

## MINUTES

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

### **LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

**November 19, 2024**

**The following were in ATTENDANCE:**

#### **BOARD MEMBERS**

Brett McCreary, President  
Samuel Bashore  
Jay Blackwell  
David Clovsky  
Jeff Logan  
Brian Wickenheiser

#### **TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL**

James Bennett, Township Planner  
Michael Knouse, P.E. Township Engineer  
Isaac Sweeney, Director, Community & Economic  
Development  
Renee' Greenawalt, Recording Secretary

#### **OTHER**

Commissioner Joe Swartz  
Steve Hoffman – Cumberland County Planning Dept.

### **CALL TO ORDER AND PROOF OF PUBLICATION**

Mr. McCreary called the November 19, 2024 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. **BASHORE** moved to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2024 Regular Meeting. Mr. **BLACKWELL** seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **SLD #2024-06 – Arcona Neighborhood 9 Preliminary/Final Minor Subdivision & Land Development Plan**

Mr. Bennett introduced the purpose of the plan, which is to subdivide sixteen single-family residential lots from Lot 9 on Rossmoyne Road as part of the Arcona Master Plan. The proposed plan is in the R-2 Zoning district and Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay.

#### **Applicant Presentation**

Ms. Laura Curran re-summarized the plan and noted that the five waivers sought were commonly requested and had been approved for phase 9 and in the subdivision plan.

#### **Township Comments**

Mr. Knouse referenced the comment letter of November 11, 2024, noting most comments were administrative in nature, including the outstanding Highway Occupancy Permit. The only significant comment under subdivision and land development is that the plan must clearly demonstrate that parking can be accommodated in the proposed driveways without obstruction of the sidewalk, specifically that 18 feet is provided for the driveway from the back of the sidewalk to the front of the unit. Regarding stormwater, comments include creation of a riparian buffer easement, selecting the method of monitoring, and clarification on several lots where the roof leaders must be conveyed to the storm sewer to meet the design intent. Public safety has reviewed the plan to satisfaction.

#### **Commissioner Comments**

Mr. Wickenheiser inquired about the status of the HOP. Ms. Curran noted the scoping meeting had been held. Ms. Curran addressed other questions, noting the size of the homes, on average, were planned to be 4500 square feet and three stories high. The roads will be private and the homes in this area would be incorporated into the Arcona West HOA.

### **Recommendation on the Plan**

Hearing no further discussion, the Planning Commission members addressed the requests for waivers and recommendations on the plan.

Mr. **BASHORE** offered a motion to approve waiver of Section 192-24.C – Submission of a Preliminary Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BLACKWELL** and passed 6-0.

Mr. **WICKENHEISER** motioned to approve Section 192-57.B.(2)[h][2] and 192-57.C.(13)(c)(1) – Additional right-of-way and cartway along the frontage of Rossmoyne Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BASHORE** and passed 6-0.

Mr. **LOGAN** offered a motion to approve waiver of Section 192-57.C.(8) – Curbing along the frontage of Rossmoyne Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BLACKWELL** and passed 6-0.

Mr. **BLACKWELL** offered a motion to approve waiver of Section 192-57.C.(9) – Sidewalk along the frontage of Rossmoyne Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BASHORE** and passed 6-0.

Mr. **BASHORE** offered a motion to approve waiver of Section 192-68.B.(3) – Minimum street centerline radius of 165'. Mr. **WICKENHEISER** seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Mr. **WICKENHEISER** offered a motion to recommend approval of SLD #2024-06 upon satisfactory completion of township and county comments. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BLACKWELL** and passed 6-0.

#### **SLD #2024-10 – Walmart Supercenter #05888-241 Final Land Development Plan**

Mr. Bennett presented the purpose of the plan to expand the existing retail building located at 3400 Hartzdale Drive (Walmart) by approximately 3,057 square feet to facilitate online orders. The proposed plan is in the C-4 Zoning District.

#### **Applicant Presentation**

On behalf of the applicant, the engineer for the project, Mr. Mike Myers, reiterated the purpose of the plan to support the operation of online order pick-ups and noted added parking lot striping to facilitate that purpose. He noted that the intent is to provide space for all online order pick-up to be contained to one area and provide a dedicated indoor staging space for that purpose. He presented a sketch of the plans and briefly reviewed the waivers sought, specifically the waiver from providing sidewalk along Capital City Mall Drive as it does not connect to anything.

#### **Township & County Comments**

Mr. Knouse referenced the comment letter of November 11, 2024, noting the need for notes on the plan reflecting a pending decision by the Zoning Hearing Board related to parking. Most remaining comments were administrative in nature, however significantly under subdivision and land development is the need for review by the Township's traffic engineer to address traffic improvements at the Hartzdale Drive access. Mr. Knouse noted that staff would continue to work with the applicant on their proposed modifications to improve the area. Mr. Hoffman echoed about the need for the addition of notes missing from the plan.

#### **Commissioner Comments**

Mr. Logan inquired about the maintenance of the traffic controls at the Hartzdale Drive access. Mr. Knouse confirmed the signage there has not been maintained. Commissioner Swartz referenced notes on the plan for signage directing to the pick-up area from Hartzdale Drive but none from behind the building and suggested that be added. He also observed that there is pedestrian traffic that occurs in that area that should be taken into consideration.

#### **Public Comment**

Ms. April Knepp, resident at 2490 New York Avenue, asked if there would be a separate entrance for those customers accessing the online pickup area, citing the existing traffic congestion. Mr. Myers indicated the entrance would remain as it is and identified the area specified for online pick-up. Ms. Knepp expressed reservations about the functionality of the proposed parking plan.

#### **Recommendation on the Plan**

Hearing no further discussion, the Planning Commission members addressed the requests for waivers and recommendations on the plan.

Mr. **BLACKWELL** offered a motion to approve the waiver of 192-30.A- Submission of a Preliminary Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. **LOGAN** and passed 6-0.

Mr. **BASHORE** offered a motion to approve waiver of Section 192-57.C.9 – Requirement to provide sidewalk along the Capital City Mall Drive. The motion was seconded by Mr. **LOGAN** and passed 6-0.

Mr. **WICKENHEISER** offered a motion to approve SLD #2024-10 upon satisfactory completion of township and county comments. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BASHORE** and passed 6-0.

#### **SLD #2024-12 – 4107 Rosemont Avenue Final Minor Subdivision Plan**

Mr. Bennett presented the purpose of the plan to consolidate tract 13-24-0799-162 and tract 13-24-0799-259 into 1 lot consisting of 0.37 acres. The proposed plan is in the R-1 Zoning District. No waivers are requested for the plan.

#### **Applicant Presentation**

On behalf of the applicant, the engineer for the project, Mr. Rick Castranio restated the purpose of the plan.

#### **Township & County Comments**

Mr. Knouse referred to the comment letter of November 11, 2024, noting one comment to label an existing shed as non-conforming on the plan, as well as additional labeling under subdivision and land development, and completion of certificates prior to recording of the plan.

#### **Recommendation on the Plan**

Hearing no further discussion, the Planning Commission members offered their recommendation on the plan.

Mr. **BLACKWELL** offered a motion to approve SLD #2024-12 upon satisfactory completion of township and county comments. The motion was seconded by Mr. **BASHORE** and passed 6-0.

#### **SLD #2024-11 – Sheetz – Camp Hill (PA) Hartzdale Preliminary/Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan**

Mr. Bennett presented the purpose of the plan to consolidate two existing lots into one lot, demolish the existing buildings and construct a gas station/convenience store located at 2501 Gettysburg Road. The proposed plan is in the C-2 Zoning District.

#### **Applicant Presentation**

Mr. Sean Delaney, representing Stevens and Lee, and Mr. Josh Weidler, representing BL Companies, presented renderings of the plan, to be located at the existing sites of Batteries Plus and the RV storage lot next to it. They identified existing access points for the proposed 4900-square-foot property consisting of twelve fuel stations, 42 parking spaces and a drive-through. He noted the intent to maintain an existing easement connecting the property with the Christmas Tree Hill parking lot. Mr. Weidler also highlighted features of the plan including the landscaping plan, existing buffer along the existing lot and Lebanon Avenue. He noted that one of the waivers is for installation of sidewalk along this existing buffer. Other aspects of the plan include a small rain garden area to support water quality and volume control.

#### **Township & County Comments**

Mr. Knouse referred to the comment letter of November 15, 2024, and first reviewed the waivers. Then, under zoning he noted the need for provision of the shared parking and maintenance agreement and a revised, traffic circulation turning template since the one provided encroaches the opposing travel lane in Hartzdale Drive. Next, under subdivision and land development, he addressed several administrative items such as certificates, cost estimates for financial guarantee, a clear indication of the sight distances at each of the access drives, traffic impact study responses, and outside water and sewer approvals. Under stormwater he indicated the need for evidence of E&S approval and NPDES permit, and a few minor clarifications.

Mr. Hoffman from the Cumberland County Planning Commission requested a review of the landscape plan, noting

potential interference for trees with the overhead power lines. Mr. Weidler indicated some changes to the plan to address that concern.

### **Commissioner Comments**

Mr. Bashore asked the applicant to address the need for a revised turning template. Mr. Weidler noted they would revise the plan such that there would not be interference with the oncoming traffic. He noted that primary access to fuel trucks would be the southern entrance.

Mr. McCreary expressed a preference to avoid any traffic onto Lebanon Avenue. He asked about the anticipated traffic flow. Mr. Eric Mountz with Traffic Planning and Design addressed the question. He discussed details of the traffic study and noted that all comments related to the traffic study had been addressed. He stated that there would be some level of traffic using the Lebanon Avenue access, but that it would have minimal impact on residents. He also indicated that through traffic seemed unlikely to occur. Providing estimated traffic counts based on ordinance and the PennDOT criteria, he reported an expected 100 new trips per hour during peak hours (50 cars entering, 50 exiting).

Mr. Logan asked if alcohol would be available at the location. Mr. David Smith, representing Sheetz, noted they did not yet have a liquor license but would attempt to get one.

Mr. Logan asked about the impact on traffic flow without the driveway at Lebanon Avenue. Mr. Mountz replied that access would ease traffic from the signal at Hartzdale Drive and would help get drivers immediately to the fuel pumps, reducing internal circulation.

Providing information on the current traffic volumes at Lebanon Avenue, Nina Avenue and current access to the site, total volumes are 20-35 trips per hour during the peak.

Mr. Wickenheiser asked where the two lanes would begin going out to Gettysburg Road. Mr. Mountz showed it would be extended about 225 feet back to the southern end driveway to accommodate queuing.

Members noted the current common practice of illegal turning movements at the nearby Walmart access from Hartzdale Drive and expressed concern about the same occurring at this proposed site.

Commissioner Swartz expressed concern about the proposed redevelopment use being inconsistent with the Township Comprehensive Plan, acknowledging that the zoning code is currently undergoing an update, and that this is not the sort of redevelopment envisioned for this area.

### **Public Comments**

Mr. Allen Spurgeon, resident at 2416 New York Avenue, 2414 Avenue, 2407 Gettysburg Rd and another business on Gettysburg Road, expressed concern over the impact that traffic from the site to Lebanon Avenue will have on the neighborhood. He also noted that the existing tree line is thin, ineffectively blocking noise and light, which would disturb the peace and serenity of residents. He requested consideration be given to the installation of a sound barrier between the property and the neighborhood. He also expressed concern about additional traffic on top of the existing traffic from Walmart and the Capital City Mall. He provided a document containing signatures from 58 residents and businesses that would be negatively impacted.

Mr. McCreary asked if Sheetz had approached the neighborhood residents for any discussion or feedback about the proposed plan. Mr. Spurgeon indicated he had not been approached. Many other audience members expressed the same.

Dr. Maryann Bova, resident at 2417 New York Avenue, concurred with Mr. Spurgeon and expressed her support for a sound barrier and no access to Lebanon Avenue, noting the significantly negative impact that backed up traffic on Lebanon Avenue or Schuylkill would have on residents.

Ms. Janelle Acri, resident at 2410 Massachusetts Avenue noted unease with the anticipated traffic that would back up on Gettysburg Road with cars trying to turn left into the property, noting the existing back up to turn into the two existing access points into the neighborhood. She also expressed apprehension about safety with many children who traverse the

currently peaceful, quiet neighborhood and community on foot and on bikes.

Ms. Bonnie Sunday, who lives at 2408 Massachusetts Avenue, expressed concern about the likelihood of decreased property value as well as safety concerns related to traffic and patron activity associated with a Sheetz.

Mr. Maynard Castel, resident at 2415 New York Avenue, noted that there were no sidewalks or curbs in the neighborhood, so pedestrians walk in the street, and existing properties are at street level. Additionally, he highlighted the significance of the traffic during the peak shopping season.

Ms. Suzanne Mahrady, resident at 100 Lebanon Avenue, noted hers was the only home located on that street and that her family would be negatively affected by the traffic and light pollution, as well as increased danger to her autistic son.

Mr. Ron Sisti, resident at 21 Santa Maria Avenue expressed appreciation for his private, secure, and quiet neighborhood and asked commissioners to make a decision that would protect the privacy and serenity of their homes. He noted the three existing nearby Sheetz and questioned the need for another one so close in proximity.

Ms. April Knepp, 2409 New York Avenue, owner of the hair salon along Gettysburg Road, stated what she interpreted to be inconsistencies with what had been presented by the applicant regarding utilization of Lebanon Avenue. She noted the unlikely ability of a tractor trailer turning right out of that street and expressed concern about light, noise, and safety.

Ms. Emily Hasler, 2310 New York Avenue explained the existence of current through traffic, noting drivers use their driveway to turn around and are concerned about additional traffic to avoid the light at the intersection.

Following public comment, Mr. McCreary asked if the applicant would consider removing access via Lebanon Avenue from the proposed plan. Commissioner Swartz also noted his support for that idea. Mr. Mountz shared an aerial photograph of the neighborhood to demonstrate the access points to the neighborhood and reiterated his belief in the benefits of having that access and that not having it would be detrimental.

Mr. McCreary asserted his belief that excess through traffic would occur with the access to Lebanon Avenue.

Mr. Clovsky expressed concern for the residents and noted displeasure about the lack of goodwill being extended to them by the applicant. He indicated that he would not support the project as it currently stands.

Mr. Smith affirmed his commitment to engage with residents to address concerns and noted that all the issues raised would be evaluated and considered for changes and adjustments made where possible.

Mr. Hoffman indicated that he agreed with the concerns but also noted that if the project was proposed without access via Lebanon Avenue, emergency services may have an accessibility concern for apparatus.

Mr. Spurgeon noted that he did reach out to Sheetz Corporate about ten days ago and was given a case number, but he had not received a return call yet.

Commissioner Swartz encouraged the applicant to try to work with the residents to find creative solutions. Also, for the benefit of the public, he explained that the Planning Commission is charged with making a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners on whether to accept the plan. He expressed appreciation to all the residents for taking the opportunity to express their concerns and to provide feedback.

Mr. **WICKENHEISER** made a motion to table SLD #2024-11 pending further discussion between Sheetz, the residents and township staff. Mr. **BASHORE** seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Discussion of the 2025 Planning Commission meeting dates**

Mr. Bennett introduced the issue for discussion. Members agreed to the proposed dates and kept the meeting time at 7 pm.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Mr. McCreary announced that the next meeting was scheduled for December 19, 2024.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 PM.