



MIDDLE SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
May 28, 2020

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 5:30pm using the ZOOM internet application, due to the national COVID-19 pandemic emergency with Bob Early presiding.

Planning Commission members present: Bob Early, Parin Shah, Wayne Bolt, Mark Oney, Nick Theofilos and Alternate Member Carrie Wetherbee. Also, in attendance, Planning Commission Solicitor Deborah Huffman, Esq., Township Engineer Chris McDermott, P.E. and Planning Commission Recording Secretary Holly Freese.

Plan Presenters in Attendance: Deanna Schmoyer, P.E. from D&D Engineering on behalf of Winds West, Inc. Bruce Hagendorn, Brad Hagendorn and Jesse Hagendorn from Winds West, Inc.

A Public Notice was posted on the township's website, www.middlesmithfieldtownship.com, and Facebook page that anyone interested in participating in the public meeting to email the Recording Secretary hfreese@mstownship.com and a Zoom meeting link or teleconference phone number would be provided to them. No one from the public attended.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Wayne Bolt made a motion to approve the April 23, 2020 minutes. Parin Shah seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Announcements

None

Plan Submittals

None

Plan Reviews and Unfinished Business

Minor Subdivision and Lot Consolidation Plan of Lands of Demonstrated Estates, LLC.- Frank Smith Jr. submitted a letter requesting the plan be tabled until the June 25, 2020 meeting in order to address the comments in the review letter dated May 27, 2020.

Chris McDermott, P.E. stated that the main concern is access to the property. Neither of the lots have frontage and there are currently unconstructed right-of-way's to the property. The property owner will need to construct private access to the lot. There was an easement

agreement that was given to the previous owner that has very specific restrictions. Attorney Deborah Huffman will look at the agreement before the June meeting.

The applicant is asking for a non-building waiver, which Mr. McDermott is okay with.

Parin Shah made a motion to table the plan until the June 25, 2020 meeting. Wayne Bolt seconded the plan. Motion passed 5-0.

Other Reviews and/or Recommendations

Conditional Use Application- West Winds Inc., Storage Facility (Intersection of Big Ridge Dr. & SR 209)- Deanna Schmoyer P.E. from D&D Engineering presented the proposed plans for the self storage facility located at the intersection of Big Ridge Dr and Milford Rd. (SR 209.)

There will be two buildings, three stories, 10,000 square feet each, and measure approximately 62.5' wide by 160' long. The property is 5.9 acres and there would be approximately 2 acres of earth disturbance. Everything will be housed within the buildings, and there will be no outdoor storage for boats, RVs, U-Hauls, etc. Office hours of operation will most likely be Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm, Saturday 9 am to 4 pm, Sunday to be determined. Existing customers will be allowed 24-hour access and entry will be via pin code. Explosives and toxic substances are prohibited and will be enforced. The buildings will contain an elevator and one of the buildings will be climate controlled. The buildings will be earth tone colors to blend in with surroundings.

Christopher McDermott, P.E., provided a review letter discussing design, location and traffic, which Ms. Schmoyer addressed.

Ms. Schmoyer stated the Frank Smith Jr. Inc., did the property survey, and there does not seem to be any restrictions on the deed review. An appraisal letter of the property will be available for the Conditional Use Hearing.

Stormwater will be managed by permeable pavement. Ms. Schmoyer stated there are a lot of wetland buffers on this property.

Met-ED also will be contacted in regards to power.

A solid fence and vegetation will be on the Western property line. Short shrubs and trees along with a white vinyl fence will serve as a buffer in front of the building. Vegetation needs to be low due to powerlines along the roadway. Mr. McDermott is concerned about the property to the East of the property and whether its residential or not. Ms. Schmoyer stated that she believes it is apartments. Mark Oney stated that they are rentals that were converted years ago. The applicant might need a zoning determination letter for the neighboring property to determine what kind of buffer is needed on that side of the property.

Traffic patterns were pulled from ITE Manual, which shows about 75 vehicles per day based on square footage. The entrance to the facility will be off of Big Ridge Dr., after where the concrete medium is. Peak traffic hours would be on Saturday. Mr. McDermott suggested conducting a Traffic Impact Study. Carrie Wetherbee stated that Country Club of the Poconos (CCP) contains full time residents and is concerned about that intersection already being congested and difficult to get out of. Mrs. Wetherbee also addressed concerns with School Busses and Mail Carriers having difficulty getting through with additional traffic. Mr. McDermott stated that the Board of Supervisors can ask applicant to do a traffic assessment to identify if this is going to change the function of the intersection. Ms. Schmoyer asked about the bridge on Big Ridge Dr. at the main entrance of CCP. Mr. Oney stated that a temporary entrance to CCP is being constructed off of Sellersville Dr. The bridge is failing and needs to be closed, and could remain closed for several years. At that point, the day care, storage facility and homes in The Reserve at Pond Creek would be the only ones to use the main entrance. Brad from Winds West, Inc. stated that they have worked with PennDOT in the past and have never required a turning lane to enter the facility due to low traffic volumes. Ms. Schmoyer will be looking at peak traffic hours for that intersection and see if it is the same with peak traffic hours for storage facilities. The entrance to the storage facility is offset from the day care entrance by approximately 50 feet. Mr. McDermott asked if it was possible to line up the entrances. Ms. Schmoyer stated that they can't due to NPDES requiring a 150 ft buffer. Bob Early stated that the Planning Commission often pushes for new building along SR 209 to use entrances off of side roads. Mr. McDermott agreed that it doesn't make sense to have another driveway off of SR 209.

Sprinklers are required due to size of the building. PA American Water services the area and would prefer to hook up to a wet system if they have the capacity. If PA American Water doesn't have the capacity, they can do a dry system.

Illumination will be discussed during Land Development. The Fire Company will also need to review the plan during the Land Development stage.

Attorney Deb Huffman stated that the review letter states what the Planning Commission can look at for Conditional Use Recommendation. Can make recommendations that have to do with health, safety, comfort and convenience.

The Conditional Use Public Hearing will be held at 7 p.m. on June 11, 2020. Mark Oney recommended that a rendering of the front of the building with the fence a landscaping be provided for the public hearing.

Parin Shah made a motion to recommend approval of the WindsWest Inc., Storage Facility Conditional Use Application subject to the following conditions:

Addressing any outstanding Township Engineer's comments pursuant to the review letter dated May 20, 2020.

Adding a tall landscaping buffer along the property line to act as screening for the neighboring residential areas, as well as a landscaping buffer between the roadway and the fence.

Providing an as-built of the foundation before the building is erected.

Limiting the building and parking lot lighting so as not to spill onto the adjacent residential properties.

Conducting a traffic impact study to determine if the function of the intersection at Big Ridge Drive and Milford Rd (SR 209) will change.

Nick Theofilos seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

New Business

None.

Discussion

Mr. Early stated that the entrance to Big Ridge Dr. off of Sellersville looks great and the Public Works department does a fantastic job. He stated that the cost to have that job contracted out would be high and that having a Public Works crew with the skill set to do it themselves is saving the township a lot of money.

Monroe County is moving to the Yellow Phase on Friday, June 5, 2020 and outdoor dining will be allowed. Middle Smithfield Township is working with restaurants to help them construct temporary outdoor spaces while still keeping customers safe. Adapted Temporary Special Events permits are being issued without requiring Land Development. If restaurants want to keep their outdoor dining spaces post-COVID, they will need Land Development.

Continuing Education

Penn State Extension Land Use Webinar Series- Carrie Wetherbee stated there was no Land Use Webinar this month. Instead Penn State Extension offered COVID webinars.

Public Comment

None.

Next Meeting

June 25, 2020 at 5:30pm.

Adjournment

Parin Shah made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nick Theofilos seconded the motion, motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted

Holly Freese
Recording Secretary
May 28, 2020