

Mr. Gerald DeLong, Chairman, called the Regular Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00pm on Monday, March 7, 2016. Planning Commission Members present included Doug Worley, Robert Yothers, Kyle Koffel, Patricia Alderfer and Keith Kneipp. Township Engineer, Samantha Brinker, and Planning and Zoning Coordinator Beth T. Gooch were also present for this meeting. Planning Commission Member Kerrin Musseleman was excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Worley made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, from the February 1st. 2016 regular meeting. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

Hagey Road Land Development – Conditional Use Application

Ms. Susan Rice, from STA Engineering, was present to discuss the application filed for a conditional use to allow a fence to be constructed in the front yard of the proposed HD Indoor Boat/RV Storage Facility. Ms. Rice stated that the fence is to be a 6 foot high black aluminum fence in the front as well as in the rear. .

Bergey's Truck Center Land Development – Route 113 (#11-15)

No new information to report at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Sustainable Waste Solutions– Hagey Road Lot 4 (#03-16)

Mr. Rick Mast, from Richard C. Mast Associates, presented the Land Development plans for SWS. The general building will have an office section in the front. The total building is a little over 17,000 square feet. Mr. Mast explained that SWS is a landfill free waste collection service. They are

currently leasing property and wanted to purchase property to construct their own facility. The plans show that there will be two entrances proposed off of Hagey Road. There will be loading doors on either side of the building so you can drive through. The details of the fence are still being worked out. It will need to be gated for security purposes when the operation is closed. Mr. Mast is anticipating that they will not have to file for a conditional use for the fence, as it will be behind the closest portion of the front of the building. Mr. Mast explained that any parking in the front lot on the plans will be moved and there will not be a zoning issue. The trash storage location will be designated on the plans. Mr. Mast pointed out that the plans show a parking lot separation in a location that makes sense to divide employee parking, but it does not directly follow the SALDO requirements. SWS is in the process of contacting the other local businesses to work together to extend sewer and water to the properties throughout the area. The Rear yard is already heavily tree lined so no additional plantings are proposed in the rear. The property line buffer is proposed along the line where there are no current plantings. Mr. DeLong asked where the vehicles will be parked. Mr. Mast responded that they will be inside and outside of the building. He explained that it is not a trash transfer station, but will be primarily an office and lite maintenance facility. During the extreme cold some of the trucks will need to be parked inside. Mr. Randy Hendricks, from Sustainable Waste Solutions, explained the general idea on why the trucks need to be inside. Mr. Worley asked about truck washing and the water runoff of oils and such. Mr. Mast stated that they will have to follow DEP regulations. Mr. Kneipp wanted SWS to confirm that there will not be any hazardous waste run off. He also questioned how the Sewer Authority was with the amount of water. Mr. Mast reported that this not been resolved yet. Mr. Hendricks stated that they will not be moving forward until the sewer hook ups are resolved. Ms. Alderfer asked about the expected future expansion for this facility. Mr. Hendricks responded that the growth of the company will be taking part in another location. He stated the amount of employees may increase from 27 to 30 but that would be the extent at the Franconia location. Mr. DeLong asked if this would be the headquarters. Mr. Hendricks confirmed. Mr. Worley made a motion to formally accept the plans and Mr. Kneipp seconded. All were in favor, motion passed.

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

Ms. Gooch reported that the ZHB conducted a hearing on March 3, 2016 for Stephen and Mary Tidey. The Tidey's were awarded a special exception to allow an in law suite on property located at 597 Hunsicker Road (mailing address 597 Heath Road). During the hearing the application

was verbally amended to include a variance to allow a second front entrance. The Zoning Hearing Board voted unanimously to approve the requests. An application from Eileen Landis to permit an in law suite at 705 Morwood Road was received, along with an extension request to be heard in May.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sketch Plan– Select Properties

Mr. John Kennedy, Mr. Brian Grant, and Mr. Mike Amoroso, from Select Properties, were present to provide information regarding the sketch plan for Select Properties. The property consists of about 31 acres. It is split zoned R175 and R100. Mr. Kennedy stated that they would be requesting the property to be included in the MRD overlay. He pointed out that it is located in a designated growth area and that it appears to be a logical transition in density from Souderton Borough. The proposed plans show 95 townhomes. Mr. Kennedy reported that they appeared before the Board of Supervisors at a work session to get feedback. He noted that he is aware that the Township is not necessarily interested in additional senior housing. Mr. Kennedy located on the plans that there will not be any development east of Indian Creek Road and it will be used for BMP's to help stormwater from a regional stand point. He explained in detail how the distance from the road, plantings and natural grade the property would allow little to be seen from Cowpath Road. Select Properties is willing to pay a stormwater impact fee or a per unit cost to be used by the Township. If the Planning Commission is interested they are also offering to change a few things in the regulations of the MRD. Mr. DeLong asked Mr. Kennedy if he was aware of the abandoned cemetery, called the Fuhrman Cemetery that was on the east side of the property. Mr. Kenney responded that he was not aware. Mr. Amoroso asked if the church would have any information in regards to the cemetery. Mr. DeLong responded that yes the church would, and there are also photos. Mr. Koffel asked where the existing houses are on the property near the proposed basins. Mr. Kennedy explained that they would be removing one and saving the other. Mr. Koffel commented that he liked the buffer along Cowpath Road. Mr. Kneipp asked if there are any trails in the area. Mr. Kennedy replied that they were willing to look into that or even add trails. Mr. Kneipp suggested interior trails or a walking area. Mr. DeLong questioned why the plans included only townhouses. He stated that the WB development proposed a mix. Mr. Worley pointed out that the MRD states that a mix is required. Mr. Amoroso responded that the townhouses were planned to allow the greatest amount of open space as possible. Mr. Worley

stated that the ordinance would have to be changed. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Planning Commission felt that this is appropriate for this area. Mr. Kneipp stated that the regional planning commission wants to see transportation available to this area in order for the townhouses to actually be easier to sell, possibly Septa. Mr. Kennedy stated that there would be some sewer improvements that would need to be done. Mr. DeLong said that he would like to see some single homes on the plans. Mr. Worley stated that he likes that way the MRD reads currently. Mr. Kennedy said that singles consume a lot of property and you lose buffering. Mr. Worley explained the existing MRD developments in the township that are roughly 1/3 of each type townhomes, twins, and singles and are very successful. He stated that the next step would be to query the BOS to see if they want to pursue changing the ordinance. Mr. Kennedy pointed to the plans that show 70% open space with the current proposal. He offered that they could look at a double mix of twins and townhomes and get a 50% open space.

Discussion then took place amongst the Planning Commission. Mr. Yothers stated that he thought that they had the approval of the Board already. Ms. Gooch reported that the Board was interested in the obtaining the opinion of the Planning Commission. Ms. Alderfer agreed that the existing MRD developments in the township were successful. She said that they are occupied and rarely vacant. Mr. DeLong asked Ms. Brinker for her opinion. She said that the commission would need to decide what is more important to them, the mix or the amount of open space. Mr. Kennedy is correct that if there are added singles the open space percentage does decrease. She suggested that an inventory of the surrounding townhomes be done to see how many are currently vacant, she also mentioned that traffic will need to be considered. Mr. Kneipp pointed out that a lot of children could be added to the area if 95 townhomes were developed. Ms. Brinker commented that she liked the idea of the stormwater management/impact fee that would be beneficial to the township as it is such an issue right now. Mr. Kneipp requested the FEMA map for this particular site. Mr. Yothers feels that if this is approved the Board of Supervisors would be setting a precedent. It is the recommendation of the Planning Commission to follow the current MRD regulations.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 4th, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Worley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Yothers seconded the motion. The motion passed. No further business was discussed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth T. Gooch

Planning and Zoning Coordinator