

Lower Salford
Township Planning
Commission Meeting
August 16, 2023

Planning Commission Chair Manus McHugh called to order the Lower Salford Township Planning Commission meeting at 7:31pm. Other Planning Commission members in attendance were David Bowe, Joe Harwanko, David Goodman, and Scott Bamford. Also in attendance was Mike Beuke, Director of Building and Zoning, Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS, the Township Engineer's office, Stephanie Butler, P.E. of Bowman/McMahon Associates, and Claire Warner of the Montgomery County Planning Commission. Excused from the meeting were Vice Chair, John Kennedy, and member Brad Landis.

Minutes

The minutes from the June 28, 2023, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Bowe made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Harwanko seconded the motion.

Motion 5 Yes; 0 No

Plan Reviews

785 Cressman Road – Three lot subdivision

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Rick Mast, P.E. of RCMA.; he was joined by applicant, Mark Tuttle. Three review letters were prepared, one from Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 7/27/2023, one from Stephanie Butler of Bowman/McMahon, dated 8/4/2023, and one from Claire Warner of the MCPC dated 8/2/2023.

Mr. Mast introduced the property owner, noting that he has resided in the Township for 36 years. The frontage lot includes the house, outbuildings, and a barn; this has an existing non-conforming front yard setback. The applicant would like to subdivide two flag lots off the frontage lot and all three lots will exceed minimum requirements and have approved on-lot septic systems.

Addressing the CKS letter, the lot has one existing driveway and two proposed driveway accesses. The meandering driveways are proposed to preserve the existing trees. Mr. Mast finds the required streetlights not appropriate and feels lampposts powered by the dwelling are more reasonable at these locations. Ms. Fountain and Mr. McHugh agreed. Mr. Mast will resolve this issue to the Township's satisfaction.

Mr. Mast is proposing the homes be situated towards the front of the lots to maintain the wooded areas; Regarding the replacement of existing trees, Mr. Mast argued that these are large, wooded lots that will most likely be sold for custom-built homes and the large, wooded areas would not be disturbed.

Mr. McHugh agreed that replacement trees would be redundant and unnecessary; his concern is with storm water management. A brief discussion ensued regarding the slope of the property, water run-off, and responsibilities of the future building permit applicant.

Addressing the Bowman/McMahon letter, Mr. Mast confirmed that the applicant will comply with the sight distance requirements and driveway radii and shoulder requirements; the ultimate right-of-way information will be clarified.

Mr. Mast noted that the septic system shown on the plan supports a four-bedroom home and he is requesting that curbing and sidewalk not be required at this time.

Ms. Butler pointed out that there are no trails currently in this immediate vicinity.

Mr. McHugh requested that the applicant return to the Planning Commission with a plan that includes storm water management and sight triangles; he finds the location of the homes at the front of the lots to be appealing.

471 Main Street

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Rick Mast, P.E. of RCMA.; he was joined by applicant Vince Pupillo, architect Rich Kapusta and Ryan Keenan of Isabelle's Kitchen. One review letter was prepared by Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 8/11/2023.

Mr. Mast gave a brief background of the property and informed the Planning Commission that his client is requesting a Waiver of Land Development. The applicant is looking to separate the raw and cooked products, renovate the circulation area by building a trash room to keep the trash separate from the product and increase freezer area so he no longer needs to truck product back and forth from his other location outside of the township. Increasing the freezer space onsite will reduce traffic and will not increase the amount of processing on this site. These requested changes will only improve the building and staff efficiency. No driveway or parking changes are proposed.

Mr. Mast informed the Planning Commission that he and the applicant are here this evening per the new procedures established by the Township to present the waiver of land development application to the Planning Commission, after meeting with the Building & Zoning Committee.

Addressing the CKS letter, Mr. Mast noted that the use is already approved.

The Zoning Officer, Mike Beuke, confirmed that no new Conditional Use will be required.

It was clarified that the maintenance building (unenclosed pavilion/garage building) is not an accessory use, it is part an accessory building and part of the principal use.

Regarding density bonuses, Mr. Mast stated that the bonuses were part of the previously recorded plans completed between 1997-1999, for shared driveway and retention of a building built before 1940. Also, residential use has also been reduced since this recording as well.

Mr. McHugh agreed that no additional Conditional Use is necessary as this is not a full land development.

Mr. Bamford asked if a brick facade would be more appealing than a white concrete building as it is visible from the street. After some discussion, it was agreed that a brick façade was not necessary.

There being no further comments, Mr. McHugh stated that since the use is not being modified, the modifications are minor, and there will be no impact to the access points, he does not consider this to be a full Land Development and he is comfortable with the waiver request.

A motion was made by Mr. Harwanko and seconded by Mr. Goodman.

Motion 5 Yes; 0 No

196 Main Street – Conditional Use Application for Apartments and Retail Store

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Rick Mast, P.E. of RCMA.; joining him were applicants Bryan Hunsberger and Leo Orloski. One review letter was prepared by Stephanie Butler of Bowman/McMahon, dated 8/10/2023.

Mr. Mast reminded everyone that this application was discussed at the June Planning Commission meeting.

A new a new traffic study has been conducted that includes the new Wawa; the results show the intersection to be adequate.

Mr. Mast displayed a sample of what could possibly be developed on the Allebach property if it were to change hands. He showed how future access could be aligned with June Drive at Main Street and on Quarry Road at 196 Main Street. The existing center turn lane on Main Street would allow for a left turn into 196 Main Street.

Mr. Mast stated that any slight line constraints could be worked out with Ms. Butler.

Mr. McHugh suggested that Mr. Mast and Ms. Butler walk the site for more clarity.

Ms. Fountain confirmed for Mr. Bamford that if the Allebach property were to be developed as all commercial on Main Street, the Township would try to connect the development to the existing Meadowbrook Shopping Plaza.

Ms. Butler stated that the displayed schematic only shows half of the allowable commercial area. Residents Bette and Alan Duddy of Cheswyck Drive asked if this project has received final approval and commented on the amount of traffic on Main Street by the Mainland Point development. Mr. Mast and Ms. Butler explained the process, road improvement requirements and PennDOT control of Main Street/Rt. 63. Ms. Duddy questioned why rental properties are proposed and voiced her concern about safety.

Mr. McHugh stated that he does not care for three story rental units.

Mr. Mast informed the Planning Commission that the applicants' attorney will be submitting a text amendment to allow a bank use at 196 Main Street. He also suggested the Township look at the bank use in all the zoning districts.

Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Ms. Warner presented the summary of edits for the Village District and said she is working with the solicitor regarding Conditional Use requirements in the Village District.

A discussion followed regarding maximum building height, mean grade, building height definitions, and flat roofs.

Currently the maximum building height in the Village District is 3.5 stories or 40' measured at the midpoint of the gable and peak.

Mr. Beuke informed the Planning Commission that at the next meeting he will be opening a discussion on expansion of existing non-conforming buildings as this is currently not allowed.

There being no public comment, Mr. Goodman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Harwanko seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday September 27, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Reimel
Administrative Assistant