

Lower Salford
Township Planning
Commission Meeting
October 26, 2022

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 John Kennedy, David Goodman, Brad Landis, David Bowe 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, Stephanie Butler, P.E. of McMahon Associates, the Township Traffic Engineer's office, and Claire Warner of the Montgomery County Planning Commission. Planning Commission member Joe Harwanko was excused from the meeting.

Following a brief discussion, it was determined that the joint November/December meeting would be held on December 14, 2022.

Minutes

The minutes from the September 28, 2022, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Landis made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion; Mr. Bowe abstained due to being excused from the September meeting.

Motion 5 Yes; 0 No; 1 Abstain

Plan Reviews

221 Main Street/Arby's & 231 Main Street/Popeyes - Arby's Restaurant with drive-through, one story 2535sf building and Popeyes Restaurant with drive-through, one story 2530sf building; located on a portion of Lot 2 of the Mainland Pointe Development. Rick Mast, P.E. for applicant Mainland Pointe LLC.

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Rick Mast, P.E. of RCMA. Two review letters were prepared, one from Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 10/13/2022 and one from Stephanie Butler, P.E. of McMahon Associates dated 10/20/2022.

Mr. Mast displayed the plan, noted that the Conditional Use Approval was granted and that the previously approved drive through that was approved for Lot 1 has been relinquished.

Mr. Mast passed out architectural plans of the buildings and noted that most comments on the CKS letter are "will comply", including making the shrubs a minimum of 36 inches in height.

Mr. Mast recognized that the smaller buildings would keep the apartments visible and that the primary entrances for Popeyes would be on the side of the building.

Regarding lighting, the applicant will comply with the CKS letter as the parking lot lighting will be identical to that used for Taco Bell, but the building-mounted lights will be specific to each building. Ms. Fountain reminded Mr. Mast that all lights with their illumination levels must be placed on a plan for review and approval.

The subject of replacement trees is "will comply" and replacement trees will be in the same general location.

It was agreed that there will be no mid-block crossing installed on American Way, as suggested by the MCPC. Ms. Warner stated that the MCPC recommends 6 different species of trees and

shrubs for buffering; Mr. Mast would like to use 3 species and the Planning Commission approved the request.

Addressing the McMahan letter, Mr. Mast said that most items are “will comply”; the proposed shade tree in the Arby’s sight distance triangle will be maintained and limbed when necessary. Ms. Butler will determine the traffic impact fee when the applicant provides the necessary information; the applicant will be required to pay the fee prior to building permits being issued. A discussion regarding stacking in the drive-through lanes was held. McMahan is not comfortable with the stacking time. Mr. McHugh encouraged Mr. Mast to work on the concerns and return to the Planning Commission with resolutions.

Mr. Mast stated that 55%-56% of peak traffic uses the drive-through; a double drive-through increases the efficiency of the store but does not bring in more traffic.

Further discussion took place regarding the concerns over the stacking at both the Popeyes and Arby’s; there being only one double drive-through Popeyes in the country, little statistical information is available. Ms. Butler recommended Mr. Mast to base his information on a single lane drive-through to provide her with the necessary information and determine if the total storage of the dual stacking lanes meets the queuing data. Ms. Butler requested the queuing information be provided for both restaurants as the data will vary based on the actual restaurant. Mr. McHugh complimented the architectural appearance of the buildings.

It was noted that the deadline for submitting to be on the agenda for the joint meeting is 11/9/2022, Mr. Mast assured that he would submit the traffic information.

25 Fretz Road/Almac - Proposed expansion to Building 2, parking facilities, walkways, and storm water management on 44-acre parcel. Jim Mazeika of Barry Isett and Associates for applicant Almac Group/James Corrigan.

Present on behalf of the applicant was Jim Mazeika of Barry Isett & Associates and James Corrigan of Almac. Two review letters were prepared, one from Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 10/19/2022 and one from Stephanie Butler, P.E. of McMahan Associates dated 10/20/2022.

Mr. Mazeika recapped the project, displayed a revised plan, and discussed the entrances and exits from the campus.

Discussions followed regarding emergency driveway access, future driveway widening, escrow for future improvements, and unwanted thoroughfare traffic.

Mr. McHugh’s opinion is that widening the driveway will have minimal impact and he does not understand the applicant’s hesitancy to comply with the request.

Ms. Butler stated that the Wambold/Fretz intersection currently operates at an acceptable Level of Service including with the development traffic but that a second entrance would be desirable for traffic along Wambold Road arriving from the north, eliminating the need for them to travel through the main intersection to the site access and ultimately to the new parking lot. Ms. Butler stated that a post-study of the traffic conditions once the 309 Connector is completed will be a condition and will determine if any other access improvements are necessary at that time. This will capture the actual traffic data from the construction of the 309 Connector in lieu of projections. Mr. McHugh requested the middle access to be constructed for the future condition now while it can remain as an emergency entrance only/daily egress only until such time as the entrance is necessary to be a daily use.

Mr. Bowe noted that the new construction on the Towamencin side of Wambold Road will also add more traffic.

Mr. Goodman stated that, in his opinion, this property will not be used as a thoroughfare. A discussion took place on the timeline of the 309 Connector, current lack of gates or turnstiles on the Almac campus, sidewalks on Fretz Road and the pedestrian bridge over the wetlands.

Mr. Mazeika stated that the applicant has not pursued shared driveway access with the neighboring property due to security concerns.

Ms. Fountain will check the ordinance for compliance regarding the proposed screening of the outdoor storage and trash disposal area.

The applicant stated that the pedestrian bridge will span 140'; it will be a prefabricated bridge that will be delivered in sections and placed on site. The applicant also clarified that the proposed buffer is 40', the applicant can meet the parking requirements, and will clarify the CKS SALDO comments regarding tree sizes and replacement trees.

A discussion followed regarding the requested waivers, storm water management, and plan review from the Fire Marshal.

Mr. McHugh instructed the applicant on what they need to work on and emphasized he still has concerns and would like to see improvements with the proposed driveway.

Ordinance Amendments

Mr. Beuke announced that the Sign Ordinance and Parking Ordinance are currently being reviewed by the Township Solicitor.

A brief discussion occurred regarding signs, types of signs, and size of allowable signs.

Mr. McHugh stated that clarity is needed on size and duration.

County Plan Reviews

Ms. Warner reviewed the proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance Amendments. Discussion was had regarding the front yard requirements, density bonuses, non-residential density bonuses, and shared driveways.

Mr. Kennedy asked about the density bonus for preserving older buildings.

A brief discussion included façade easements, shared driveways, shared parking, and reducing curb cuts.

Ms. Warner will continue with her review and will work on non-residential bonus options.

Mr. Kennedy requested that Ms. Butler give a brief update on the Trail & Sidewalk Committee. Ms. Butler announced that the Township was given a \$100,000 grant for a feasibility study for Walkable Lederach; DVRPC and PennDOT will be involved, and public input will be sought. The completion deadline for this project is 6/30/2024.

Mr. McHugh asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Shields seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:49pm.

The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday, December 14, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Reimel
Administrative Assistant