

The stated Working Session of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Thursday, January 9, 2025 via webinar and in-person at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with President Hecker presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 8:27 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners BRODSKY, ROTHMAN, DiPLACIDO, LANEY-MARTIN, BROWNE, WINEGRAD, HENRY, ZAPPONE, YOUNG-GERTZ, SPIEGELMAN, BOLE, SCHREIBER, BOWMAN, VAHEY, HECKER

Also Present: Township Manager Christman
Assistant Legal Counsel Gallagher

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

President Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Vice President Vahey to approve the minutes from the Working Session of November 14, 2024.

MOTION was ADOPTED 15-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation of the Preliminary Major Subdivision and Land Development for LD-22-01 DJS Associates located at 1603 & 1617 Old York Road:

Mr. Eric Clase, Project Engineer representing the applicant, said DJS is an existing business that performs traffic forensics, and the property is located on Butler Avenue, Old York Road, and Hamilton Avenue. They previously tore down a building on the Butler Avenue side of the property, and two lots will be combined for an addition to be constructed that will consist of office space, storage and additional parking spaces totaling approximately 41,000 sq. ft. in the MS-High Density Zoning District.

The applicant appeared before the Zoning Hearing Board and was granted variances with conditions, and the applicant will meet those conditions. Also, the applicant is requesting five waivers and will comply with all items as listed in the Township's professional consultant's review letters.

Waivers requested by the applicant –

Property Identification Plan - the applicant used aerial photography, so a partial waiver is requested.

Existing Features Plan - the applicant used aerial photography, so a partial waiver is requested.

Off-Street Parking Spaces – parking spaces are typically 10X20 and the existing spaces onsite are 10X18, so a partial waiver is requested to continue with the existing size of the parking spaces.

Erosion & Sediment Control Requirements – any slope onsite that is steeper than 15% requires a waiver. To tie the proposed building expansion along Butler Avenue to the sidewalk, the slope had to be made steeper. The sidewalk is not for pedestrians, it is to tie the existing earth into the existing grade, and it exceeds 15%, so the waiver is to allow a steeper slope.

The applicant removed a waiver request during the Planning Commission meeting regarding stormwater requirements showing existing features and the applicant will provide it, so no waiver is being requested.

Preliminary/Final Plan Approval – the applicant is requesting a waiver for the plan to be approved as preliminary as final.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Young-Gertz said she has concern about drainage onto Rt. 611 and permeability.

Mr. Clase replied we will be capturing all stormwater runoff onsite by taking it to a detention basin.

Commissioner Young-Gertz asked for the number of additional parking spaces.

Mr. Clase replied we are adding eight parking spaces, three internal to the building, so there will be 11 additional spaces.

Commissioner Young-Gertz questioned whether the stonewall in front of the property will remain onsite.

Mr. Clase replied yes, there will be a wall along the frontage of the property as part of the building.

Mr. Khal Hassan, Township Engineer, said this proposal was previously reviewed back in April 2022 at various levels, and in April 2024, the applicant appeared before the Zoning Hearing Board and received variances with conditions. On December 18, 2024, the applicant appeared before the Township's Planning Commission who recommended approval of the application.

The applicant provided an updated waiver request list, and initially, there was a waiver request from the ERSAM requirement relating to stormwater, but the applicant removed that waiver and will be in full compliance as they submitted a full design of the stormwater management facility.

The other waiver requests are standard. This is a small project, and we have ample existing information for the site, so aerial photography suffices. The existing parking spaces are 10X18 and the proposed spaces will be the same, which is an acceptable practice. Also, he has no issue with the waiver from Erosion & Sediment Control requirements as the stormwater design associated with the project is adequate and addresses any potential issues related to stormwater. The site is self-contained, and the design will operate as intended.

This is the second review of the project, and it is ready to move forward. The applicant will need to address any outstanding comments before recording the plan.

President Hecker clarified that Township Engineer supports the plan to be designated as preliminary/final plan. Is that correct?

Mr. Hassan replied yes, he supports the waiver as it is a small project.

President Hecker said this will move forward for final consideration at an upcoming voting meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

President Hecker asked for any public comment.

Adele Kubel, resident, commented that they do a nice job with their maintenance.

Lora Lehmann, resident, commented that she does not believe they had a right to receive the variances granted by the Zoning Hearing Board.

President Hecker replied we have no jurisdiction over the Zoning Hearing Board, and they have ruled.

Ms. Lehmann asked for a place at the ZHB where we can talk about the process before and after the meeting and that should be up to this Board to set those rules.

President Hecker replied it is not. Our job as it relates to the Zoning Hearing Board is to appoint members to serve on their Board, and they are an independent agency with their own solicitor. We do not have jurisdiction over their rules of procedures.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary