

**Lower Salford
Township Planning
Commission Meeting
September 27, 2023**

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 Vice Chair, John Kennedy, Joe Harwanko, David Goodman, Brad Landis 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 was member. David Bowe.

Minutes

The minutes from the August 16, 2023, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Bamford seconded the motion. Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Landis abstained due to being excused from the August meeting.

Motion 3 Yes; 0 No; Abstain 2

Plan Reviews

45 Mainland Road – Conditional Use

Present to discuss the plan was Christen Pionzio, Esq. from HRMML. Ms. Pionzio gave a brief overview of the property, its intended use, and the previous text amendment that allows a museum by Conditional Use. It was noted that this property is zoned Industrial.

Ms. Pionzio displayed a plan and pointed out the proposed addition to the building which she referred to as Phase 2; tonight's discussion is focusing on Phase 1 of this project that has no changes to the property. Discussed was the existing non-conformity, current adequate parking, off-site event parking, and the off-site parking agreement with the LCBC church and shuttle service.

Mr. Bamford asked for clarification of the front of the building. Ms. Pionzio explained how the property has two frontages but that the entrance to the building is proposed to be on the Rt. 63 side of the building as part of the proposed addition with Phase 2 of the project.

Mr. Bamford inquired about connectivity and sidewalks to Store Road and to the Mainland Inn. For safety reasons, Mr. McHugh is apprehensive about a sidewalk to Store Road but agrees that a sidewalk to the Mainland Inn would be appropriate. A discussion ensued regarding how to make the connection between 45 Mainland Road and the Mainland Inn at 17 Mainland Road.

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to move the Conditional Use application forward with the condition that the applicant tries, to the best of their ability, to create the pedestrian connection between the two properties. Mr. Landis seconded the motion.

Motion 6 Yes; 0 No

Lederach Cross Road Development – Land Development and Lot Line Change

Present to review the application was Anthony Brunkan, P.E. of Cornerstone Consulting and applicant John Shihadeh.

Mr. Brunkan displayed the current proposed plan and presented a revised waiver request letter dated 9/27/23. This parcel is located near the corner of Rt. 113/Harleysville Pike and Lederach Cross Road in the VC District. The application was previously presented as a sketch plan for two single family dwellings.

This plan proposes three buildings totaling six townhome units on two lots with access from Lederach Cross Road and a one-way, "in only" directional driveway from Harleysville Pike. Since this is a more intense use than previously proposed, additional storm water management will need to be installed.

Mr. Brunkan noted that these homes are proposed to be built as affordable homes as opposed to high-end houses and he feels these are a good fit for the Village District.

In response to the zoning section of the CKS review letter, density calculations were discussed, and Mr. Beuke stated that the Township would be agreeable to the density calculation even if the lots are consolidated. The ability to save existing trees or the replacement of trees that need to be removed was discussed in addition to streetlights, single trash hauler and cluster mailboxes.

Mr. McHugh instructed the applicant to work with Ms. Butler and the Walkable Lederach project.

Regarding land development issues outlined in the CKS letter, Mr. Harwanko voiced his concerns over the driveway widths and turning radii for firetrucks as well as concrete curbing in lieu of Belgium block as the block curbing damages the firetruck tires.

Ms. Butler initiated a conversation that included the requirement for PennDOT permits, emergency access from Harleysville Pike, limiting traffic to Lederach Cross Road, maximum impervious coverage, and potential cut-through traffic.

Waivers were discussed for some items and Mr. McHugh suggested the elimination of the trees along the Lederach Cross Road driveway to move the driveway farther away from the homes.

Ms. Butler briefly discussed the Walkable Lederach project and informed the applicant that connectivity will be required.

Mr. McHugh emphasized that sidewalks are a priority for Lederach Village.

Mr. Harwanko and Ms. Fountain briefly discussed the desirability of removable bollards at the emergency access areas.

Mr. McHugh instructed the applicant to iron out the issues discussed, work on the vehicular circulation and limiting the Harleysville Pike access to emergency access only.

355 Maple Avenue – Trails

Present to discuss the plan was Christen Pionzio, Esq. from HRMML, she was joined by applicant John Fiore and Lindsey Breylinger of Bohler Engineering.

Ms. Pionzio displayed the revised plan; she pointed out that the requested connection changes were made specifically at Harleysville Pike and briefly discussed the boardwalk-type walkway/bridge that will be installed along with the required railing.

Mr. Kennedy complimented the applicant, stating that the plan “looks great”; he then made a motion for recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bamford.

Motion 6 Yes; 0 No

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Mr. Beuke reviewed the Text Amendment for Impervious Surfaces and Restoration or Expansion of Nonconforming Buildings. He explained how the current ordinance for impervious coverage is antiquated and has not been reviewed in decades. The current ordinance does not fit in with today’s interpretations.

Mr. Beuke pointed out that currently, nonconforming buildings cannot expand without first appearing before the Zoning Hearing Board if they do not meet current zoning.

Ms. Warner reviewed the Text Amendment and discussed the definition of net lot area. A discussion ensued regarding net lot area and impervious coverage and what is and is not included in these calculations.

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

Motion 6 Yes; 0 No

Ms. Warner informed the members that she has been working with Mr. Beuke and Mr. Freithmuth on a clean version of the Zoning Ordinance Amendments for the Village District and will be presenting it at the October meeting.

Mr. McHugh asked that the final version be delivered to the Planning Commission prior to the October meeting with enough time for the members to thoroughly review it prior to convening.

Mr. Kennedy gave a brief update on the Indian Valley Regional Planning Commission and provided a handout regarding the survey for their comprehensive plan.

There being no public comment, Mr. Landis made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Harwanko seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:48pm.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday October 25, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Reimel
Administrative Assistant