

The stated meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, December 18, 2024 via webinar and in-person at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with Mr. Brown presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: BROWN, BAKER, STRACKHOUSE,
WEATHERLY
Excused: DICELLO, ROBINSON, GOLDSTONE

Also Present: Township Engineer Lee
County Planner Narcowich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Weatherly made a MOTION, seconded by Ms. Strackhouse to approve the Planning Commission Meeting minutes from October 22, 2024.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

PRESENTATION: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

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

Mr. Brown said the Planning Commission has seen this proposal back in 2022; however, the applicant's current proposal is the consolidation of two existing parcels (1603 & 1617 Old York Road) yielding a total area of 41,451 sq. ft., and lot consolidation of the two parcels would create a triple-frontage lot.

The applicant plans on demolishing the existing brick masonry building located at 1617 Old York Road to construct a new 2,460 sq. ft. two-story building addition with an enclosed link connection to the existing parent building of 1603 Old York Road as well as constructing a parking area location below and adjacent to the new building along with new curbing, sidewalk and walkways; retaining walls; landscaping; and stormwater management. The new building addition is proposed to continue being serviced by public water and sewer.

Mr. John McShea, Attorney representing the applicant, said the Zoning Hearing Board granted variances for the project to allow the reduction of the minimum green area requirement; allow smaller windows on the ground floor facing Butler Avenue; allow 11 off-street parking spaces where are 18 are required; and allow an HVAC unit to exist within the front yard of the consolidated property.

Township's consultants and staff have reviewed the current plan and issued review letters.

Mr. Eric Clase, PE, representing the applicant, said the existing lots proposed to be consolidated total approximately 41,000 sq. ft. and a building addition of 2,460 sq. ft. The Township's Fire Marshal, Director of Wastewater Utilities Department and Traffic Engineer had no comments. Also, the Township Engineer provided a review letter, and other than the waiver requests, the applicant will comply with all comments as listed.

Mr. Brown clarified that the two remaining items listed in the Township Engineer's review letter relate to stormwater infiltration testing and fire truck circulation. Is that correct?

Ms. Allison Lee replied yes, the applicant is working on those items.

Waivers requested by the applicant:

Property Identification Plan – The applicant is requesting a partial waiver to permit an aerial photograph plan with a 400 ft. distance and the abutting property owner information shown on the plan.

Existing Features Plan – The applicant has provided an aerial photo plan with a 400 ft. distance boundary line from the site, parcel lot lines, and block-unit numbers shown on the aerial plan. The applicant is requesting a partial waiver to permit an aerial photograph plan with a 400 ft. distance and the abutting property owner information shown on the plan.

Off-Street Parking Areas – The applicant is proposing the new parking spaces be ten (10) ft. wide by eighteen (18) ft. long, which is less than the required twenty (20) ft. length requirement. The applicant is also delineating an approximately 21.60 ft. two (2)-way aisle width adjacent the Butler Avenue access driveway, which is less than the required minimum twenty-four (24) ft. wide aisleway.

The applicant is requesting a waiver to allow for the proposed off-street parking spaces to be 10' wide x 18' long as opposed to the 10' wide x 20' long off-street parking space requirement to match the existing off-street parking space dimensions onsite.

Erosion and Sediment Control Plan – The applicant is proposing to regrade along the Butler Avenue site frontage that currently has a stone retaining wall and existing 25% slopes near the current driveway area to proposed 33% slopes.

The applicant is requesting a waiver to allow for proposed slopes of 33% for the proposed grading located along the Butler Avenue site frontage, which exceeds the required 15% slopes for cut and fill slopes. The applicant is requesting a waiver to allow for proposed slopes of 33% for the proposed grading located along the Butler Avenue site frontage, which exceeds the required 15% slopes for cut and fill slopes.

Stormwater Site Plan Requirements – The applicant has provided an existing condition plan for the site. The applicant is requesting a partial waiver to not provide an existing resources and site analysis map (ERSAM) due to the size and scope of the project and there are no environmentally sensitive areas nor wetlands currently existing within the site.

Mr. Brown asked the applicant to provide an updated overview of the plan along with any changes that may have occurred since originally presented.

Mr. Clase replied most of the work will be done on the north side of the site, which is on the Butler Avenue side. There will be three parking spaces within the proposed structure and outdoor parking spaces adjacent to it, and on the street side of the building, there will be an underground stormwater detention basin. It is a small building addition tying it into an existing site and an existing building.

Mr. Brown asked for any comments from members of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Weatherly asked for the location of the steep slopes.

Mr. Clase replied they are on the north side of the building.

Mr. Brown asked about the flow of vehicular traffic through the site.

Mr. Clase replied it will be full flow from both access drives, which is an existing condition, and there is not much traffic onsite.

Mr. Brown clarified that there were conditions of the variances granted by the Zoning Hearing Board, noting there is some availability for off-street parking spaces nearby. Is that correct?

Mr. Clase replied that is correct. Along Hamilton Avenue, there is a property (not shown on the plan) that has a number of parking spaces, and those spaces have to remain per relief granted by the ZHB or the applicant will lose their approval.

Mr. Baker questioned whether there will be enough parking for employees and clients.

Mr. Justin Schorr, DJS Associates, replied yes. The proposed building is a garage, and we would be adding three parking spaces to this building.

Mr. Baker asked what will the garage be used for?

Mr. Schorr replied to park three field vehicles.

Mr. Narcowich questioned whether there will be a designated place for loading/unloading vehicles.

Mr. Schorr replied there is no loading/unloading, just deliveries.

Mr. Narcowich asked will the applicant provide street furniture and benches.

Mr. Schorr replied yes, per the ordinance.

Mr. Baker asked is there a photo showing the size of the HVAC unit.

Mr. Clase replied no; however, the HVAC unit will be buffered with plantings, so it will not be visible.

Mr. Brown clarified that the applicant is seeking preliminary approval on the application. Is that correct?

Mr. McShea replied the applicant is seeking preliminary as final approval of the plan as we have appeared before the Planning Commission previously and were granted relief from the Zoning Hearing Board.

Ms. Allison Lee asked the applicant to provide an updated waivers request letter to include a waiver from the land development stages.

Mr. McShea asked for that waiver to be included in the plan as presented tonight.

Ms. Allison Lee noted that is a waiver from Section 146-9 – Land Development Plan Stages.

Mr. Weatherly questioned whether the partial waiver from providing an ERSAM is generally accepted by the Township Engineer.

Ms. Allison Lee replied this is the first we have seen where the ERSAM is requested to be waived. Typically, we advise the applicant to prepare it as an existing conditions plan/ERSAM and put a note on the plan that there are no environmentally sensitive areas or steep slopes onsite, and that would comply.

Mr. Weatherly suggested the applicant revise the existing features plan into an ERSAM, so the information is noted on the plan.

Ms. Allison Lee continued that it will be an Existing Conditions Plan/ERSAM, and the applicant should add the notes.

The applicant will comply.

Mr. Brown asked for any public comment. There were none.

Mr. Brown clarified that waivers requested by the applicant are from Existing Features Plan; Off-Street Parking Areas – being of the required size; Property Identification Plan; Erosion & Sediment Control Requirements; also, waiver from Stormwater Site Requirements section will be removed and an ERSAM will be provided adding notes to the plan; and for the plan to be approved as preliminary as final.

Ms. Strackhouse made a MOTION, seconded by Mr. Baker to recommend approval of the preliminary as final major subdivision and land development plan for DJS Associates located at 1603 & 1617 Old York Road including the waiver requests as listed.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Mr. Brown announced that this is our last meeting for 2024, and Ms. Lucy Strackhouse's term expires after tonight. He thanked Lucy for her many years of dedicated service and wished her well in her retirement as a member of the Planning Commission.

Ms. Strackhouse thanked Township staff and Mr. Mike Narcowich for all their help as well as Ms. Liz Vile for her amazing minutes. She wished "Good Luck" to the members of the Planning Commission hoping all their meetings go well in the future. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary