



UPPER MACUNGIE TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

May 15, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Charles Deprill and asked all present to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Deprill, Chairman; Paul McNemar, Vice-Chairman; Mike Werst, Ray Boronyak, and Haikeem Nelson, Members. Absent – Chris Walls, Secretary and Commissioner Timothy Helmer.

STAFF PRESENT: Kalman Sostarecz, Asst. Township Manager/Director of Community Development; Meredith Keller, Township Planner; Dave Alban, Township Engineer; Jonathan Kiechel, Keystone Consulting Engineers; Andrew Schantz, Township Solicitor.

II. MINUTES

Commissioner Boronyak moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 17, 2024. Seconded by Commissioner Werst. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Mr. Sostarecz reported that there were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

IV. MPC TIMELINE REVIEW

Chairman Deprill asked if any action was necessary of the Planning Commission regarding active MPC Timelines on applications. Mr. Sostarecz noted that no action was necessary.

V. PLAN REVIEW

- A. Docket #2344 – Americold Expansion – 7150 Ambassador Drive, Final Land Development Plan** – The applicant is proposing an expansion of their existing facility by 326,842 square feet along with associated site improvements such as parking and stormwater facilities. The site is located within the Township’s LI – Light Industrial Parking Zoning District.

Fidel Gonzalez, P.E. of Langan Engineering, stated that he will comply with the review letter and revise the plans accordingly. Chairman Deprill inquired about the specifications of the proposed wall. Consulting sound engineer Ben Mueller explained that a sound study was completed as part of due diligence and showed that there was no need for the sound wall owing to the expansion. He noted that the addition is farther from residences and added that Americold agreed to the wall to provide some mitigation from the expansion after conversations with neighbors. He clarified that the wall will be 12 feet high and 170 linear feet and will be composed of I beams with horizontal stacked tongue and groove slats made of PVC or painted aluminum.

Vice-Chairman McNamar asked how the height was determined. Mr. Mueller stated that the 12-foot height aligns with truck and noise sources, adding that the trucks’ exhaust stacks are not a primary contributor of noise on site.

Vice-Chairman McNemar inquired about NPDES approval. Mr. Gonzalez replied they are at the end of technical review.

No public comment.

Motion by Vice-Chairman McNemar to recommend that Docket #2344, Americold Expansion, 7150 Ambassador Drive, Final Land Development Plan, be approved, conditioned on the comments of the staff and Township Engineer’s review letters. Seconded by Commissioner Boronyak. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

- B. Docket #2338 – Twin Ponds, Preliminary/Final Land Development, 8739 Hamilton Blvd** – The applicant is proposing to construct 132 residential apartment units within 22 buildings and a daycare facility utilizing the Township’s Mixed-Use Zoning Overlay. The project is located within the Township’s NC – Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District.

Mark Danek, Esq. of Obermayer Rebmann Maxwell & Hippel LLP, Jeff Strauss of D. R. Horton, and engineer Jake Pickering, P.E. of Bohler Engineering, represented the application. Mr. Strauss stated that he would comply with the comment letters.

Mr. Danek provided an overview of the waiver requests and deferrals. Vice-Chairman McNemar inquired about the status of outside agency approvals. Mr. Strauss responded that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission reviewed and approved the plan and that the project is in technical review for the NPDES permit.

Regarding Waiver 12, Mr. McNemar suggested that the Planning Commission request that the fee in lieu of funds be directed toward the installation of trees at Earl Adams Memorial Park or the Breinig Run stream preservation area located across Hamilton Boulevard from the site. He asked that the funds benefit the immediate area rather than improving other parts of the Township.

No public comment.

Motion by Vice-Chairman McNemar to recommend that Waivers 1 through 10 be approved and that Waiver 12 be approved, with the recommendation that the fee in lieu of funds get allocated to the adjacent Township-owned Earl Adams Memorial Park or the Breinig Run stream preservation area across Hamilton Boulevard. Seconded by Commissioner Werst. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Vice-Chairman McNemar to recommend that Deferral 11 be approved, with the recommendation that the deferral include the sidewalk on the west side of Twin Ponds Road south of the proposed road (Lilly Lane), and with the requirement that sidewalk be installed on the west side of Twin Ponds Road north of the proposed road (Lilly Lane) and extend to the northern property line. Seconded by Commissioner Nelson. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Motion by Vice-Chairman McNemar to recommend that Docket #2338, Twin Ponds, 8739 Hamilton Boulevard, Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, be approved, conditioned on the comments of the staff and Township Engineer’s review letters. Seconded by Commissioner Boronyak. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

- Docket #2363 – Eastern Lift Truck Building Addition, Preliminary/Final Land Development, 7050 Snowdrift Road** – The applicant is proposing construction of a 29,800 square foot addition to their existing facility and associated site improvements including parking, sidewalks, and stormwater management facilities. The project is located within the Township’s LI – Light Industrial Zoning District.

Joshua George, P.E. of Landworks Civil Design, stated that he still needs to obtain outside agency approvals, adding that the waiver regarding curbing inside the site will be withdrawn since the applicant will provide curbing at potentially all areas inside the site. The waiver requests from the landscaping requirements, he continued, are needed because of I-78 to the south, existing easements to the east and west, as well as existing development and a fire easement to the north. He noted that he will include a deferral in the resubmission that will request to defer the installation of a pedestrian path from Snowdrift Road to the site and added that he will work through the remaining zoning and fire issues over the next few months with township staff.

No action was taken.

Docket #2347 – 110 PA Route 100 Warehouse, Preliminary Land Development, 110 PA Route 100 – The applicant is proposing the construction of a 150,400 square foot warehouse building and associated site improvements including parking and stormwater facilities. The project is located within the Township’s LI – Light Industrial Zoning District.

Vice-Chairman McNemar recused himself, owing to his work with the developer in an adjoining municipality and excused himself from the meeting.

Dan Rowley, Esq. of Saul Ewing, Jennifer Guckin of Prologis, and David Wilson, P.E. of Colliers Engineering, represented the application. Mr. Rowley stated that the application included three waiver requests, though only one will remain since two have been identified as not required.

Mr. Wilson identified areas currently curbed on Route 100 and Schantz Road and clarified that the waiver request has been submitted, because both are state roads under PennDOT jurisdiction, and he does not want to alter drainage patterns. Mr. Alban countered that the sidewalk would be installed close to the roads and that the curbing would create some separation between traffic and pedestrians. Mr. Sostarecz noted that this property would be the only section from I-78 to Industrial Boulevard that would not have curbing.

Chairman Deprill inquired whether the tree at the corner of Route 100 and Schantz Road is a heritage tree and asked that it be retained. He then questioned whether there would be two guardhouses. Mr. Wilson responded that the intent is to retain a single tenant and that there is no initial proposal for gates or guardhouses. He added that the Zoning Hearing Board required that if a guardhouse is installed that it would need to be offset 250 feet from the shared private access with the hotel to eliminate stacking issues. Ms. Guckin explained that, while the plans show two offices, the plans are conceptual, and the interior space has not yet been determined. She added that the intent is for a single tenant.

Chairman Deprill identified several concerns including truck traffic crossing without a median and asked if the median could be extended to the school. Mr. Rowley responded that it could be considered. Mr. Wilson noted that they intend to extend the concrete island along Industrial Boulevard.

Mr. Sostarecz stated that one condition of the Zoning Hearing Board is to not have dock doors fronting the roads and to design the building so it does not have a warehouse appearance. He asked that the design be as attractive as possible along the two street frontages.

Mr. Wilson noted that he has met with LCCD and is working through infiltration and stormwater comments and that he must resubmit the application to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

No action was taken.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. South Whitehall Township Act 537 Plan Update

Mr. Sostarecz introduced the South Whitehall Township Act 537 Plan Update, noting that no action was required from the Planning Commission and that it was for review only. He added that the Board of Supervisors will pass a resolution on the plan at the June 6 meeting and noted that KCE provided a brief review letter. Mr. Alban commented that the update will formalize the transfer of the sewer system from South Whitehall Township Authority to South Whitehall Township.

No public comment.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no additional public comment.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Werst moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Nelson. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).