

MINUTES**PLANNING COMMISSION****LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP****REGULAR MEETING****JULY 18, 2023****The following were in ATTENDANCE:****BOARD MEMBERS**

Brett McCreary, Chair

Brian Wickenheiser, Vice-Chair

David Clovsky

Jeffrey Logan

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Erin Trone, Assistant Manager

Michael Knouse, P.E. Township Engineer

Steven P. Miner, Township Solicitor

OTHER

Commissioner Dean Villone

CALL TO ORDER AND PROOF OF PUBLICATION

Chairman McCreary called the July 18, 2023 Regular Meeting of the Lower Allen Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm. He announced that proof of publication was available for review.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. CLOVSKY moved to approve the minutes, from the May 17, 2023, Regular Meeting. Mr. LOGAN seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS**Board of Commissioner Approvals**

Director Trone reported that the Board of Commissioners had approved the Trinity Gyms Plan on June 26, 2023 and had accepted another 60-day extension from Kindt Properties on July 10, 2023. One of the conditions for approval was submission of construction drawings for the existing building, which have not yet been received.

Pending Plans

Director Trone reported that the plan for Spring Lake Apartments was awaiting financial security, recreation fees and agreements required prior to recording. Next, she reported that the plan for Interstate Towing and Recovery was awaiting financial security prior to recording. Finally, she indicated that the Sadie Lane Development plan was awaiting financial security prior to recording.

Under Construction

Director Trone reported that several plans were under construction, including forty units for Arcona 8.2, Birch Grove has 18 townhome units under construction and the township received the first permit application for a single-family home located near Lower Allen Elementary School; Cloud-10 Carwash had applied for a demolition permit and is awaiting their HOP; Lark Meadows had submitted its first permit application for a single-family home of fourteen units planned behind Rossmoyne Elementary School; and the warehouse at 2450 Gettysburg Road was under construction.

SLD-2023-05 Revised Tommy Carwash**Applicant Presentation**

Mr. Greg Holtzman with BL Companies, Project Manager for the site, presented the revised plan to combine three lots at the corner of Hartzdale Drive and Gettysburg Road to build an automated carwash. He reviewed items in the plan that had been changed since their prior plan submission. First was to continue coordination with PennDOT and to continue coordination with the adjacent property owner. He illustrated the changes to the access in and out and described efforts to secure an easement with the neighbor. He reported that an agreement had been negotiated to allow cars to access the

carwash via the property to the south. The access off Gettysburg Road is right-in only. There are two access points from Hartzdale Drive. The first access point (the northern access) is right-in/right-out only. There is a small median located on Hartzdale Drive at that that prevents left turn movements. The southern access point on Hartzdale Drive allows for full movements. Mr. Holtzman addressed concerns of stacking cars and mentioned that another new Tommy's Carwash locally had not observed significant stacking. He also addressed concern about noise generated by the vacuums and the carwash blowers but noted that they had demonstrated that the anticipated noise fell within the allowable noise level.

The agreement with the neighbor resulted in displacement of parking spaces, so additional parking spaces were added and will be allocated to the neighbor per the agreement.

Mr. Holtzman requested approval of the waivers which had not changed from the prior submission, as well as a recommendation for approval of the land development plan.

Township Staff Comments

Mr. Knouse from Rettew reviewed the comments included in his second review letter dated July 13, 2023, noting the applicant had addressed quite a few comments from the original review. The inclusion of the adjacent property triggered many new comments, particularly regarding circulation. The applicant requested three waivers, to include those for submission of a preliminary plan, the installation of parking lot planting islands, and one related to parking space size.

He said that staff has a favorable view of these waivers.

Next, Mr. Knouse noted that most of the subdivision and land development comments are primarily outside agency approvals, financial agreements, and coordination. Similarly, there are administrative clean up comments on the stormwater management comments. He noted the plan needs to address water quality for residual wash water from existing vehicles that is directed towards the proposed storm sewer. The water quality insert details need to identify which inlets will receive the filter.

Mr. Knouse next addressed the zoning comments. The first relates to circulation and internal access. There are several areas of concern. The applicant made some improvements but there are remaining concerns. The first relates to potential back up onto Hartzdale Drive and blocking of the intersection. The opportunity to access the southern access helps to some extent. County review comments were reflected in the original review.

Commissioner Comments

Mr. Wickenheiser expressed concern about potential stacking onto Hartzdale Drive at the intersection.

Mr. McCreary asked the applicant for an update on the status of their PennDOT approvals. Mr. Holtzman replied that the traffic impact study had been approved and the application was in the HOP design phase.

Mr. McCreary asked if the Township had any sticking points on the zoning issues. Mr. Knouse said the applicant had made improvements but there remains concern about the right turn in on Hartzdale due to the potential stacking. Director Trone added additional concern, that with the addition of the southern entrance, there is a mini-intersection added to the middle of the plan, which presents concern about maneuvering within the site.

Mr. McCreary noted the potential for traffic congestion and hardship for the existing tenants within the shopping center, stating that it was the property owner who agreed to the easement, not the business owners. He also noted a public safety concern with many young children associated with the martial arts studio.

Mr. Wickenheiser expressed concern about a high likelihood of increased accidents coming off Hartzdale Drive and suggested making it a right out only, and to eliminate the right turn in. Mr. McCreary said there is not sufficient width to have two lanes there. It is wider at the beginning of the turn but then narrows quickly.

Mr. Clovsky asked if public safety had weighed in and asked if they had concerns since they would need to use additional resources to respond to higher levels of incidents. Director Trone noted they had not yet done so.

Mr. McCreary suggested the addition of a turning lane and the possibility of limiting the entrance to the south end. In reply, Mr. Tanner Brandt with Christianson Companies, referred to the year-long negotiations with the adjacent property owner and the limited access that had been agreed upon. He opined that every solution proposed by the applicant brought more issues from the Township. Mr. Wickenheiser noted that with each additional presentation, there are new items to consider, which brings a new set of comments. Mr. McCreary added that the original plan had quite a few issues of concern.

The applicant's traffic design consultant, Mr. Craig Mellott, stated that there were two lanes on Hartzdale, although the right lane ends abruptly. He suggested making that into a right turn lane. He also asserted that most people turning at the intersection were traveling at lower speeds, minimizing the likelihood of accidents. He also addressed the stacking concern and referred to transaction data for a Tommy's Carwash facility in Chambersburg where cars were counted in

February following a winter storm (assumed to be the highest counts) and noted that based on that information, there is adequate room to accommodate stacking.

Mr. McCreary again reiterated the concern about stacking onto Hartzdale as drivers slow down to turn right into the site. Mr. Mellott suggested they could look at adding traffic controls such as painted striping.

Following a brief discussion about the increase in the number of automated carwashes opening in the area, and the related market justifications for such, Mr. Clovsky expressed his opinion that he feels the proliferation of carwashes in the area was unnecessary and not necessarily welcomed in this community.

Mr. Clovsky asked staff about their recommendation on the requested sidewalk waiver. Mr. Knouse referred to the review letter which states that sidewalk and ADA curb ramp need to be provided on the western side of the access drive off Gettysburg Road. The applicant's response letter indicates a waiver request will be submitted to defer the sidewalk at this location. He noted that a written request needs to be provided and noted on the plan.

Public Comments

Mr. Joe Swartz, resident at 1706 Letchworth Road, requested that the traffic study be made available to the public. Mr. Miner directed him to submit a Right To Know Law request for the record. Next, Mr. Swartz referenced earlier discussions about traffic volume and observed no consideration of pedestrian traffic and asked if had been considered, especially considering the planned redevelopment in accordance with the township master plan and Gettysburg Road Corridor plan. The existing intersection is dangerous to pedestrians. He noted the community deserves assurance of safe access through the public spaces.

Mr. Swartz also expressed his opposition to any request for a waiver for ADA sidewalk and crosswalk right-in entrance along Gettysburg Road.

Mr. Logan sought confirmation that the applicant is providing a sidewalk around the entire perimeter. Mr. Knouse affirmed that was the case, except for the small corner of the property where they are seeking a deferment, which is just shy of the property line, and would involve the neighboring property owner to participate in re-grading and contouring.

Action on the Proposed Plan

Mr. LOGAN motioned to approve a waiver of Section 192-30.A. Preliminary Plan, seconded by Install Curb Along Road Frontage, seconded by Mr. WICKENHEISER. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. LOGAN motioned to approve a waiver of Section 192-58.E.10 Parking Lot Planting Islands, seconded by Mr. WICKENHEISER. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. LOGAN motioned to approve a waiver of Section 192-59.C.2 Parking Space Size for space next to planting island, seconded by Mr. WICKENHEISER. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. LOGAN motioned to recommend deferral of the sidewalk in the section identified in the plan, whereby the applicant will be responsible for completing the sidewalk in the future, as the adjoining property is developed, seconded by Mr. WICKENHEISER. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. LOGAN motioned to recommend approval of the revised plan SLD-2023-05, with comments from the Township, County, the waivers and per the condition to incorporate a permanent, independent turning lane on Hartzdale Drive to direct right hand traffic into Tommy's Carwash. The motion was seconded by Mr. WICKENHEISER. The motion carried 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Trone reported there had been no submissions by the due date for August meeting but will likely have at least one plan for September.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM