**M I N U T E S**

**LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP \*REGULAR MEETING**

**PLANNING COMMISSION NOVEMBER 19, 2020 7:00 P.M.**

\*Tonight’s meeting was held as an electronic meeting via Zoom due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

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

Chauncey Knopp, Chairman Ann Hursh, LST Planning & Zoning

Eric Breon, Vice Chairman Peter Henninger, Solicitor

Dennis Fausey Shawn Fabian, HRG

James Young Tonya Condran, Recording Secretary

Absent:

Kimber Latsha

Others Present:

Adam Davis, BL Companies

Nick DiSanto, Triple Crown Corp.

Chris DiSanto, Triple Crown Corp.

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Knopp asked if there was a motion to approve the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion was made by Mr. Young to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Breon. 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. Fausey and all were in favor.

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

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Fulling Mill Road -** Planning Commission File #PC2020-03. Located at 250 Fulling Mill Road, consisting of approximately 9.08 acres for an 82,500 sf warehouse, the property is located in the Industrial Park zone, owned by Mountaineer Properties LLC, submitted by BL Companies.

Mrs. Hursh gave a brief refresher of this plan which was previously presented to the Planning Commission at the November 19, 2020 meeting. Since then, they have addressed the majority of the comments given to them and have given two additional submissions. There is a note about the accessible route that they will be required to do. Plus the standard administrative comments that we have for every project. Dauphin County Planning Commission comments have been addressed.

Mr. Knopp asked the Planning Commission if anyone had any questions or comments. No one did at this time.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Henninger for any comments.

Mr. Henninger said that the comments and concerns he had from November we addressed. Legally, everything is good to go from his side.

Mr. Knopp asked Mr. Fabian for any comments.

Mr. Fabian said the majority of HRG’s comments were resolved since we met last in November. Everything they have remaining are just administrative comments. Mr. Fabian said that there is still some coordination with the Municipal Authority side, there was a submission for a Sewage Facilities Planning Module. He asked if there were any updates on that.

Mr. Henninger added that the Municipal Authority approved that on Monday and sent it in.

Mr. Fabian said that there are no concerns on HRG’s end then.

Mr. Hursh informed that they have three waiver requests (as follows):

1. §22-404 – Preliminary Plan. Waiver form has been submitted for a Preliminary Plan submission.
2. §22-606 – Curbing. Waiver form has been submitted for a waiver of curbing along access drives.
3. §22-607 – Sidewalks. Waiver form has been submitted for a waiver of installing sidewalks along Fulling Mill Road.

Mr. Henninger reminded that we would rather defer on curbing and sidewalks as opposed to flat waivers.

* + Mr. Knopp asked for a motion to approve the waiver of the Preliminary Plan. Mr. Young made the motion. Mr. Fausey seconded. All were in favor.
  + Mr. Knopp asked for a motion on the Curbing waiver request. Mr. Young made the motion to defer the curbing requirement along the access drives. Mr. Breon seconded that. All were in favor.
  + Mr. Knopp asked for a motion on the waiver to install sidewalks along Fulling Mill Rd. Mr. Young made the motion to defer the requirement for sidewalks along Fulling Mill Rd. Mr. Fausey seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Knopp asked Mrs. Hursh if Dauphin County had any input on this plan.

Mrs. Hursh said yes, the first time we met on this plan, Dauphin County did have comments but they all were addressed. So they are ok with this plan.

Mr. Knopp asked if there were any further questions. There were none.

Mr. Knopp then asked what the Planning Commission would like to do with this plan based upon tonight’s input.

Mr. Young made the motion to recommend approval of this plan with the standard conditions and stipulations. Mr. Fausey seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Knopp announced that the plan was approved with stipulations.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Knopp asked Mrs. Hursh to talk about the sketch plan that is being presented tonight.

Before Mrs. Hursh introduced Nick DiSanto from Triple Crown Corporation, she explained that this subject site is zoned Commercial Neighborhood. It is located across Oberlin Road from the school complex.

Mr. DiSanto introduced himself and his partner Chris DiSanto. He then explained their vision of what they are proposing for the subject property. They put it up for contract about 4 months ago with the current seller and they’ve been analyzing the different options. They also realize there are a lot of conflicts with the property (i.e., gas lines, communication lines, and a lot of easements that go through the parcel). Through their analysis and the feedback they are getting from some market users, there seems to be a desire for more townhouses in this area, at the gap between the single-families and the high school. So they wanted to look at this and have a discussion with the Planning Commission to see what the thought was, if there is a desire for more townhouses. Their sketch plan shows roughly 104 townhouses on this site. He said they are envisioning a community similar to the Woodridge townhouses, which was a successful project.

Mr. DiSanto went on to explain the sketch plan. He said it is all very conceptual right now.

Mr. Knopp asked for clarification that this project would be townhouses and not apartments.

Mr. DiSanto confirmed that it was indeed townhouses. They would be ‘For Rent’ townhouses, as they want to maintain a single parcel and not do a massive subdivision.

Mr. Knopp asked how many units would be in one building.

Mr. DiSanto said that this is all very conceptual, but none of them would exceed eight (8) townhouses. They do not want to re-zone here. It is already zoned Commercial Neighborhood which allows certain residential type uses, such as senior living, student housing, and residential rentals. In Lower Swatara Township, most of the Commercial Neighborhood Districts are already developed. There is really only one other place in the township that would be useable for townhouse development and that parcel is on Fulling Mill Road by the firehouse. So their thought was to add a text amendment, adding in some constraints as to what is in the Multi-Family District for townhouses (no more than 8 units per building, same setbacks, same height restrictions, etc.).

Mr. Breon pointed out that the corner of Oberlin and N. Union is very swampy most of the time. He asked if that corner would remained undeveloped.

Mr. DiSanto confirmed that yes, it would remain undeveloped because it is like a swamp and right above there is where the gas line goes through the site.

Mr. Breon then asked for confirmation that there are no commercial buildings planned for this site.

Mr. DiSanto said that is correct, no commercial buildings, just a residential neighborhood (in concept).

Mr. DiSanto said that they would try to align one access point with Blue Raider Lane. Being that this is a State Route, a traffic study will have to be performed to see what PennDOT will warrant.

Mr. Knopp asked how close the second access point was to the curve (where N. Union meets Oberlin).

Mr. DiSanto replied that he doesn’t have hard measurements but they figure about 600 feet from the curve. He said they were trying to keep that on the high side so there is good visibility.

Mr. Knopp felt that this would cause a lot of traffic for Rte. 441 at certain times, like when the school leaves out.

Mr. DiSanto acknowledged the fact that 441 is a very busy road. He said that they are hoping to have some pedestrian improvements approved since it is right across from the school complex.

Mr. Knopp asked if anyone thought that Oberlin Road would have to be widened.

Mr. DiSanto said he really didn’t know but he believes there would definitely be lane improvements like right-lane extensions.

Mr. Henninger added that when Blue Raider Lane was put in, they widened the road with the deceleration/acceleration lanes going in and out, so he imagines they would want to do the same with this project, if not a traffic signal.

Mr. Henninger explained that in the C-N Zoning District there is no residential by right, it is just the Special Exceptions for residential retirement facilities and student housing, so he asked Mr. DiSanto if he was thinking of a text amendment along the lines of a Special Exception or an overlay. He asked Mr. DiSanto to explain what he was thinking with the text amendment.

Mr. DiSanto explained that they really wanted to hear what the Planning Commission’s recommendation would be, but they were leaning more towards a Special Exception because the other two residential-type uses are under Special Exceptions. He said that this parcel is unique from the other C-N Districts in the township, but they recognize there may be a desire to limit the expansion of residential development in Commercial Neighborhood Districts since the vast majority are already developed.

Mr. Henninger added that from that standpoint, it can be tailored more with this specific site going with the Special Exception route. The Township would like more Commercial development if possible; there already is good residential development and good industrial development, but it’s the commercial end that has been lacking. He explained that a Special Exception for this site would be better than changing anything and making it worse for the remainder of C-N Districts in the township.

Mr. C. DiSanto explained that there is really no other place in Lower Swatara Township’s Commercial Neighborhood Districts that would warrant this type of residential use because they are either already developed or too small. Mr. N. DiSanto added that they had gone to Commercial-type clients to see if there would be any interest in development on this site, but because of grade-restraints, easements, and such, they just couldn’t meet the lot requirements.

Mr. DiSanto then asked the Planning Commission if they had any more questions, concerns or suggestions.

Mr. Knopp asked if they would be planning to plant any trees or shrubbery.

Mr. DiSanto responded that it would definitely be warranted. Right now it’s just a really big open field. They would look into what is required to help beautify the site by breaking it up so it is not just one massive open complex.

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

Mr. Breon replied that he feels the neighbors on Horseshoe Drive may have concerns, but other than that he himself has concerns about fire apparatus getting to the rear of the structures sufficiently. He asked how tall the buildings were going to be.

Mr. DiSanto said they were just two-story townhouses so probably around 32 feet at the peak of each roof. Most of the units would be about 20 feet to the soffits. But he reminded that this is just a sketch plan at this point, so they will do what is needed to be done to make it meet safety restrictions.

Mr. Knopp asked for any other comments.

Mr. Young said that as a general concept, he is not opposed to what they are proposing in terms of a townhouse development on this site. But he added “the devil is always in the details” of a plan.

Mr. Fausey agreed with Mr. Young.

Mr. DiSanto stated that since the Planning Commission is not opposed to the townhouse concept for this site, their next step would be to present this sketch plan to the Board of Commissioners to see what their thoughts would be.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

The next Planning Commission Meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.

**ADJOURN:**

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Ann Hursh, Planning and Zoning Coordinator