**M I N U T E S**

**LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP REGULAR MEETING**

**PLANNING COMMISSION JANUARY 23, 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

Kimber Latsha

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:

Craig Mellott, TPD

Ron Secary, Snyder Secary & Associates

David Goode, Kinsley Properties

Daniel Haas, D&H

Jason Wilhelm, D&H

Mike Stoner, D&H

Esch McCombie, McNees

Laura Hayes, Press & Journal

Ron Paul, LST

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Knopp asked if there was a motion to approve the December 19, 2019 meeting minutes. Motion was made by Mr. Young to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Latsha. All were in favor. Minutes were approved.

**REORGANIZATION:**

The motion was made by Mr. Young to retain the same chairs as the previous years. Motion was seconded by Mr. Latsha and all were in favor.

Chairman will remain Chauncey Knopp. Vice Chairman will remain Eric Breon. Recording Secretary will remain Tonya Condran.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for D&H Proposed Warehouse Planning Commission File #PC2019-03.** Located north of Rosedale Avenue, east of Stoner Drive. Project is 84 acres, with a disturbed area of 58 acres for a 745,200 sf warehouse/distribution facility in the Industrial Park (IP) zone. Project submitted by Snyder, Secary & Associates, LLC on behalf of DHK D&H, LLC.

Ron Secary of Snyder, Secary, & Associates explained that they are the engineers responsible for the plan. As presented last year, there were re-zoning efforts on this property and some of the other Jednota properties that were purchased by Kinsley Properties. This particular property, 83.29 acres located south of the PA Turnpike, west of the Airport Connector, and north of Rosedale Avenue, is going to be developed into a partnership between D&H Distributors and Kinsley Properties. What is contemplated is a 745,200 sf warehouse building with offices also associated with it.

Mr. Secary then gave some highlights of the plan before asking the Planning Commission for any questions they may have. The building will have two access points, one on the eastside of the property and one on the west. Truck traffic to use primarily the eastern access for proximity to getting back on the highway. All public utilities are available to the site and will be utilized. There are two stormwater basins shown on the plan, one on eastside and one on the westside, which will meet and exceed the Township’s stormwater requirements. Last year the plan did received several variances, one for building height and one for numerical parking requirements. The plan reflects 452 car parking spaces located on the south side of the building. There is also an area for potential future parking on the northwest corner of the building should that need arise.

Mr. Secary introduced Craig Mellot of TPD (Traffic Plan Design) and said he would discuss some of the frontage improvements along Rosedale associated with this project.

Mr. Fausey asked when the break-ground date was going to be.

Mr. Secary said they would like to start sometime in the summer of 2020.

Mr. Breon asked if the traffic issues were all covered.

Mrs. Hursh confirmed the traffic issues were all covered.

Mr. Henninger interjected that he hasn’t seen any signage plan and he knows it was a big item of discussion. He asked how we are going to stop those trucks from making the mistake of turning the wrong way (west bound) on Rosedale. And if they do make that mistake, how are they going to get out of there.

Mr. Secary responded that there will be prohibitive movement signage and they are proposing the construction of a turn-around cul-de-sac along Rosedale that will allow any wayward trucks that mistakenly head west to be able to turn around and head back east in the correct direction. Mr. Secary also stated that they were going to make it as difficult as possible for trucks to make the right-turn when headed out of the property back onto Rosedale Avenue.

Craig Mellot from TPD reminded the board that during the re-zoning process they did an extensive presentation on traffic with their Traffic Impact Study. The document was submitted with the Land Development plans. He said he thinks all the comments from HRG are straight-forward and they will have no problem addressing them. He said the focus was how to get trucks on the appropriate road segments and how to keep them off the road segments they don’t want them on. The intent is to have trucks use Rosedale Ave. down to Meade Ave. then down to Route 230. They way to accomplish this is through design features. The driveways are designed to either allow trucks to turn (going into site from Rosedale) or hinder them from turning (coming out of the site turning onto Rosedale). So between the signage and the geometry of the driveways, it will be clear for the trucks where they are supposed to turn. There will also be signage right before the turn-around stating that no trucks are allowed past this point. He said they also did a study recommending Lower Swatara Township prohibit trucks on Rosedale west of the site to White House Lane and then White House Lane down to Route 230. HRG is recommending to the BOC to adopt that as an ordinance. Then the Police would have the ability to levy fines. The other part of the study is how to get Rosedale to a point where the road is good enough to accept trucks. He then said they are proposing to widen Rosedale Ave. from the western driveway to the eastern driveway with accommodations for shoulders on each side for bike traffic.

Mr. Breon asked which side of the street would be losing ground for that.

Mr. Mellott replied that they are trying to preserve the wall along the north side of the street, so they are limited as to what they can do. So the widening will be more on the south side where the office building is currently there. The intent is to save as many of the mature trees along there as possible, but they won’t be able to save them all. But they will replace the trees that will have to be removed.

Mr. Breon asked about the other part of the project which will be on the south side of Rosedale Avenue.

Mr. Mellott responded that the plan for the south side of Rosedale is not before the Planning Commission at this time. But their approach is to think forward to that time when that plan comes in as to where the access for that part and determine where the access drive will come in.

Mr. Mellott explained that from their site heading east on Rosedale to the Airport Connector Bridge, the road will be widened with a third lane. From the Airport Connector Bridge to Meade Ave. will not have a third lane but will be widened, providing shoulders on both sides so that trucks can be accommodated and bicyclists as well. Then at the intersection of Meade Ave. and Rosedale Ave., in the northwest corner especially, they will be doing some geometry modifications so trucks can turn safely into and out of that intersection.

Mr. Young stated that one of Mrs. Hursh’s comments was that they should give consideration to providing addition right-of-way and sidewalk along the south side of Rosedale going west to Whitehouse Lane. He asked for their response to that.

Mr. Secary responded that they haven’t had time to talk to their clients about this yet. He said they will certainly address that going forward but the information is new to them.

Mr. Breon interjected that he understands this may be the first time they actually saw it in writing but it was talked about at the previous meeting.

Mr. Secary said that the improvements terminate just beyond the turnaround.

Mr. Breon said that the whole area from Stoner Drive and up is a mess. He continued that in our discussions we discussed the need for improvements because of the additional traffic that will be generated going from the site to Whitehouse Lane for the worker traffic.

Mr. Mellott said that he thinks the expectation is that the majority of traffic is not going to be going in that direction. He said that their studies show about 20% may use that route.

Mr. Breon replied that he does not think that is going to be true. He feels it will be a greater number of cars using that section of Rosedale Avenue.

Mr. Mellott said he worked with the Township Engineer to come up with the 20% coming from Whitehouse Lane (west) and 80% coming from the east. And that level of traffic coming from Whitehouse Lane does not rise to the standard to require further improvements. As far as the actual stretch of Rosedale, it is narrower and curvy, but he says the one thing that you must keep in mind is that wider is not necessarily better because it leads to higher speeds. Also you would be encouraging people to use it when you don’t really want them to. So there is not always a correlation between making the road wider and safer (in respect to passenger vehicles, not trucks).

Mr. Breon said that once the project is complete, there is no going back. He said he just doesn’t want to be looking back five years from now seeing that the road (the way it is) isn’t working and there are numerous vehicles travelling that route at every shift change.

Mr. Mellott said that since they are public roads, they cannot force people to not use them.

Mr. Breon said he is aware of that.

Mr. Mellott also explained that with the type of traffic that may be generated with this project, they do not feel it will cause any safety issues.

Mr. Breon added that with the traffic that is on Rosedale now, there is already signage relative to a sight problem coming over the hill towards Stoner Drive.

Mr. Mellott said that part of what they had to do with their report is look at the crash patterns in that area. He said it is not uncommon to have a road like that, but when people see that it is curvy and narrow, they drive accordingly. It hasn’t led to any crash patterns according to their evaluation. He informed that they did not receive any comment from HRG saying that they need to widen that section of Rosedale Avenue.

Mr. Henninger added that the overall plan talks about a second warehouse on the south side of Rosedale Avenue; at that point, they would need to revisit things again.

Mr. Mellott said that potentially their study is done comprehensively, so they factored in the traffic from that southern property as well.

Mr. Young said that as he recalls when they were here before, there was an issue with the anticipated truck traffic when the south side of Rosedale portion of the overall project goes in. He recalled that they were almost doubling the space and were only counting on a small increase in truck traffic. He asked if that had been revisited with the staff.

Mr. Mellott said that based on D&H’s evaluation, their truck traffic is about 90% less than a conventional warehouse.

Mr. Breon rebutted that they will not necessarily be the tenants of that new warehouse.

Mr. Mellott went on to say that on the south side of Rosedale, PennDOT has standards for a generic warehouse and truck traffic that is certainly higher than what D&H’s estimates were, so they used PennDOT’s standard. So the truck traffic that the southern building would generate on average based on PennDOT’s statistics, is what they used for that building. For the northern building, which would be D&H, they used their data for that building. He added that they had cleared that with HRG as they were going through this scoping process.

Mr. Breon said to remember this day, because we will be back at this topic when the time comes for the second (southern) project to begin. He feels that people will be coming up through Highspire and Lumber Street to get to the site causing more worker traffic than they are anticipating on Rosedale to the west of the sites.

Mr. Knopp asked for Mrs. Hursh’s comments.

Mrs. Hursh affirmed that staff did meet with D&H’s team and went over all the comments and there is really not anything earth-shattering other than maybe the traffic. An address is being checked on for approval from the County GIS/911 staff. She also discussed the extra buffer/screening between their site and the only residential home in the immediate area. They did agree to put in some additional screening between the properties. She also stated that they did receive the Fire and Building comments and a lot of that can be done at the Building Permit Approval stage. She also mentioned the additional Right-of-Way and Sidewalks; and there would need to be grading done. She suggested they put something in the Agreement that they would revisit this also a couple years from now. She reported that Madison Smith did a few stormwater comments, none of which were earth-shattering either.

Ms. Korber then went over the Dauphin County Planning Commission comments. She said she also did not have anything earth-shattering. She wanted to give them a couple compliments though. The County does like it when parking gets reduced; and it seems like the wet areas/streams are being protected very well too. Also they are pleased that all the forested area is remaining. As far as the sidewalks, County does like bike and pedestrian demand studies as part of the Regional Growth Management Plan. They feel there is some demand in that area. She stated there is also some bus presence in that area, Route 7 Middletown goes through Steelton/Highspire with a lot of stops. She feels that there is a feasible chance that some people may be walking to work to this facility with the residential areas and the bus activity along Rte. 230, so this is why she would like to see sidewalks/big shoulders.

Mr. Henninger interjected that when they were going through another project on N. Union Street, they found that the amount of people, walking along N. Union St. and across Rte. 283 to go to work out on Fulling Mill Rd., was a concern that was raised. They didn’t realize, until they went out and watched, just how many people do walk that route. This is why the sidewalk comment is an issue. As far as the traffic goes, he feels that if people find a better/quicker way there, they are going to take the route they feel is best for them. The future ability to look back as part of the Developer’s Agreement as far as these signal warrants and stacking and whatever at these various intersections is very important because it is not necessarily always what it looks like on paper in the end; it just doesn’t always work that way.

Mr. Fabian reiterated that they did sit down and meet to go over a lot of the major concerns, he feels it was a very productive conversation. There are major tweaks to the stormwater design right now from the infiltration results. When it comes back it for review, he said they will do a more thorough review of the actual stormwater on site.

Mr. Secary said they plan to resubmit the Plans next week. Based on the information they received from the infiltration test which wasn’t completed before they submitted the Plans back in December. But they are complete now and they have revamped the design. It is still two basins in the same locations, they are just slightly smaller (less deep) than the original ones. But they feel the design intent is the same at it always was and they will be discussing it further with HRG.

Mr. Breon asked how it is that the basins got smaller.

Mr. Fabian said that his understanding of the revised design is that they are going to go to a managed release concept so there will be some storage space in a soil media on the bottom that will account for some volume with some underdrains in there. So the actual overall depth is going to be less deep because of having the media presence there for that additional storage.

Mr. Secary added that with their first design, since they didn’t have those infiltration tests, they took an incredibly conservative approach, so it is not that they are shrinking it to get out of anything. And the design has to be approved by DEP and go through the NPDES permitting process, as well.

Mr. Knopp asked for any other questions or comments from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Latsha asked if we wanted to do something about the sidewalks, what action we should take.

Mr. Henninger explained that we don’t traditionally waive sidewalks, so we would recommend deferral on the north side of Rosedale. We also would recommend to the Board of Commissioners as part of this process that they strongly consider the sidewalk continued on the south side of Rosedale Avenue down to Whitehouse Lane.

Mr. Breon asked if the sidewalk was going to be the entire way to the overpass.

Mr. Henninger said yes and across the overpass (the overpass has a walkway).

Mr. Fausey added that there is a walkway on the south side that starts from “nowhere” and crosses over the bridge and goes all the way down to Meade Avenue.

Mrs. Hursh said that they are seeking relief from the requirement to install sidewalks on the south side of Rosedale from the site west to Whitehouse Lane until the time that which the Township deems necessary.

Mr. Knopp asked for any other questions or comments.

Mr. Young asked if with the revision of the stormwater plan, would this need to come before the Planning Commission again.

Mrs. Hursh replied that it is up to the Planning Commission. She said that HRG reviews it and they do what is needed to be done.

Mr. Henninger added that it doesn’t look like there is going to be a massive change in footprint based on what they have on the plans. There are two major basins on the plan. If it were re-designed where there would now be four little basins at different areas, that would change the scope of the plan, then they would need to come back. But, he said from what he understands between the Township engineer and the project’s engineer, from the 10,000 foot view, you won’t even be able to see it.

Mrs. Hursh asked Mr. Fabian how comfortable he was with the stormwater.

Mr. Fabian responded that the basins are in the same general location with the same general drainage areas to both of them. We will have the ability to review and offer comment and the have those comments resolved. So, Mr. Fabian feels confident that overall the location and function of stormwater flow isn’t going to drastically change even though specifics of the design will.

Mr. Henninger added that if DEP says no, they will have to come back.

Mr. Knopp asked for any other questions or comments. There were none.

Mr. Knopp asked for the two waivers to be discussed:

* 1. Preliminary Plats Procedure – The project is being submitted as a Preliminary/Final Plan.
     + Mr. Young made the motion to approve.
     + Mr. Latsha seconded.
     + All were in favor.
  2. Sidewalks – The developer is seeking relief of the requirement to install sidewalks until that time at which the Township deems necessary.
     + Mrs. Hursh reminded that we usually do deferrals on sidewalks.
     + Mr. Henninger added that the recommendation would be a deferral on the north side, but an extension on the south side.
     + Mr. Young made the motion to approve as stated above.
     + Mr. Latsha seconded.
     + All were in favor.

Mr. Knopp asked the Planning Commission what they would like to do with the overall project based on the discussions we had tonight.

* + Mr. Latsha said we still have concerns on the final approval of stormwater, so he made a motion for the conditional approval subject to stipulations with respect to all the comments mentioned.
  + Mr. Young seconded.
  + All were in favor.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

The next Planning Commission Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

**ADJOURN:**

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Ann Hursh, Planning and Zoning Coordinator