

Mr. Gerald Delong, Chairman, called the Regular Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, March 5, 2012. Planning Commission Members present included Keith Kneipp, Kerrin Musselman, Doug Worley and Patricia Alderfer. Assistant Township Manager, Jamie P. Worman, Township Engineer, Cindy Van Hise, and Jean Holland from the Montgomery County Planning Commission were also present for this meeting. Planning Commission members Kyle Koffel and Robert Yothers were absent (excused).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Alderfer made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9th, 2012 regular meeting. Mr. Musselman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

NO OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Alderfer Poultry Company Minor Subdivision- 724 Harleysville Pike (#01-12)

Mr. Scott Camburn of Urwiler & Walter Associates was present to review this application. He began with a brief overview of the proposed project which is to subdivide off a single building lot for the future home of Mr. Mike Alderfer and his wife. The 70,000 square-foot flag lot will be subdivided from the 58 acre farm. Mr. Camburn explained that the parcel will be accessed from a shared driveway with the Gehman property that currently exists along Harleysville Pike. The required 25-foot wide access strip will be provided off of Schoolhouse Road but will not be paved or used for access at this time. Mr. Camburn then addressed the Metz Review letter dated, February 29th, 2012, by stating that the applicant will comply with the items outlined in the letter. Mr. Kneipp questioned how an address for this parcel would work and whether having an access off of Schoolhouse Road but using an access off of Harleysville Pike would create confusion to emergency responders. Ms. Worman explained that the Township is responsible to assign the address. She continued that since the access would be off of

Harleysville Pike it will most likely receive a Harleysville Pike address. She added that the access strip off of Schoolhouse Road would most likely remain in a natural state in which case no one would really know it was an access point. Mr. Camburn then reported that he had just submitted a formal waiver request to the Township. The applicant is seeking relief from the plan scale requirement. Ms. Van Hise commented that the request made sense. Mr. Delong asked if there was a motion to recommend the project for approval with the conditions discussed. Mr. Musselman made a motion to recommend the project for conditional preliminary/final approval. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Delong jumped down the agenda to “Other Business” to address the North Penn Water Authority item. Ms. Julie Vonsprecklesen, Esquire of East Burn and Gray was present to discuss the proposed water tank plans of the North Penn Water Authority. She gave a brief overview of the proposal which is to locate a water tank on a property within the Township that is located in the LI- Limited Industrial District that is owned by the Leidy’s. Ms. Vonsprecklesen explained that since the NPWA is a utility they are not required to go through land development but they wanted to present the plans to the Commission to get their feedback. She also added that the project will need relief and variances from the Zoning Hearing Board which is the next step. Steven Riley the Project Engineer from Entech Engineering then approached the Commission and gave his overview of the plan details. He reviewed the plan explaining that the tower will be located on a parcel that is currently farmed. Access to the tank will be off of Township Line Road. He continued that the access point off of the road will be paved and then transition into a gravel driveway beyond the access point back to the tank. He also added that the area needed for the tank will be approximately 300 square feet and will be covered by an easement. He then reported that the tank will be approximately 145 feet tall with a 60 foot diameter at the base and 120 foot diameter at the top. Once completed the tank will be fenced and will be able to hold 3 million gallons of water. Mr. Riley also noted that the access to the actual water storage is from inside the tank. He also reported that the tank had received clearance from the FAA as required. Mr. Riley then

commented that the key reason for selecting this particular site was the elevation of the property, the proximity to adequate water mains, and a good transmission grid in the area. He continued that they felt this was the best location to maximize water flow. Mr. Delong commented that the 309 Connector will be going through that area. Mr. Riley replied that they were aware of that but coordination of the timing was premature. Mr. Kneipp questioned the security gate shown on the plans. He asked if the gate would be locked as he had concerns about people parking on the paved area. He added that he constantly sees people parking all over the place in this location which is usually spill-over parking from the Temple across the street. Mr. Riley replied that it would be a secured gate and that they were unaware of the parking situation but would note it. Mr. Dan Preston, NPWA Director of Operations and Engineers, addressed the Commission to discuss the need for the water tank. He explained that they are looking to meet the needs of the public by stabilizing pressure and maximizing fire flow. The tank would hold the reserved water and provide adequate storage for customers. He continued that the primary reason is to increase storage to have an average day in reserve. He touched on the items of elevation and proximity to mains as did Mr. Riley. He explained the process of what they were looking for and how Leidy's emerged as the most desirable location. Mr. Kneipp commented that he still had concerns about the security gate and felt that possible signage would be appropriate. Mr. Preston replied that they are sharing the access easement to the site so they would have to look into that. Mr. Delong asked if the NPWA would just be occupying this area of land or subdividing it. Mr. Preston replied that it would be handled through an easement. Mr. Musselman asked what color is proposed for the tower. Mr. Preston replied that the color had not been chosen yet but that the base would be concrete. Mr. Kneipp questioned how this tank would service the entire community. Mr. Preston explained that they have a 16-inch transmission main network that would provide water service to the entire community. Mr. Musselman asked if the tank would be completely dark at night. Mr. Preston replied that there would be minimal security lighting with a potential for that being a motion detection system. He assured the group that there would be nothing intrusive and they would not be illuminating the tank. Ms. Holland from the Montgomery County Planning Commission asked Mr. Preston to elaborate on the Lansdale tank that they are taking out of service.

Mr. Preston explained that they are not eliminating that tank but are doing a complete overhaul of it and then will be bringing it back on line. Mr. DeLong asked if there would be wells on the property. Mr. Preston replied that there will not be wells because the water will come from a substation in Chalfont. Ms. Van Hise asked if the Commission had any formal comments they wished to submit to the Zoning Hearing Board regarding the proposal. The Planning Commission had no forwarding comments. No further discussion took place on this proposal.

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

Ms. Worman reported that the application submitted by Jill and Brent Stouffer and Shaun Froshour requesting a variance and interpretation of Section 145-139 and 145-18 A.1 of the Franconia Township Zoning Code pertaining to use, lot size and setback requirements of an existing commercial building for use by Paw-itively Healthy, LLC which provides daytime and overnight dog services was heard on Wednesday January 11th, 2012. She explained that the application did not receive approval for a variance, but the Zoning Hearing Board did vote to overrule the zoning violation the applicants received. She continued that as she understood it, the dog service operation is then permitted to continue as it had prior to the hearing. She added that a number of residents attended the hearing in support of the operation.

Ms. Worman then reported that the Township received notification that they had won the appeal they had filed against the Zoning Hearing Board regarding the decision that was rendered in the Jose Coronado Case. She reminded the Commission that the Jose Coronado application was the case in which the Zoning Hearing Board approved their request for a variance to permit housing for six seasonal employees on the second floor of the rear building located on his property at 668 County Line Road. The Board of Supervisors had entered a formal opposition to the application but the Zoning Hearing Board granted the variance regardless of the applicant's failure to meet the criteria necessary for a variance to be granted. The court overruled this decision.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Worman reported that the Township Solicitor received notification that the lawsuit filed by Mr. Kenneth Taggart regarding a proposed subdivision on Cowpath Road has been thrown out of court for his failure to comply with the associated filing deadlines. Mr. Delong questioned whether we formally need to deny the application. Ms. Worman replied that this board did recommend it for denial but that it was tabled when it reached the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Worman continued that she was unsure as to where the project was left and would need to follow up with the solicitor for direction.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting is April 2, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. There was no further business discussed at the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie P. Worman, Assistant Township Manager