and will subdivide the Riccobono property to transfer property to PENNDOT for future road widening. Both J. DePetris (one of the Applicants) and D. Olmstead, PE (the Applicants' Engineer) were present to discuss the plan

The Township Engineer and the MCPC had reviewed the plans. The Applicants' Engineer made an application for ten (10) SALDO waivers including inter the plan to depict all existing and proposed structures, uses and setback lines; to depict all existing feature and adjacent streets; to depict contours and topography; to depict significant physical features; to submit a title report; a complete outline survey; to depict street widths; to depict location of all existing buildings and structures; to depict location of wells, sanitary sewage systems, storm water systems; to depict soil classifications with boundaries; monuments and markers after final grading is completed and no recreation/open space fee-in-lieu.

Due to the fact that no development is proposed, the Commission voted as follows: on motion of Commissioner D. Strunk, seconded by Commissioner R. Moses and on a unanimous vote of 5-0, the SALDO waivers were recommended for approval; and, on motion of Commissioner S. Amori, seconded by Commissioner D. Strunk and on a unanimous vote of 5-0, the Plan was recommended for Conditional Preliminary and Final Plan approval (on condition of compliance with the Township Engineer Second Review Letter of February 10, 2021).

c) Khan Mixed Use Sketch Plan

The proposed development is located in the ED (Economic Development) Zoning District and on the southern side of Independence Road (SR 447) at its intersection with Franklin Hill Road. It proposes four 4-story apartment buildings with a total of 144 units (36 units per building) and a 4,800 sq.ft. medical office building with 273 off-street parking spaces. The property presently consists of meadow and woodlands with existing wetlands on a corner of the property.

Dr. Khan and Jan Miller (of Liberty Associates) were present to discuss the plan. The Township Engineer had an issue with this being a mixed use project but the plan did not meet the twenty five (25) acre lot requirement as per Zoning Ordinance Section 305. This spurred a discussion concerning zoning amendments that are being suggested to the ED (Economic Development) Zoning District where some Commissioners are not in favor of such amendments.

Since the Township Engineer had just completed his Second Review by correspondence dated February 10, 2021, the Commission (on motion by Commissioner S. Amori, seconded by Commissioner K. Wichman and on a unanimous vote of 5-0) tabled the matter until the April 8, 2021 meeting.

7. New Business:

1) Reduce ZHB Membership

Supervisor Chair Pride stated that the present number of ZHB Members is five (5); and, it has been difficult to have five (5) ZHB members attend meetings. So the feeling is to reduce the number from five (5) to three (3). Commissioner Amori expressed his feeling that he is not inclined to reduce the size of government boards as this dilutes citizen participation in their government. Commissioner Strunk felt that there needs to be more citizen participation...not less. Commissioner Albert inquired as to whether the Township could reduce the quorum to two (2) members (even with a 5 member board) so that business could still be transacted; and, this would be the same quorum (2 out of 3) if a 3 member board was approved. The Solicitor stated that the Township could reduce the quorum if it wishes; however, he would not recommend it as that is not what the Township has been doing (as it has traditionally adopted a policy that a quorum consists of a majority of the board members).

On motion by Commissioner Amori, seconded by Commissioner Strunk and on a vote of 4-1 (Commissioner Albert is a nay), the Commission did not recommend a reduction of the ZHB membership.

2) Proposed Amendment to Chapter 15 of the Township Code of Ordinances- Prohibited Parking Locations

An amendment was proposed where parking would be prohibited on both sides of SR 209 between the intersection of SR 447 and the intersection of Hillside Drive (T-660). This proposal has been made for the period of time that SR 209 road improvements will be under construction re Smithfield Gateway Plan.

The Monroe County Planning Commission reviewed the proposal (by letter dated January 15, 2021) and recommended adoption of the ordinance. The Applicant's Engineer D. Olmstead also stated since SR 209 is a state highway, the Township must comply with the PENNDOT regulations where "No Parking" is allowed in the construction area.

On motion by Commissioner D. Strunk, seconded by Commissioner S. Amori and on a unanimous vote of 5-0, the ordinance was recommended for adoption.

8. Unfinished Business: None

9. Public Comments: None

10. Adjournment:

There being no other business coming before the Commission and on motion by Commissioner S. Amori, seconded by Commissioner R. Moses and on a unanimous vote of 5-0, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Karasek Law Offices, LLC

By: 

Ronald J. Karasek, Esquire

PA I.D. No. 23233

Solicitor to Smithfield Township