

Mr. Keith Kneipp called the Regular Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:02 pm on Tuesday, September 7th, 2021. Planning Commission Members present included Keith Kneipp, John Medendorp, Steven Barndt, Nancy Shelly, Jerry DeLong, Doug Worley and George Balzer. Director of Planning and Zoning Beth T. Gooch, Township Engineer Erik Garton and Township Solicitor Eric Wert were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Kneipp asked if there were any comments or corrections to be made to the minutes. Corrections were made and noted. Ms. Shelly made a motion to approve the minutes as amended from the August 2nd, 2021, regular meeting. Mr. Medendorp seconded the motion. The motion passed, 7-0.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

(#04-21) Bergey's Buick/GMC Dealership and Corporate Center

Mr. Rick Mast was present on behalf of Bergey's Realty. He stated that the review letter from Gilmore dated September 1, 2021, includes all aspects of the plan. He presented the requested waivers to the Planning Commission. He stated that along the existing streets they are requesting a deferral from widening Allentown Road due to the sewage pumping station, the location of the storm sewer as well as the grade. Mr. Garton added that it is a PennDOT Road and will need to be reviewed by them as well. Mr. Mast addressed sidewalk in various locations. No waiver is needed along Godshall Road or on Route 113 as sidewalk already exists. A deferral is requested along Allentown Road, and the applicant is willing to work with the Township engineer for some alternative to traditional sidewalk that may include a path of some sort. A request for a deferral of curbing is also included from the pumping station up to the top of the property. There are a number of waiver requests relating to landscaping. He reported that due to the nature of the automobile sales use of the property, plantings to hide or buffer the inventory are not ideal. The number of shade trees proposed has been reduced on the plan and moved to other green areas on the site. A relocation of 7 street trees is proposed as well as a reduction in street trees on 113 and Allentown Road along the proposed inventory parking areas. Bergey's will contribute a fee in lieu of the trees as necessary. Another waiver is requested not to provide 280 shrubs between the back parking lot and the street front properties, also owned by Bergey's, and should it be granted will also be a fee in lieu of. Mr. Garton stated that it was a reasonable request. Mr. Mast

requested a reduction of 118 shrubs along 113 and Allentown Road, a waiver to permit 20 foot lighting, and a waiver for non-residential driveways.

The applicant proposes to have a meeting with the Township and PennDOT to discuss future improvements to the intersection such as a turning lane and changes in signaling. Bergey's is requesting that all of the improvements be done in the future when additional projects affect the same intersection. Mr. Garrity, counsel for Bergey's, suggested putting together an agreement to the Township's satisfaction in regards to a time frame for said improvements.

Mr. Garton recommended that the stormwater plan accommodate future improvements so that just a permit may be pulled and there would not be the need for a new stormwater plan. Mr. Mast responded that the plan does already allow for future projects and a note will be added to plan.

Discussion took place regarding a proposed path or trail leading to the Township's park at the rear of the property. Bergey's representatives feel strongly that they do not want to direct the public to enter the park through the middle of the site but will consider something along Allentown Road and the basin. Mr. Mast requested that the Planning Commission consider recommending conditional preliminary approval to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Worley made a motion to condition the approval upon compliance with the Gilmore review letter. It was seconded by Mr. Barndt, and all voted in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

Ms. Gooch informed the Planning Commission that the two hearings conducted Thursday, August 5th, resulted in the granting of a special exception for an in-law suite on Godshall Road, and a variance for a minimum lot size on Ridge View Drive. Currently there are no new applications for October.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, October 4th, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Barndt raised concerns about the Bergey's application. He stated that there are really two uses on the property, both an automobile dealership and offices. He recommended that the lighting limitations for the car dealership not be applied to the corporate office parking lot. Mr. Garton noted the suggestion, and it will be addressed with the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Worley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. It was seconded by Mr. Barndt and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth T. Gooch,

Director of Planning and Zoning