

Mr. John Medendorp called the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm on Monday, March 3, 2025. Planning Commission Members present included John Medendorp, Paul Nice, George Balzer, Steven Barndt, Doug Worley and Nancy Shelly. Director of Administration and Community Development Beth T. Gooch, Township Engineer Timothy Wallace and Township Solicitor Eric Wert were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Medendorp asked if there were any comments or corrections to be made to the minutes from February 3, 2025. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was made by Paul Nice and seconded by Nancy Shelly. The motion carried.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Nate Fox, legal representative for the 24 Allentown Road proposal, reported that variances were granted by the Zoning Hearing Board. Part of the proposal is a subdivision of a second lot and the development proposal is for a 150,000 square foot warehouse along Asher's Chocolates with access off Wambold Road at the corner of Allentown Road. The applicant has submitted a conditional use application for reserve parking. A parking study has been completed. Mr. Worley asked if there has been any discussion about lining up with Mininger Road. Mr. Kevin Savage from Dynamic Traffic, traffic engineer for the project, stated that the access off of Allentown needed to be as far away from the intersection as possible and that the trucks are restricted to the Wambold Road drive. Mr. Justin Geonnotti, project engineer, reported that the passenger vehicles will access off Allentown Road and there will be signage for the restriction of trucks.

Mr. Fox explained that currently there is an existing setback of seven feet along Allentown Road. The plan proposes a 30 foot setback and they will be looking for a suitable commercial use, with some zoning relief, once the intersection can be observed. Mr. Wert added that this was at the request of the Township. The proposed subdivision limits the warehouse to 150,000 square feet. Eventually the existing structures will be demolished, and a note will be added to the plan. The plan will be resubmitted showing a front yard of 30 feet.

The Township engineer review letter addresses the truck noise level. The truck location is proposed to be along the property line adjacent to Asher's and there will be buffering along the church property. The passenger drive will go across the subdivided lot to access Allentown Road.

Discussion took place about the current zoning of the property and the proposed commercial use in the future. The applicant may choose to go the Zoning Hearing Board for a variance with the Township support. With the restriction of trucks accessing from Allentown this will limit the future use of the second lot. Possible office use.

Mr. Savage stated that one parking space is required per 500 square feet and would need 300 spaces. The plan shows 204 constructed spaces and 101 banked for future use. Two hundred and four spaces are proposed. The requested waivers include preliminary/final approval, providing existing features, plan sheet size as well as the request to install a wider driveway of 75 feet vs 55 feet. Waivers from curbing, underground utilities, the locations of detention basins 1 and 2 to be within 100 feet of the building, and a percentage that can be located in the front yard are also requested. A partial waiver is requested for the height of lights at the loading dock. A fee in lieu of providing open space is proposed as well as a fee in lieu of Park and Recreation use. The request to use HDPE within the right-of-way instead of RCP will need the approval of PennDOT.

Mr. Tim Wallace suggested that the Planning Commission consider a conditional recommendation upon the Gilmore and Associates review of the traffic study. The Conditional Use hearing will be scheduled at the earliest, April 21, 2025. Mr. Medendorp requested a motion to grant conditional preliminary/final and the modifications to the waiver letter. Mr. Worley made the motion. It was seconded by Ms. Shelly and all voted in favor, 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

Ms. Gooch reported that Robert Johnson, 364 Oak Drive is requesting to construct a detached accessory building that exceeds the permitted size and height to be located closer to his rear and side property lines than required. Mr. Denis Vucenovic, 605 Fourth Street is proposing a minor subdivision of one lot off his current residence that will result in a new lot that is less square feet than required and has a width that is less than what is required. This will also result in his existing lot to become less than what is required by code. The third application is for Jill Froshour, 724 Morwood Road. She is requesting modifications to a previously granted variance for the kennel

use on the property. The modifications relate to the number of dogs permitted, the number of dogs permitted outside, and the sale of the business.

OTHER BUSINESS

A Conditional Use application has been filed for the 24 Allentown Road proposal as previously discussed, to permit parking spaces to be put in reserve. Mr. Worley made the motion to recommend approval, and it was seconded by Nancy Shelly. All voted in favor.

A Zoning Ordinance update is proposed. Mr. Wallace summarized a number of the changes including moving the Stormwater Management requirements to a separate chapter and out of the SALDO. Many of the amendments are clean up items that have arisen over the years in doing plan and permit reviews. Mr. Bardnt motioned to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Worley seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 7, 2025, at 7 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Beth T. Gooch,

Director of Administration

and Community Development