

Springfield Township Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes November 2, 2016

Chairperson Bobb Carson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with Jay Fuggiti, Scott Douglas, Bruce Fritchman, Steve Smith, Curt Reiss and Karen Bedics present. Solicitor Scott MacNair and Engineer Bob Wynn were present to advise.

Motion by Scott Douglass, seconded by Jay Fuggiti, to approve the September 7th minutes. All in favor. Motion carries.

Motion by Steve Smith, seconded by Karen Bedics, to approve the October 5th minutes. All in favor. Motion carries.

Reiss Hauling and Recycling Sketch Plan—The applicant was present and represented by Jim Sher, Esq and Gary Kraft, PE. The applicant seeks zoning approval to establish a trash transfer station on TMP 42-10-4 (1154 Passer Road), currently the site of the applicant's non-conforming trash hauling business. The applicant has a leasehold area within the larger 10 acre lot from where the trash hauling business is operated. The single family detached dwelling on the property is now used as office space for 3-4 people. The various accessory buildings on the property are used as storage and maintenance space for the business. The applicant's predecessor built a structure in 1986 that was intended by the owner for use as a trash transfer point. The design of the building supports that conclusion. The Township has a building permit application for a "pole barn" for the structure. The Township has a record of at least one inspection of the structure contemporaneous to its construction. The owner at the time never continued with the process of obtaining zoning approval or a DEP permit for a trash transfer station, and never utilized the building in that capacity. To obtain a DEP permit an applicant must demonstrate municipal zoning approval.

Establishing a permitted trash transfer station would allow the applicant's current service vehicles to return to the site and transfer loads to a larger transfer trailer for transport to a landfill. The service vehicles currently make runs to the landfill directly from their routes or directly from the business site. Operating the transfer station would add 2 trucks, and 4 transfer trailers and a part-time driver to the business. The applicant would also add a vehicle scale and redesign (enlarge) the driveway entrance on Passer Road. The applicant proposes to remove a secondary driveway from Passer Road located west of the main drive. The applicant proposes to reconfigure internal parking and storage so as to allow safe operation of the larger transfer trailers.

The Commission had general comments and comments specific to the Township Engineer's review letter dated October 28, 2016.

- The Commission would like to see confirmation from the land owner that there's approval of the Lessee's application.
- The path to zoning approval will require a special exception from the Zoning Hearing Board and the Commission will make an appropriate recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on the Township's position.

- Because of its non-conforming status, the Commission’s primary concern is keeping future expansion of the business—either in land area or intensity of use—from becoming overwhelming to the surrounding area. The Commission discussed various metrics of measuring compliance such as total tonnage processed, total cubic yards processed or vehicle trips generated. The applicant expressed willingness to accept a condition that caps the land area in use to the current leasehold. The applicant expressed willingness to accept other conditions that would constrain the intensity of use. There was no conclusion as to the proper metric.
- There are currently no stormwater controls on the property, and it’s unclear what the net change in impervious will be until the applicant conducts more engineering study. It’s possible the project might qualify for a waiver based on lot size. The applicant expressed willingness to create a stormwater control to address current conditions, but wished to investigate what that might entail.
- There is currently no leachate control or processing on the property, which is a zoning requirement. The applicant is willing to meet this condition but is unsure what will be required physically.
- The Commission was split on whether the applicant could satisfy sewage requirements by utilizing porta-johns. The office staff uses the system built with the single family dwelling. The occupant load isn’t any greater than that of a family. The drivers use a porta-john before leaving on their routes and upon return. The Commission will need to reach a decision on this point.
- The applicant is generally willing to comply with the technical comments in the Township Engineer’s review letter. The applicant has not yet decided whether he will ask for waiver from land development.

The applicant will apply for a Special Exception and appear before the Planning Commission again prior to the hearing. No action taken.

Codification issues (animal regulations)—The Commission continued its discussion of animal density and regulations.

- Use 404.A.5 Intensive Agriculture—the Commission opted to rename this use “Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation” and defer the permitting to DEP. The Commission kept the building setback distances in the current regulations and kept the current lot minimum of 25 acres.
- Use 404.A.1 Agriculture—the Commission confirmed the regulations should change to limit animal density to .5 AEU/acre unless a property owner was authorized greater density by virtue of having an approved plan from the NRCS. It reduced the setback for an animal shelter to 50’ to align with the requirements for H5 uses.
- Use 404.H.5 Residential Accessory animals—the Commission agreed to regulate this use by animal headcount rather than AEU. It agreed to delete the requirement to exclude the restriction on woodland and wetland from lot size computation. It agreed to a minimum lot size of .5 acres for poultry of any kind, with a maximum density of 25 poults/acre. It agreed to a minimum lot size of 2 acres for 1 horse or cow, with 1 acre required for each additional animal. It agreed to a minimum lot size of 1 acre for sheep, goats or pigs. Ms. Bedics will propose some method of exempting miniaturized versions of larger animals that are domestic pets.

- Use 404.A.6 Kennels—the Commission agreed to remove the building soundproofing requirement in favor of the noise limitations at the lot line as detailed in Section 507.B. It left the minimum setback distances for buildings as is. Ms. Bedics will propose a method to align animal density to the state’s licensing requirements.
- Use 404.A.8 Riding /Board Stable—the Commission agreed to make allowable animal density consistent with use A1. It agreed the use should be removed from the VC, VR and DD zoning districts. Ms. Bedics will investigate what kind of regulations might be needed when this use also includes the impact from horse competitions and shows.

Codification Issues (historic resource regulations)—Steve Smith distributed a first draft of potential revisions and indicated he was getting information on how to manage “demolition by neglect.”

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Brown
Township Manager