

SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF MONROE, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 14, 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 Amori, Commissioners D. Schryver, D. Strunk, M. Bowyer, M. Albert, R. Moses were all physically present in the meeting room at the Township Municipal Building. Commissioner B. Sandy was absent. The meeting was also live-streamed remotely.

In addition to the above Commissioners, the other Township officials who attended the meeting were Township Supervisor R. Lovenheim, Township Engineer Melissa Prugar, PE, Township Solicitor, Ronold J. Karasek, Esquire and Township Office Manager J. Heilakka all of whom were all physically present in the meeting room.

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

4. Minutes: The Minutes of August 12, 2021 Regular Meeting were approved on motion of Commissioner Strunk, seconded by Commissioner Amori and vote of 6-0. The Minutes of the August 24, 2021 Joint Meeting with the Township Board of Supervisors and the Township Planning Commission were approved on motion of Commissioner Amori, seconded by Commissioner Moses and vote of 6-0

5. Public Comments: None.

6. Plans to Act On:

Stroudsburg Airport Sketch Plan Re-Development/Black Buffalo

Present in the Meeting Room on behalf of the Applicant were Joseph Correia (of J. Perrucci & Sons-Project Manager) and Michael Buchvalt (of T&M Engineering Associates). Two (2) other representatives attended via ZOOM i.e. Daniel Harrington of Scannell Properties¹ (Industrial Developer) and another individual.

The proposal is for a mixed-use development consisting of proposed industrial, light manufacturing, commercial resort and multi-family uses. The project is located on two (2) parcels consisting of sixty eight (68) acres and located in the M-1 (Industrial) Zoning District.

Proposed Lot No. 1 (approx. 24 acres) will house a 131,250 sq. ft. light manufacturing building. Black Buffalo is the client who builds machinery and 3-D technology i.e. construction of wall panels. It has sites on Long Island and New Jersey; and, will need a place "to grow" and a home for its R/D division. Its neighbor is Vigon which is across from the proposed site on Airport Road.

Proposed Lot No. 2 (approx. 12.5 acres) is landlocked and is intended for a small resort/rental community called "Kudos".

¹ Scannell Properties is an industrial developer with thirty (30) years experience in both the U.S. and in Europe.

Proposed Lot No. 3 (approx. 8 acres) is designated as open space, and, proposed Lot No. 4 (approx. 8 acres) is intended for a small multi-family development called "Quads". Proposed Lot No. 5 (approx. 14.5 acres) is designated as industrial. No development is proposed at this time for Lots 4 and 5.

Mr. Correia stated that he needs "feedback" on the project; and, he has not yet had the opportunity to read the Township Engineer Review Letter. Engineer Buchvalt describes the plan and the various projects. He states that there may be a need for zoning variances for the Kudos, the Quad and the off-street parking². Also issues with building height of thirty-five (35') feet vs. sixty (60') feet³ exist. He also states that there are wetlands on the property; and, the Applicant may need some relief on wetland buffers.

Commissioners Amori and Schryver raise issues with stormwater, drainage, grading on the site and the fact that the present use is a "light use". Supervisor Lovenheim distributed an Information Sheet on electric air taxis and suggest that it might be more profitable to keep the airstrip as an airstrip as it is the only one in the area.

Engineer Prugar then went through Mr. Tresslar's Review Letter dated October 14, 2021.

ZONING

Ms. Prugar stated that the proposed multi-family residential uses are not permitted in the M-1 (Industrial) Zoning District; however, they are permitted with a mixed-use development. Further and since there is no frontage along any state road, a variance will be required. As to building height, the maximum height for mixed-use is sixty-five (65') feet while the maximum height in the Industrial Zone is thirty-five (35') feet; accordingly, a building height of forty-five (45') feet – fifty (50') feet within the Industrial Zone would require a variance. In addition, proposed Lot No. 2 is land-locked and front yards cannot be adequately established such that a variance would be required.

A flood plain exists on proposed Lot No. 1 so that additional information on grading and stormwater management must be provided to determine the effect upon the flood plain. Also, the manufacturing/wholesale/warehouse/factory establishment requires one hundred thirty-two (132) off-street parking spaces (plus one space for each employee) but only twenty-four (24) spaces are proposed so a variance would be required. In addition, ADA spaces (with access aisles) will also be required.

Ms. Prugar also stated that a dumpster area shall be provided on the plan with a designation of the circulation to access these areas. Also, a landscape and lighting plan will be required.

Finally, traffic generated by the project sites need to be addressed so that a Traffic Impact Study is to be provided.

² Mr. Buchvalt also states that if variances are needed for the Kudos and Quads projects, then the Applicant would proceed only with the light manufacturing building et al. on Lot No. 1.

³ He states that Vigon was able to secure variances for building height and off-street parking.

SUBDIVISION

Ms. Prugar stated what was needed to be shown on the plan for the proposed Lot No. 1 construction. Further, she stated that the proposed uses (including buildings, parking, stormwater management and related items) should be shown on proposed Lots Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5. As with the zoning comment, proposed Lot No. 2 is land-locked and the lot design needs to be revised to have frontage on a public street. She also stated that a lighting and landscape plan must be provided; and, proposed Lot No. 4 is approximately 3.75 times deeper than its width so it must be revised to conform with the Ordinance. Ms. Prugar also stated that stormwater management, erosion and sedimentation controls are to be provided with the proposed Lot No. 1 development. Finally, she stated that the open space and/or a fee-in-lieu are to be provided.

FLOOD PLAIN

As already stated, the plan must be revised to provide grading and stormwater management facilities on proposed Lot No. 1 to determine the extent of the disturbance to the existing flood plain area.

Commissioner Albert asked if it would be possible to relocate the proposed building(s) and keep the existing runway since the area is in a food plain and there are wetlands on the lot. Commissioner Strunk wondered whether a ten (10) page review letter is excessive for a Sketch Plan. Ms. Prugar was of the opinion that the nature of the mixed-use development (including industrial, light manufacturing, warehousing, commercial resort and multi-family residential uses on five (5) separate lots) required this extensive review.

As this is was a Sketch Plan review, no official action was required and the Commission went on to the next topic.

7. Unfinished Business:

Amendments Proposed to the ED (Economic Development) Zone

Township Office Manager J. Heilakka lead the discussion and reviewed an abbreviated Ordinance (which she termed the "Skinny" Ordinance) which document reflected revisions as per various hi-lights and comments. For example, commercial uses (in the Incentivized Development Option) would have a minimum of thirty (30%) percent of building floor area and seventy (70%) percent of residential uses as per building floor area.

The Township Planning Commissioners (along with Supervisor Lovenheim) suggested the first floor of any building should be commercial with no residential uses on the ground floor. Supervisor Lovenheim stated that these discussions affect projects proposed by DePetris, Kahn and Nauman. Commissioner Strunk questioned why does the Township want these types of developments to locate in the Township. Is it taxes since mixed-use development places a higher burden on infrastructure and changes the quality of life? Commissioner Bowyer asked what type of people is the Township trying to attract. Officer Manager Heilakka suggested that this type of housing is needed for tenants and younger people who wish to stay in the area.

She stated that there are only twenty-seven (27) rental units available in Monroe County and minimally available starter homes so that younger individuals and/or a young family move out of the area as they cannot afford the larger homes.

Commissioner Strunk questioned why there were so many uses as the ED Zone was initially proposed to address only the S.R. 209 – Milford Road corridor. Commissioner Bowyer asked if there were other municipalities and/or areas that have such a zone. Commissioner Albert suggested that the current residential areas should be part of the ED Zone. J. Heilakka also indicated that adult entertainment is not permitted in any zoning district and this should be addressed or it could be an issue moving forward. Finally, the Solicitor should address the indoor shooting range provisions.

This ended the discussion on these amendments and the Commission moved on to New Business.

8. New Business:

2021 Marshall Falls Phase 2-DCED LSA Grant Notification

Office Manager J. Heilakka stated that the Township Planning Commission needed to approve of the Township's application to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penn DOT) for a Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) grant to repair the Green Mountain Drive Bridge.

There was a discussion that Green Mountain Drive Bridge is a two-span stone masonry closed spandrel arch constructed in 1910 that serves as the only point of access for a community of nearly thirty homes. A load rating analysis in 2020 imposed a weight restriction of fifteen (15) tons, and the Township must now take the appropriate actions to repair the structure.


Accordingly and on motion of Commissioner Amori and seconded by Commissioner Strunk and on vote of 6-0 the Township Planning Commission recommended approval of the Grant Application and directed the Township Solicitor to prepare the appropriate correspondence to the Township Supervisors.

9. Public Comment: None

10. Adjournment:

There being no other business coming before the Commission and on motion by Commissioner Moses, seconded by Commissioner Amori and on a unanimous vote of 6-0, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Karasek Law Offices, LLC

By: 

Ronald J. Karasek, Esquire
PA I.D. No. 23233
Solicitor to Smithfield Township