

Ms. Beth Gooch called the Reorganizational Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm on Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Planning Commission Members present included Keith Kneipp, Doug Worley, John Medendorp, Steven Barndt, Paul Nice, George Balzer and Nancy Shelly. Director of Administration and Community Development Beth T. Gooch, Township Engineer Timothy Wallace and Township Solicitor Eric Wert were also present.

Ms. Gooch led the reorganization. She asked for a nomination for Chairman. Steve Barndt nominated Keith Kneipp. It was seconded by Paul Nice, and all voted in favor, 7-0. Chairman Kneipp took over the meeting. He asked for a nomination for Vice Chairman. Mr. Worley made the motion that was seconded by Mr. Balzer to appoint John Medendorp, and all voted in favor. Paul Nice nominated Doug Worley for secretary, it was seconded by Steve Barndt, and all voted in favor.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Kneipp asked if there were any comments or corrections to be made to the minutes from December 4, 2023. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was made by Steve Barndt and seconded by Nancy Shelly. The motion carried.

## **SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Mike Mally was present on behalf of Schoolhouse Road Properties, Endurance. He stated that the proposed warehouse is 178,000 square feet and will be nearly identical to 209 Schoolhouse Road. It is designed for roughly the same target tenant. The December 14<sup>th</sup> Gilmore review letter is will comply, with the exception of the requested waivers. Mr. Matt Patterson reported that the plan shows 180 passenger vehicle spaces and in October of 2023 the Zoning Hearing Board granted the variance to reduce the number of parking spaces and to permit the encroachment towards the building. There are 31 trailer stalls with the entrance to the east solely for trucking with a queuing area. He added that the property is zoned Limited Industrial and is a little more than 14 acres. The plan consolidates the two parcels and contains a PECO easement in the rear. There have already been a few review cycles completed and a new submission has been made. PennDOT has approved the traffic study and the MCCD approval is in the works. There are 14 waivers requested total. Mr. Patterson went through each of the waivers regarding driveway width and the curve of the passenger vehicle entrance. He included a waiver from

providing sidewalk, which was recommended as a deferral. Additional waivers included pipe material, storm facility location to the building, and location of utility services. A waiver for the height of light fixtures to be twenty feet, matches the height of the lights at the adjacent building. A motion was made by Steve Barndt to recommend preliminary/final approval to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Worley seconded the motion, and the motion passed, 7-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

(#04-23) DLKS Properties, LLC. Mr. Steve Barndt made a motion to formally accept the land development plans. Ms. Nancy Shelly seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Mr. Medendorp announced that he will be abstaining from discussion and vote for the SASD proposal as he is employed by the civil design firm.

Mr. Ken Godshall, GKO Architects, informed the Planning Commission that the Souderton Area School District has submitted a proposed building addition to West Broad Street Elementary School in order to get rid of the modulars. The addition is approximately 17,000 square feet and is part of their 30-year plan. The district does not anticipate additional student enrollment and this proposal is to address the issues they face today for space. Mr. Frank Ball added that the projected enrollment is actually going down. Mr. Godshall explained that the building will undergo full renovations and there will be no change to the bus loop but a reconfiguration of the parking area that will include the removal of a playground area to extend the parent car loop. The construction may include the removal of a few miscellaneous SAVE buildings that are no longer in use.

Mr. Mike Roth announced that most of the March 1<sup>st</sup>, review letter is will comply. He added that the shed in question on the property is actually owned by Lion's Gate Community and an easement will be worked out. A request is being made to allow the ADA ramps crossing the driveway to be located a bit more interior, a waiver is also requested for road widening as there are no improvements proposed at the south end of the site. A waiver from providing open space is included as the applicant feels that there are a number of spaces on the property open for public use. Mr. Wallace responded that the Board will make that decision. Mr. Roth stated that there will not be an increase in additional trips and will submit formal documentation in support. Waivers also included the location of the basin and rain garden. The Planning Commission agreed that the road widening and curbing should be considered as a deferral. Mr. Worley made a motion to recommend preliminary/final approval. It was seconded by Ms. Shelly conditioned upon the relief

necessary to be granted by the Zoning Hearing Board at the hearing scheduled for Thursday March 7<sup>th</sup>. All voted in favor, 6-0.

## **ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS**

Ms. Gooch reported that the School District will be seeking a special exception for the building expansion just discussed as well as a variance for an illuminated sign along West Broad Street. The owners of property located at 589 Godshall Road have requested a variance to permit less than the required side yard setback for an in-ground pool. The third hearing, for 570 Keller Creamery Road, is for an accessory building that exceeds both the 800 square feet permitted size and the 14-foot maximum height.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Immanuel Leidy's Church has submitted an application to rezone their property located at 276 W Cherry Lane. Mr. Richard Kapusta reported that in 2016 Leidy's occupied the corner property and during the land development process it was understood that the rezone request would be applied for after construction. The church is built and being used Institutionally. It was purchased as three parcels. The middle parcel that was the Hunsicker Farm is being used as a parsonage and contains the detention basin. The third part of the property is graded for athletic fields and has a soccer and softball field with potential picnic pavilions in the future. Discussion took place on any regional impact and the parsonage use. The motion to recommend approval was made by Doug Worley and seconded by Paul Nice. The motion carried unanimously.

## **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 1, 2024, at 7 p.m.

Mr. Worley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. It was seconded by Mr. Barndt, and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth T. Gooch,

Director of Administration

and Community Development