

SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF MONROE, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
REGULAR MEETING ON APRIL 13, 2023 AT 7 P.M.
MEETING MINUTES

1./2. Call to Order and Members Present

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Scott Amori. Along with Commissioner Amori, Commissioners M. Albert, C. Bowers, B. Moses, D. Schryver (arrives at 7:03PM), and D. Strunk are physically present in the meeting room at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center, located at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301. Commissioner M. Bowyer was absent. The meeting was also streamed via Zoom.

In addition to the above Commissioners, the other Township officials who attended the meeting were Supervisors Jacob Pride (via Zoom) and Robert Lovenheim, Zoning Hearing Board Vice Chair Guy Miller, Township Solicitor Ronold J. Karasek, Esquire, Township Engineer Jon S. Tresslar, PE and PLS, and Township Manager Julia Heilakka.

Present also were Doug Olmstead, James DePetris, John Coté, Mike Speigel, Scott Miller, and Bob Radle.

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

4. Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 9, 2023: Commissioner Amori motions to approve the minutes, Commissioner Albert seconds. Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

5. Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

6. New Business and Plans to Act On:

a) Smithfield Gateway Land Development Plan – Phase 1A-2

The presented plan proposes the development of a Wawa gas station/convenience store on the corner of Music Center Drive and SR 209 (Seven Bridge Rd.) and an undesignated restaurant directly to the north, both on Parcel 16.8.2.1. Langan Engineering issued eleven waiver requests per a letter dated February 24, 2023, MCPC issued their review letter #46-23 on April 4, 2023, and Engineer Tresslar's Review Letter No. 1 was issued on April 11, 2023.

Commissioner Schryver arrives at 7:03PM. Jon Coté of Langan Engineering presents Phase 1A-2 and explains the current plan, with 62 parking spaces for Wawa and 41 for the restaurant. Commissioner Amori states there was not supposed to be a second road with exit on Music Center Drive and it's already been constructed. Doug Olmstead replies the current entrance is a construction entrance in a different spot than is being proposed for the road.

Commissioner Albert makes the applicant aware of discussions related to reducing parking requirements for commercial uses in the township. Doug Olmstead states Music Center Drive will be a right in, right out onto SR 209.

Commissioner Amori states there was only supposed to be one entrance on Music Center Drive. John Coté replies the change of use to a Wawa has made a second road needed. Mike Spiegel, a representative from Wawa, states having one entrance causes safety concerns.

The light at Mosier Farm Drive and SR 209 will be operational before Wawa opens. The Wawa will be a 24-hour operation and will have seating for beer and wine sales. John Coté discusses waiver request numbers one through eleven as demonstrated in his letter to the township dated February 24, 2023. Commissioner Moses asks about EV charging stations. The store is not currently selected, but Tesla may opt to add 8 – 12 charging spaces.

Commissioner Albert motions to recommend approval of the Feb 24, 2023 waivers as requested on the plan, Commissioner Bowers seconds. Vote: Commissioner Amori opposed; Commissioners Schryver, Strunk, Moses, Albert, and Bowers in favor: motion carries.

Engineer Tresslar confirms there are no outstanding concerns from the Monroe County Planning Commission review letter.

Commissioner Albert motions to recommend the approval of the land development plan per Mr. Tresslar's review letter of April 11, 2023 and any other requirements to meet Mr. Tresslar's approval, Commissioner Bowers seconds. Vote: Commissioner Amori opposed; Commissioners Schryver, Strunk, Moses, Albert, and Bowers in favor: motion carries.

b) Sketch Plan – First Energy East Stroudsburg Service Center – Pole Yard Expansion.

The proposed plan expands a pole yard at the rear of Parcel 16.8.2.13-2, which includes building a retaining wall, paving over impervious gravel, and reducing total impervious surface on the site.

Scott Miller presents the project for discussion. A current embankment with gravel on it would be braced with a retaining wall, and approximately 365 ft² of grass would be added behind the wall (instead of the gravel currently there). Township ordinance indicates that even if impervious is reduced, stormwater is required. The process will disturb approximately 30,000 ft². The applicant requests waivers from Chapters 22 and 26 regarding the land development process and additional stormwater facilities for water quality and recharge.

Jon Tresslar states stormwater activates with disturbances of 5,000 ft² or more. The plan does not need to go through land development, but the township should review a stormwater plan to protect the township. Scott Miller confirms they have not received any complaints from neighbors regarding stormwater and that all stormwater goes towards the back of the property.

After additional discussion, the Commission concurs that land development is not required, but the project must submit a stormwater plan.

c) Schedule a Joint Meeting with Supervisors RE: Parking Ordinance.

The Commission discusses and decides on Monday, May 1st at 5:30PM for a meeting with the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Jacob Pride and Solicitor Karasek are unavailable after 6:15PM. Supervisor Robert Lovenheim asks the Commission to consider parking regulations for commercial businesses, how parking requirements are structured on a mixed-use parcel, and why the current ordinance mandates parking at the rear of the lot and not the front. Guy Miller discusses parking at the rear may be a life-safety issue for emergency equipment. Commissioner Schryver believes the rule is to preserve the aesthetics of the town, and parking should be on the sides and rear.

7. Old and Unfinished Business:

a) Discuss & Consider: That the Planning Commission ask the Supervisors to request the Planning Commission to develop, recommend for approval and then implement a specific onboarding plan for new Planning Commission Volunteers.

b) Discuss & Consider: A motion of the Planning Commission for a periodic report of activities of the Zoning Officer and Building Inspector or permits applied for, grated (or refused), Zoning Violations Cited and any Legal status of those Zoning Violations.

c) Review of Action on prior recommendations.

These items were carried over from prior meetings. No action was taken on any old or unfinished business.

9. Public Comment

Julia Heilakka provides an update for the Marshalls Falls Park project, located at Parcels 16.6.1.1 and 16.94594. The helical pile contractor determined large rocks made foundations for the boardwalk unfeasible. As a result, the contractor and engineers are discussing removing 218 ft of boardwalk and adding 218 ft of paved trail with railings. The change order is still in discussion, and the project is still slated for completion and a grand opening in October 2023.

Julia Heilakka states the next ordinance changes slated are general updates for Chapters 1, 2, 4, and Chapter 22 - number of paper copies required for SALDO submissions.

Adjournment:

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Moses motions to adjourn, Commissioner Amori seconds. Vote: all in favor; meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Heilakka
Assistant Township Secretary
Smithfield Township