

East Manchester Township
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
July 24, 2018

At a regular meeting held at the Township Building, the following members were present: Blaine Rentzel, Robert Nace, Edward Hewitt, and Mike McCowan. Also present: Engineer Laymon Mortorff, Acting Zoning Officer Byron Trout, P.E., Recording Secretary, and ten citizens.

Chairman McCowan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Motion by Rentzel, second by Hewitt, to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 27, 2018, as distributed. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Plans

84 Zion's View Road; Final Subdivision Plan

David Koratich, Joe Stein of Warehaus, Gary Stewart, and Christopher McGrath, DHL, were present on this proposal. Mr. McCowan noted that this will be a briefing presentation only; no action will be taken. This plan is #2018.0073, dated 4/3/18, Revision 3, date 7/13/18; plan #2018.0073.00, dated 4/16/18 Revision 2, dated 6/29/18.

By way of history, in the early 2000s, this was the Craft farm. A preliminary plan was filed which included 90 acres; environmental easements were obtained and restrictions imposed; about 10 acres of land was acquired later, and in 2015 the easements were lifted to permit development of the site. The plan is to construct a large building. No one wants to disturb environmental features/animals. A plan was approved by the Township in 2016-17. The applicants understand the Township's desires to maintain the environmental integrity of the site with minimal impact to the residents.

DHL is proposing a 1 million square-foot building. Mr. McGrath explained DHL's operations and desire for the site. Often DHL operates out of another business's building. They now have at least two business operations that are interested in using this proposed building, so DHL would be the owner/operator of this building. Mr. McGrath insisted that DHL is building this facility to remain a fixture in the Township and add jobs occupied by Township residents.

Mr. Stein noted that this proposal includes 100 acres with only about 50% of impervious coverage. There is much green space and natural buffering on this site. Access will be from Zion's View Road. The amount of dock space is probably overestimated, at least at this point. This will be a six-day per week operation. There are spring-fed wetlands which will be protected, as well as easements for the streams. There are four stormwater management ponds. Natural woodlands will be preserved and maintained as much as possible. One tenant will lease over 600,000 square feet; the other a little over 300,000 square feet. To protect the residents, a high berm and plantings are proposed. Mr. Stein showed a proposal for sight distance of an average-height person standing on different neighboring residential sites. Vegetation and the berm will prevent any view of the site from these locations. All lighting will be shielded. Residents might see a glow from the lighting but not the lighting itself.

Mr. Stein noted that a major benefit of this proposal will be the improvements to Canal Road that are required. He gave examples of signs that will be posted. Truck traffic will not be permitted to turn left onto Zions View Rd. The proposed design of the road improvements has

been approved by PennDOT. Exit 24 from Route 83 will be improved as well, to accommodate more “stacking” of vehicles in that area. Willow Springs Lane and Board Road will also see improvements. Ultimately, the Canal Road/Zion’s View intersection will be improved in the future.

There are little to no engineering comments outstanding. Coordination with all utilities and PennDOT has been accomplished. The Sewer Authority has given its blessing. The applicants would very much like to have a conditional approval tonight from the Planning Commission so that they might be able to proceed with ground breaking.

On questioning by Mr. Nace, Mr. Stein clarified where the overflow from the stormwater ponds will be directed – toward the wetlands, not toward the residences at all.

Mr. Stewart spoke, noting that one of the neighbors is amenable to helping the applicants obtain part of his land in the event that more land is needed to manage the stormwater area.

Several properties will be required to connect to the public sewer, and the applicant has offered financial assistance to facilitate this process.

Mr. McGrath hopes that construction can begin by the end of August, early September. It was noted that the owner’s signature is missing; the owner is waiting to be assured that the proposal is satisfactory to the Township. That’s sort of a Catch-22 situation, because the Township cannot proceed with final approval without the owner’s signature. There is a Plan B, of sorts, to accommodate the lack of signature.

Discussion was held on the Canal Road improvements and the phases that will be required to get this project accomplished in a timely fashion with the least impact on the area. Phase 1 must be completed by June 1, 2019. How about the truck traffic? Mr. Hewitt noted that there are many tractor trailer trucks that are confused about where they are going. Often, their GPS indicates a wrong direction, sending the trucks on a road that is not actually a truck route.

Mr. Rentzel asked about the runoff from Starbucks and Ollie’s – does that go to the stream? Is the stream large enough to handle any extra runoff? Mr. Trout explained. It’s all under control. How about the pump station? Large enough to handle the extra, thinking of 500 employees? Yep. The Sewer Authority had no reservations about approving the proposal. Mr. Koratich noted that there won’t be 500 people in the building at any one time.

From the audience, a gentleman asked how the construction traffic will be handled? How will the road be affected? Mr. McGrath explained the timing of the project and road improvement.

Another gentleman asked for clarification on the truck traffic making right turns only out of the site. Discussion was held on mis-guided truck traffic and how to deal with that throughout this area. Mr. McGrath noted that DHL can control its trucks by telling them what routes to use or not to use.

Also, Mike ? asked about mosquito control in the retention pond. The ponds are designed to be wet for 72 hours, then they will be dry. Also, how about speed control along this area? Increased traffic will only make the situation worse. Ultimately, once the trouble is beyond the site, it’s out of the applicant’s hands, of course. The police will have to look at the situation and ticket violators where appropriate. Mr. McGrath noted that this is a concern of PennDOT and plans are underway to correct the visibility in the area to increase safety. Is the berm to be landscaped? Mowable grass. It is the responsibility of the owner to maintain the trees and the berm. Any violations will be a Zoning Officer issue. Be warned.

Mr. Laymon noted that the Land Development Plan would be resubmitted for the Planning commission next month.

Mr. McCowan feels that the Planning Commission cannot give a conditional approval on this plan without the appropriate signatures. He feels that with the level of urgency that Mr. Stein conveyed, the signature certainly should have been obtained. Mr. Rentzel suggested a conditional approval of the subdivision plan and the waivers, subject to the applicant presenting the plan with the signature at the next meeting.

Mr. Stein said the applicant could consider requesting a waiver of the signature requirement.

Mr. Nace is concerned that the owner will not sign for next month's meeting. He feels that it wouldn't be a good idea to conditionally approve this plan because of that risk. Mr. Stein noted that even with a conditional approval, this plan cannot progress past the Supervisors, so there's a bit of protection in that regard. Mr. Hewitt is concerned about setting a precedent if the Planning Commission conditionally approves this plan tonight; then everyone submitting a plan will expect the same treatment and will file the same waiver.

Kudos to the applicants and all involved for such a complete, attractive, and well-done presentation of the plan.

How about a special meeting of the Planning Commission? The meeting needs to be advertised twice in the month preceding the meeting, ten days apart. Is that do-able, practically speaking? The advertising costs would be borne by the applicant. How about a date? How about a meeting right before the Supervisors' meeting on August 14 at 6:00 that evening? Mr. Trout will contact the Township Manager, Mr. Gentzler, tomorrow morning to see if this is feasible. Stay tuned. At that meeting, both the Subdivision and Land Development Plans will be reviewed. The applicants will resubmit any revisions/completions, and the engineer can resubmit a "clean" comment letter for the Planning Commission to refer to at that meeting.

On the Land Development Plan, outstanding issues are signatures, E&S plan approval, developer's agreement and surety, rec fees, list all agreements and their execution dates, stormwater management plan approval, right to reserve comments on the driveway permit, etc. Most if not all of these outstanding items will be addressed before the "emergency" meeting on August 14. Also, they should submit the waiver request for one item, 46.B Curb, sidewalk and road widening.

The applicants requested that this plan be *tabled* until the next meeting. Request granted.

Additional New Business

Nothing at this time.

Motion by Nace, second by Hewitt, to adjourn. All members voted aye; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie B. Maher, Recording Secretary