

**Planning Commission  
Minutes  
June 6, 2016  
7:30 PM**

**Present:**

Brett MacKay  
Joseph Vavra  
Matt Chartrand  
Edward Buonocore  
Mike Jayes  
Rich Marino

**Absent:**

Nancy Becker  
Patricia Younce

**Staff:**

Carolyn McKelvie, Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer  
Jennifer Guckin, Director of Community Development and Code Enforcement  
Mary Stover, Township Engineer

**Supervisors:**

Laura Smith, Chuck Wilson and David Mosesso attended the meeting.

**Opening Comments**

Mr. MacKay called the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

Supervisor Mosesso wanted to clarify a point of view and state why he feels the Planning Commission Board is in place. He stated that the Planning Commission Board is an extension of the Board of Supervisors and they are there to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the township. He explained that he was not pleased when the Wind Energy Ordinance came through regarding wind turbulence on roof tops and they were not allowed. Supervisor Mosesso suggested that the Board consider having regulations for safety and code compliance but should not exclude certain things that the residents of the township would like to benefit from. He explained that some wind turbulence roof mounts look like dormers and simply blend in with the home. He would like the Board to consider these things when framing other ordinances for the township. He stated that again we are here for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and he asked that they keep this in mind and refrain from being dictatorial.

**Approval of the May 2016 Minutes**

Mr. Vavra made a motion to approve the May 2016 minutes and Mr. Buonocore seconded. All were in favor.

## Old Business

### **Zoning Text Amendment, ZA #2016-02, Entertainment/Lifestyles Overlay District**

Mark Nicoletti from PSDC presented to the Planning Commission the state of the current shopping center at 1758 Allentown Road and how it has been let go. It went to foreclosure and they purchased it. They have thought a lot about the right mix of tenants for this area. Mr. Nicoletti stated that LA Fitness is a possibility and they are specific with how their building needs to be and their signage. He stated that Lidl's is a grocery store similar to Trader Joe's, but 3 times larger. They are planning to open one hundred stores and are looking at the area for their store.

Mr. Nicoletti went over the possibility of a movie theater and stated that they have a specific prototype and mentioned that if we want to have a business like that here, we would have to allow their prototype.

Signage issues were discussed and Mr. Nicolette stated that they get it. They tried to make Culinary Arts, the Apartments and the Hotel all tasteful and will now try to balance signage issues with the new potential tenants. He discussed a master plan sign study that they performed and went over this with the Planning Commission members. Mr. Anderson from Cornerstone Consulting presented the sign package to the Planning Commission members.

Mr. Jayes stated he has a problem with lighting near residential areas.

Mr. Nicoletti stated he will refer to the Solicitor, Jack Dooley, to explain the underlying vs the overlay districts and what is offered and what is allowed. He did want to mention that they do own the office building next to this proposed district and with the available land they own they will be able to push for a traffic light at Forty Foot Road and a possible grant to widen Forty Foot Road. The proposed grocery store, Lidl, would like to write a check to widen the road. The new red light would be a through light to the one at Allentown Road.

Mr. Nicoletti addressed the concern regarding sign lighting and stated he will check into it. He then showed a map and the road that would go from one red light to the other.

Solicitor Dooley spoke and answered a few questions. He then went over procedure and explained that the Planning Commission recommends something and it gets passed on to the Board of Supervisors. If they pass the text amendment then the Board of Supervisors will have a hearing for it and they will vote on it. Solicitor Dooley went over what the Overlay District is and explained that the underlying use does not change. He explained opting in and complying to develop this parcel under the overlay district. If they opt in, they must use the overlay and not the underlying district and during the conditional use the Board of Supervisors can impose conditions. He explained that such items as lighting can be addressed and conditions imposed at this time. Solicitor Dooley explained the uses and the marketing of getting tenants and that they need to know that their use is zoning compliant before they can decide to put their business there.

Mr. MacKay stated that one thing he was concerned with is that bringing industry uses up into the Overlay presents them all over the site. How do we keep some industrial uses in LI and not in the overlay district?

Mr. Nicoletti replied that he is willing to forfeit those uses in the overlay district if necessary.

There was discussion regarding the uses being grandfathered in and the underlying uses surviving. Ms. Guckin mentioned that they would remain permanent in the underlying district. Solicitor Dooley mentioned that it cannot include the SKF piece.

Mr. MacKay asked about the nursing home use.

Mr. Nicoletti replied that it is not a secret that Wegmans Senior Living would like to consider this site for a future advanced living type use.

Mr. MacKay questioned how this would affect population in the township if there were more and more facilities for older folks coming in.

Mr. Jayes has the perception that we have too much already of senior living

Mr. Nicoletti replied that Wegmans proposes about 50 to 100 beds for its assisted living facility and this would be as property became available. He does not feel that we will get squeezed out by the older population and feels that behind this shopping center would be a good place for seniors. He also stated that the senior living centers do extensive studies for need before placing a facility in an area.

Mr. Vavra stated that no one thought the other grocery stores would go out of business and they did. Who knows if the same will happen with the assisted living facilities.

Mr. Nicoletti told the Planning Commission members that Lidl is investing 15 million dollars to start up their company and they are a compliment to the entire complex.

Mr. Chartrand's concern was not pinning the use to that area so that if the other uses don't last could it all be assisted living? Mr. Nicoletti stated he will provide the Planning Commission members studies of the necessity in the area.

Mr. Nicoletti stated that this project will make a big dent to pay down the debt.

Mr. Buonocore asked why not divide the industry use and the entertainment use? Solicitor Dooley replied that it is for more flexibility. They are actively out there trying to get tenants, the more flexible the better. Once tenants are interested, fine tuning will be necessary and since we can't anticipate everything, the idea is to start with everything or flexibility.

Mr. Buonocore inquired about sewer capacity and Solicitor Dooley said the Township is now ok with capacity.

Mr. Marino stated that agreeing to uses doesn't mean it locks us down to not having any say.

Solicitor Dooley stated that if they meet all of the criteria then yes, they can use their use.

Mr. Anderson clarified the new Zoning District and showed a map. He explained the buildings currently there and why the change. They needed more land for the new shopping center and the grocery store and this would spread it out.

The LI zoning line is not changing. The overlay goes over top of the underlying zoning district.

Mr. Vavra asked if LI is off to the left side of the shopping center. Solicitor Dooley stated that if they do not need the uses, they can come off.

Mr. Anderson went over the buildings at the current shopping center and explained that they have had many meetings with PennDot to make it flow and have an access through the shopping center.

Discussion regarding the Overlay and senior living use parking was discussed and allowing PSDC flexibility and willingness to take out industry uses if needed.

A sign package/example was presented by Mike Sona. Mr. Sona went over a sample of free standing signs as well as some wall signs for this proposed district. He explained the signs and why they would want them placed in the areas shown in the presentation. He went over letter height and distance for traffic flow and explained a study done regarding the signs for the safety of drivers.

There was a discussion regarding sizes of signs, examples of signs, sign change copy and timing of sign change copy, signs both illuminated and not being close to a residential area, when the lit signs would be shut off and if they would be shut off.

Solicitor Dooley stated that this is not land development and signs will be back at the time of land development. This is a concept and the Board of Supervisors will provide assistance with the overlay for signs, etc. The idea tonight is to get an idea so that we can move through so that this can go to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. MacKay asked if there was anything else. Hearing nothing, Ms. Guckin asked if they would like to forward this to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Chartrand recommended that Article IV 153-419 Entertainment Lifestyle Overlay District be recommended to the Board of Supervisors for approval with a condition that they leave industrial uses out. Mr. Marino seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Stover stated that they are waiting for comments back from the Solicitor and Montgomery County Planning Commission in order to finish the sign ordinance updates.

Solicitor Dooley stated that they are currently reviewing it.

Mr. MacKay asked if there were any other comments and there were none. Mr. Vavra made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Chartrand seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn McKelvie  
Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer

CM/dh