

**Lower Salford Township
Planning Commission Meeting
March 23, 2022**

Planning Commission Chair Manus McHugh called to order the Lower Salford Township Planning Commission meeting at 7:30pm. Other Planning Commission members in attendance were John Kennedy, Joe Harwanko, David Bowe, Brad Landis, David Goodman, and Andy Shields. Also in attendance was Mike Beuke, Director of Building and Zoning; Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS, the Township Engineer's office, and Claire Warner of the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

Minutes

The minutes from the February 23, 2022, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Kennedy made a motion to accept the minutes as recorded and Mr. Goodman seconded the motion. Mr. Harwanko abstained due to being excused from the February meeting.

Motion 6 Yes; 0 No; 1 Abstain

Plan Reviews

**59 Fretz Road/PDC Machines LLC – Amended/Final Plan
Proposed modifications to original plan including changes to fit-out and parking requirements
in the Industrial District. Martin Smith, P.E. of Pany & Lentz Engineering for applicant PDC
Machines LLC/Mateen Afzal.**

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Dan Rowley of Saul Ewing and Marty Smith, P.E. of Pany & Lentz Engineering Company. Three letters were prepared, two from Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 3/17/2022 & 3/23/2022 and one from Stephanie Butler, P.E. of McMahan Associates dated 3/16/2022.

Mr. Rowley recapped the project, stating that PDC Machines is the contracted tenant for the building that received final approval in July 2020. Due to the tenant needing interior and mezzanine alteration and an increase in the number of employees than what was first anticipated, the tenant is now required to provide more parking than originally required. The previous plan showed 95 reserved parking spaces proposed over the stormwater basin. Since the Planning Commission was not comfortable with this proposal, the applicant has returned with a revised plan.

First, the applicant is proposing to restripe and construct 282 of 380 required parking spaces, putting the remainder in reserve. The applicant only needs 282 spaces. Over the next three years the tenant expects to expand their staff from 100 to 250 at the maximum. The applicant stated that the staff will be starting and ending their work hours in staggered shifts. The applicant also stated that two waivers are being requested.

Mr. McHugh asked for a recap of the use of the space.

Mr. Smith explained that they originally anticipated the space to be used as warehouse; however, PDC Machines became the tenant and needs more office space than originally planned for with warehouse use.

Mr. Kennedy inquired about the restriping of the parking areas.

Mr. Smith explained that with no warehouse use, the loading docks will now be shut off and the

loading dock area and previous trailer parking are now planned to be striped for passenger car parking, if allowed. Also, parallel parking and sidewalks have been added to the plan.

Mr. Smith, referring to the CKS letter dated 3/17/2022, stated that the SimpleFuel Installation Area and proposed Solar Canopy Electric Vehicle Charging Area have been removed from the plan.

McHugh stated that he spoke with Ms. Butler regarding her review and there are no outstanding issues.

Mr. Smith displayed the revised plan and pointed out the changes to the parking area, islands, pedestrian crossing areas, sidewalks and two entrances in the front of the building. Mr. Smith explained that when the required width of parking spaces was reduced to 9' wide from 10' wide, this allowed for more parking spaces. He also stated that the reserve parking ordinance requires funds to be provided by the applicant to cover the cost of installation of the reserved parking spaces, for a period of 1 year after 90% of the building floor area is occupied.

Mr. Kennedy noted that he is on board with this plan for the reserve.

Mr. Smith stated that the applicant was requesting a waiver to allow the existing Type 2 screening to remain which was provided for truck parking in lieu of a Type 1 screen that is required for vehicle parking; Ms. Fountain stated that a Type 2 screen requires evergreen trees while the Type 1 allows shrubs. She recommended the waiver be recommended.

Mr. McHugh inquired about pedestrian cut throughs needed for parking on the right side.

Mr. Landis inquired about there being a right out only on Wambold for trucks; however, cars should be allowed to go either left or right.

Mr. McHugh referred to Ms. Butler's letter, stating the truck movement is to be addressed.

There being no further comments, Mr. McHugh asked for a motion to recommend the Amended Final Plan be approved with the two waivers being granted and the applicant providing sidewalk through the islands on the east side of the building. A motion was made by Mr. Kennedy and seconded by Mr. Shields.

Motion 7 Yes; 0 No

25 Fretz Road/Almac. Tentative Sketch Plan for expansion to Building 2, parking facilities, and storm water management on 44-acre parcel. Karl Leitner of Barry Isett and Associates for applicant Almac Group/James Corrigan.

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Jim Mazeika, P.E. and Karl Leitner, P.E. of Barry Isett & Associates and Jim Corrigan of Almac.

Mr. Mazeika presented an overview of what is already established at the site; he pointed out the 44-acre parcel that has been developed on the east side (Wambold Road side). The site consists of offices, light manufacturing, and a pharmacy. Mr. Mazeika pointed out the location of the proposed new building, existing pond, and storm water management.

Mr. McHugh asked about a previous discussion regarding additional access to the campus from Skippack Creek Road; the applicant replied that no additional access was ever pursued.

The applicant stated that tonight he is here to present a tentative sketch plan for Building #2 that is proposed for approximately 110,000sf of additional warehouse, cold storage, production, and two-story office space. The new building is proposed at the location of approximately 200 existing parking spaces. An additional parking area to the west was previously approved with the original plan; however, this may need to be expanded. The addition to the campus is expected to add 200-220 new employees. Currently, the site has parking for 713, with the proposed additional parking, it will

have more than 900 parking spaces.

Mr. McHugh inquired about increased truck traffic.

The applicant noted that the new area will have a loading dock for smaller box truck deliveries.

Wetlands were pointed out that are situated between the buildings and the new parking area; General Permits from PADEP will be sought for crossing the wetlands. Utilities will be extended through the parking lot for future development.

Mr. Goodman inquired about the slope of the property.

The applicant is looking to incorporate a walking path around the campus, including along Fretz Road to the parking lot and around the new parking area down to the new driveway along the norther property line.

Mr. McHugh urged the applicant to examine the plan for more access and exit points.

Mr. Kennedy suggested the applicant reach out to Ms. Butler regarding traffic flow in and out of the campus. A discussion on traffic flow followed and the applicant said they would be reaching out to PennDOT.

According to the applicant, Building 2 will be for the shift workers who have staggered work times. Building 1 will be administrative offices; these employees will work a more traditional work schedule.

The proposal includes multiple building entrances, a pedestrian bridge over the narrowest point of the wetlands, and new ADA accessible parking spaces. Ms. Fountain suggested that ADA accessible parking be added at each entrance.

Mr. McHugh inquired about storm water management; the applicant stated that they are working on it and considering several options including bioretention areas, reuse of the water in cooling towers, and a spray irrigation system.

Mr. Kennedy asked about total building coverage; it was noted that with 44 acres, the building coverage will still be less than 50% and the district allows up to 75%.

Ms. Warner inquired about a bioretention area between the two new parking lots.

Ms. Fountain asked about MS4 sediment reduction, DEP requirements, stream restoration and riparian buffer; she suggested the applicant reach out to her office separately to discuss further.

Mr. McHugh stated that his biggest concerns with this project are the access, egress, and storm water management.

The applicant mentioned some potential waivers they may be seeking, including 3:1 slope, sidewalk, storm sewer material, island size and curbing; a variance may be needed for crossing the wetlands.

The applicant plans to submit the preliminary plans in the next couple of months. Ms. Fountain encouraged the applicant to notify her office prior to any infiltration testing, so that the testing could be witnessed.

Mr. McHugh suggested to the Planning Commission members that they review the ordinance addressing the 20' deep island requirement as this seems to be an item that is often being asked to be waived.

Zoning Hearing Board Application

176 MainStreet/Grand View Health. Zoning Hearing Board Application. Requesting Variances to install signage that needs zoning relief pertaining to maximum total sign face area, individual sign face area, and lighting; or in the alternate, receive a favorable

interpretation that would eliminate the need for the Variances. Applicant Grand View Hospital d/b/a Grand View Health.

Mr. Beuke explained the application and the Class 2 and Class 3 uses. He explained how our sign ordinance is based on use and how this freestanding sign exceed the minimum requirements. Mr. Kennedy asked if a Zoning Ordinance Amendment would be an easier path that the Zoning Hearing Board.

Zoning

Vernfield Rezoning

Mr. Beuke addressed the Planning Commission stating that rezoning the 17 parcels around Rt.63 and Morwood Road known as the Village of Vernfield from R1-A Residential to VC-Village Commercial will be up for adoption by the Board of Supervisors in May. This change is supported by the Indian Valley Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to recommend the Board adopt; Mr. Shields seconded the motion.

Motion 7 Yes; 0 No

County – Zoning Ordinance Update

Claire Warner of the Montgomery County Planning Commission resumed where she left off following the last update. The Mixed Use and Commercial Districts are still being reviewed concurrently.

For the parking lot landscaping section in the Commercial District, it was suggested that the landscape planting islands be increased from every 10 spaces to every 15 spaces. A suggestion was made to change the terms “landscaped area” to “green area,” and storefront landscaping for shopping areas was discussed.

Edits to the MU Mixed Use District were discussed, including changing the term “Apartments” to “Multifamily Units,” impervious coverage, and bonus provisions.

The next meeting these changes will be recapped and uses will be addressed. It was suggested that the Uses be broader, and the categories be updated. Mr. Goodman said he would supply a list of common uses in retail shopping centers.

Mr. Beuke informed the Planning Commission that he is working on a draft for a new sign ordinance amendment as the current ordinance is out of date. The new ordinance will address several concerns including content neutrality and free speech.

There being no further business or comments, Mr. McHugh asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Shields made a motion; Mr. Harwanko seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:26pm.

The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday, April 27~~8~~, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Reimel
Administrative Assistant