

**Planning Commission
Minutes
June 8, 2020 VIA ZOOM
7:00 PM**

Present:

Brett MacKay
Douglas Leach
Edward Buonocore
Joseph Vavra
Matt Chartrand
Dennis McGeehan
Nancy Becker
Patricia Younce

Staff:

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

Roll call via zoom - all PC Members were present. Board of Supervisor Rich Marino was present. Ms. Guckin introduced the staff present at the Township building as well. No residents called in.

Approval of the March 2, 2020 Minutes

Mr. Vavra made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 2, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting with the revision of correcting the word drive-thru. Mr. Buonocore seconded. All in favor. Ms. Nancy Becker and Ms. Pat Younce abstained.

New Business

Storage Partners of Towamencin SLD 820
1520 Franklin Street

Presented by:

Christen Pionzio, Attorney for the applicant
Jonathan Manley, Applicant
Matt Witters, Engineer for the applicant

Ms. Christen Pionzio stated they were presenting tonight on the Land Development aspect of this project. She explained that after a year and a half of planning and also consolidating all of the properties, the plan is to make a beautiful storage facility. Ms. Pionzio stated this will include decorative fencing around the building and light fixtures. There will also be park benches, sidewalks and trash dispensers.

Ms. Pionzio stated they have had conversations with the Township and the engineers and they plan to go over the list of items in the Eustace letter dated 6/5/20, as well as one comment from Peter Simone's letter dated 6/3/2020, regarding the gate for the dumpster enclosure.

Ms. Pionzio explained that she will go over the list of waivers the applicant is requesting. The first of which she stated; was a waiver for the cart way width. Ms. Pionzio explained that with what they are proposing they feel it will accommodate the traffic in a safe way. She explained the Board of Supervisors were also ok with not widening the cart way as Franklin Street is the access point for all of the trucks for Holiday Inn and they get in and out just fine.

Ms. Pionzio went over the following additional waiver requests:
The second waiver request is for the driveways. She explained if they moved the driveway in any further, it wouldn't allow the circulation needed for the building.

A third waiver request is for 25 feet instead of 30 feet for the driveway access. Ms. Pionzio feels 25 feet is acceptable.

The fourth waiver request is for handicap ramps, specifically a handicap ramp at the corner at Franklin and Bustard. Ms. Pionzio explained placement of handicap ramps at this point will promote traffic to nowhere. They will agree to install one toward Franklin and ask for a waiver for the other one.

Ms. Stover explained that the ADA ramps are a requirement from Penndot and will be required when the road is paved. Mr. Manley stated he feels this is a liability and since there is no receiving area, he feels he shouldn't have to do this. Ms. Younce asked if there a way to provide an escrow for this work and Mr. Manley stated he would be happy to work through escrows for future work for this. Ms. Stover stated the Planning Commission Members have asked for deferrals in past cases. Mr. Manley did not want to agree to this and Mr. MacKay stated he feels there should be some financial responsibility for both ramps.

Ms. Pionzio explained they will work it out with the solicitor.

Mr. Manley stated he would like the road striped for a crosswalk and Mr. Chartrand asked if a crosswalk is required. Ms. Stover stated she will find out. Mr. Chartrand explained that not all ramps are associated with a crosswalk. There was a discussion regarding crosswalks. Mr. Manley has concerns but stated they will work through it.

The fifth waiver request is for parking at rear and side of building. Ms. Pionzio explained that a text amendment was requested and received for the front of the building. She explained they are requesting less distance in the back as there is access for fire safety with less than 20 feet. Mr. Chartrand questioned if they were saying that if there was a fire in the back of the building that the emergency services can gain access to all sides and Ms. Pionzio stated yes, and added that Keystone reviewed this twice.

The sixth waiver is a pedestrian pathway waiver request. Ms. Pionzio stated this is a partial waiver request as they don't want to encourage anyone to walk to the building from the street. Ms. Stover stated both Peter Simone and CKS recommended it. Ms. Pionzio replied they feel it is a liability issue as it would encourage pedestrians that don't belong there to walk up to the building. Mr. Chartrand asked how many employees do they anticipate and Mr. Manley replied two full time and two part time people.

The seventh waiver is a street tree waiver request. Ms. Pionzio explained this waiver is to plant 16 trees closer the building with larger trees to achieve the goal.

The eighth waiver is for landscaping. Ms. Pionzio explained they have extensive landscaping plans and they are requesting a waiver for 7 evergreen trees, some other landscaping, and 6 replacement trees. She stated they are asking for waiver to plant them somewhere else or get an escrow.

Ms. Stover explained some of the plants have been moved outside the 25 foot buffer. Mr. Chartrand asked if this would be a waiver or partial waiver request and a fee or escrow for the amount of trees. Mr. Manley said it is a partial waiver and he would agree to however the Township would like to do it for the fees.

The ninth waiver request was for the curb height reveal of eight inches. They are requesting a waiver to use the current six inch reveal.

The tenth waiver request is for landscaping and replacement trees. Ms. Pionzio explained the project is shy of 6 replacement trees and they will work it out with the Township. Mr. MacKay asked if this requires a waiver and Ms. Stover stated she will check the ordinance.

The eleventh waiver request is for placement in an easement. Ms. Pionzio stated there are utility easements along the front and side and they are going to need to request a waiver for driveways and plantings along the sewer easement. Ms. Stover explained that whatever is ultimately proposed, as long as it is worked out with the sewer engineer and utility owner for what can be planted and placed, it is acceptable.

The twelfth waiver request is for grading and excavation and to grade within 5 feet of the property line for water to disperse. Ms. Pionzio explained this waiver request is to be closer to property line and stated they will work it out with the neighboring property owner, Holiday Inn.

The thirteenth waiver request is for a drainage percentage of 1.5 instead of 2. Mr. Chartrand stated that he agrees.

The fourteenth waiver request is for preliminary and final approvals at the same time. Mr. MacKay asked the Planning Commission Members if there were any concerns and the members stated no.

The fifteenth waiver request is for the traffic impact study. Ms. Pionzio stated they already know the traffic volume and the current traffic for this project.

The sixteenth waiver request is for run off volume and volume reduction. Ms. Stover explained they are designing a new system that they need to get it approved from the state.

The seventeenth waiver request is for a basin within 10 feet of the building instead of 30 feet. Ms. Stover stated they are on the down grading side and this is allowed.

The eighteenth waiver request is for the requirement of 18 benches and 7 trash receptacles. Ms. Pionzio explained they feel the 3 trash receptacles and 3 benches are enough for this type of project.

Ms. Pionzo stated the proposed trash receptacle is 100 feet from the road and behind the building and is a block structure and heavily used and will withstand all the use. Ms. Pionzio stated that Mr. Simone suggested a more decorative fence enclosure and she explained this is not functional for the use, as well as it won't be seen. Mr. Manley stated they keep a close eye on this area and it is also locked. He explained they don't want swinging gates or doors and want to prevent any security issues or vandalism. Mr. Manley explained they have always done chain link with privacy screen for these buildings.

Ms. Younce asked if the proposed fencing is just as good for security with the iron gate and Mr. Manley stated they will use the privacy screening to shield the enclosure along with the landscaping.

Ms. Stover asked if chain link is the only option and Ms. Pionzio stated it is not just chain link, it has the privacy slats. Mr. Manley felt other options are expensive and not necessary. He added he needs something durable that can be screened and feels they can't do that with the iron gate. Mr. Chartrand suggested a wooden gate and Mr. Manley expressed that a wooden gate is easily broken. There was a discussion regarding the dumpster and different kinds of screening and fencing available.

Mr. MacKay stated they are not as agreeable to chain link fencing and asked if they can find something better than the wood, the Planning Commission would like to see that.

Ms. Pionzio asked about the gate options Mr. MacKay was referring to and he said metal gates. Mr. Buonocore stated they had them at the hospital and they didn't hold up and PVC fencing was suggested. The Planning Commission Members agreed they liked that type. Mr. Manley stated he wanted something durable. Ms. Pionzio added they will look into the PVC type fencing.

Ms. Pionzio addressed the Planning Commission Members with the completion of the waiver requests and said they are looking for a recommendation from the Planning Commission to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Younce made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend preliminary and final approval of Storage Partners of Towamencin LLC to the Board of Supervisors, subject to the compliance with the following review letters:

- CKS Engineers preliminary and final plan review letters dated June 1, 2020
- McMahon Associates letter dated June 2, 2020
- Keystone letter dated May 21, 2020
- Gilmore Associates letter dated May 14, 2020
- Bursich Associates letter dated April 23, 2020
- Montgomery County Planning Commission letter dated April 6, 2020
- Simone Collins letter dated June 3, 2020

and with regard to the waivers requested in the Eustace Engineers letter dated June 5, 2020 recommend they grant waivers for numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13.14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and for #4 - if they work out a financial agreement or deferral, as well as #8 as long as Simone Collins agrees with regard to the proposal presented. For #11 regarding the requirement that nothing be placed in the easements, the PC stated that anything within the easements must be worked out with the sewer engineer and other utility owners. Also, the gate for the trash dumpster should not be

chain link, but the decorative wrought iron fence is also not recommended. The applicant should provide an alternative gate material such as PVC or other suitable material.

Ms. Becker seconded.

All were in favor.

Additional Business:

Ms. Guckin stated Core 5 will be back in July if they can resolve issues with CKS and also said there are no new applications.

Ms. Younce asked if Starbucks has to go back to the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Guckin stated yes, and explained their resolution needs to be on the agenda for the Board of Supervisors.


Mr. MacKay asked if there were any additional comments.

Hearing none, Mr. Vavra made a motion to adjourn at 8:04 PM.

Ms. Becker seconded.

All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Shisler

Towamencin Township

Planning Commission Secretary/ Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer