**M I N U T E S**

**LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP REGULAR MEETING**

**PLANNING COMMISSION FEBRUARY 27, 2020 7:00 P.M.**

Meeting was called to order by Chauncey Knopp at 7:00 P.M. with the following present:

Chauncey Knopp, Chairman

Eric Breon, Vice Chairman

Dennis Fausey

James Young

Peter Henninger, Solicitor

Shawn Fabian, HRG

Alexa Korber, HRG

Ann Hursh, LST Planning & Zoning Coordinator

Tonya Condran, Recording Secretary

Others in Attendance:

Brian Engle, RETTEW Associates

Absent:

Kimber Latsha

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Knopp asked if there was a motion to approve the January 23, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion was made by Mr. Fausey to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Breon. All were in favor. Minutes were approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan/Major Subdivision Plan for Highspire Terminals Corp.** located at 900 Eisenhower Blvd., Middletown. Project is parking lot expansion and new access road for safety to separate trucks and vehicles. Project submitted by RETTEW Associates, Inc. on behalf of Highspire Terminals Corporation.

Brian Engle from RETTEW Assoc. came to the microphone to discuss the plan being presented tonight. He explained that the purpose of this project is to separate the passenger vehicles from the trucks entering the terminal. He also explained that with owning all three of the properties there, the idea is to combine them and then subdivide off the parcel closest to the Turnpike interchange, and then take out the existing paving and expand their parking lot so that it will limit the interactions of the passenger vehicles and trucks.

Mr. Engle continued to go over each plan sheet with the committee. He added that they are placing new fencing around the area, and they are taking out the extra paving in order to not have to do any additional stormwater management. The disturbance is under an acre so an NPDES permit is not required.

Mr. Engle went on to say that they are asking for two waivers; one is for waiving the requirement of a preliminary planbecause it is such a minor plan and project (§22-404); the other waiver is for existing grading (§22-407.A.14) because they don’t have all the topo in that area, it is out of the project area. He said they have worked on this site for many years with many different projects, so they have a long history and all of the information. All of the topo within the project, and even beyond the project, is good so they didn’t see a reason for such a small project.

Mr. Engle also said that they have received the comments from LST, County, and HRG, and they have no problems with any of them. They are all minor technical comments that they can easily address.

Mrs. Hursh reminded Mr. Engle that she will need the forms for the waivers.

Mr. Engle said they will absolutely get those to her.

Mr. Breon asked about the subdivision.

Mr. Engle explained that they will combine the three properties and then subdivide the southernmost part of the property so that it will become two properties now instead of three.

Mr. Breon asked why they are subdividing off that piece of property.

Mr. Engle responded that he honestly didn’t know. He doesn’t have any history with this project, he is subbing for the project’s actual engineer who is out sick. But he did say that he asked what the plans are for that property and they do not know at this time.

Mr. Henninger said that they purchased that property when the hotel was still there. So they are now absorbing part of that lot to put this parking area in. So it is going to be a smaller, separate lot. They are subdividing it off with this project so they don’t have to come back later to do it.

Mrs. Hursh added that they had a pre-app meeting with them and there are no concrete plans for that parcel as of yet. Mrs. Hursh said that her only major concern with this parcel is the access to the site.

Mr. Engle pointed out on the drawings where the driveway would be.

Mr. Breon asked if PennDOT was ok with that access.

Mr. Engle said that if that property ever gets developed, the owner will have to go through the whole process at that time. For now, there aren’t any plans.

Mr. Henninger asked how they were going to direct the traffic to go into the new entrance instead of the old entrance with this new project.

Mr. Engle replied that this isn’t like an office building where you have people that aren’t familiar with the site, the passenger vehicle and truck traffic will be employees primarily, with maybe some visitors. So the anticipation is that they are going to know where they need to go.

Mr. Henninger asked if there would be an “Exit Only” sign down by the tank farm.

Mr. Engle said that there will be an entrance and an exit for the passenger vehicles.

Mr. Breon asked why they are still using the same road.

Mr. Engle said the idea is that the interaction of the vehicles approaching each other directly is alleviated so that traffic flows better with less chance of sight impairment. If all traffic is going in the same direction, it causes less hazards.

Mr. Knopp asked if any other Planning Commission member had questions or comments.

Mr. Fausey said he didn’t understand why they wanted to subdivide. Because he feels that if they don’t subdivide, they wouldn’t need the Planning Commission, they would just need permits.

Mr. Henninger said that is not correct because their entrance is on a separate lot.

Mr. Engle added that they would have to at least combine them because they would be over the property line.

Mr. Knopp asked Mrs. Hursh for any comments.

Mrs. Hursh said she does have comments, most of them are very minor. Her biggest comment was that there may be a problem with access to the other lot, but that was discussed already.

Mr. Knopp asked Ms. Korber if she had any comments.

Ms. Korber replied that her comments are fairly minor too. She said her biggest curiosity was why they are putting one tree in the parking lot.

Mr. Engle wasn’t quite sure. But he said if he had to guess, he would assume that there is something in the ordinance that somebody picked up, probably like there has to be a break in however many spaces there are or something like that. He said they will look into it though.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Fabian if he had any comments.

Mr. Fabian said that like everyone else, he had nothing substantial. He said he had a couple minor comments.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Henninger if he had any comments.

Mr. Henninger said he felt everything was good.

Mr. Knopp asked for discussion and voting on the two waivers:

* 1. Preliminary Plan - §22-404. Mr. Engle said they submitted it as a Preliminary Final, if the Township is ok with that. Mr. Young made the motion to approve. Mr. Fausey seconded. All were in favor.
  2. Existing Grading - §22-407.A.14. Mr. Engle explained that they show contours on all of the site except for the area outside of the project area. The rest is all good survey, so it is basically just a partial waiver. Mr. Young made the motion to approve. Mr. Fausey seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Knopp then asked the Planning Commission what they would like to do with the Final Development Plan.

* + Mr. Breon made the motion to approve with stipulations.
  + Mr. Young seconded the motion.
  + All were in favor.

Plan was approved for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Discussion of the recodification of the Lower Swatara Township Ordinances.**

Mrs. Hursh explained that months ago she went over all the changes with the Planning Commission. The changes were minor: conflicting items, grammar issues, some typos, the penalties being made standard, etc. These changes are done so now it must go through the Planning Commission approval and then the Board of Commissioners. It is up for adoption at the April 1, 2020 BOC meeting.

Mr. Henninger added that this recodification is to make things consistent; there were different penalty provisions for different sections of the subdivision/zoning ordinances. We also cleaned up requirements as far as electronic submissions. It wasn’t much more than that.

The Planning Commission decided to table this until next month’s meeting. The Planning Commission wanted more time to familiarize themselves with the changes.

The next Planning Commission Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

**ADJOURN:**

A motion was made by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Breon to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Ann Hursh, Planning and Zoning Coordinator