

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 2, 2024**

The Springfield Township Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00 P.M., in the conference room of the Springfield Township Library, located at 8900 Hawthorne Lane, Wyndmoor, PA 19038. Present at the meeting were Ms. Murray, Mr. Sands, Mr. Harbison, Mr. Schaefer, and Ms. Helwig. Mark Penecale, Director of Planning & Zoning was also in attendance.

Approval of the Minutes:

The Planning Commission approved the minutes from their meeting held on Tuesday, December 19, 2023.

Commissioner's Report:

There was no Commissioner's Report at this meeting.

New Business:

PC1: George Broseman, Esq. and Kevin Fruck, PE presented the plan for alterations to 1851 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown, PA. The applicant, 1851 Bethlehem Pike Associates, LP proposes to convert the site from a bank use to a Starbucks Coffee, with a drive-thru lane. Mr. Broseman informed the Planning Commission that due to the minor alterations to the site, the applicant was seeking a waiver from the requirements of a Land Development Submission. In addition, he informed the Planning Commission members that the plan, as submitted received Zoning Hearing Board approval for the modifications to the curbing and the installation of a dumpster enclosure within a defined flood plain. Mr. Fruck, the project engineer, explained the proposed changes to the exterior area and the need for the trash enclosure as plotted on the plan. Mr. Fruck reviewed the Woodrow & Associates Review Letter, dated December 14, 2023, with the Planning Commission Members.

Ms. Helwig asked Mr. Fruck what the outdoor patio was proposed to be made of. She asked if it would be concrete or brick pavers. Mr. Fruck informed everyone that the patio has not been designed yet, but that if it was a concrete finish, it could be stamped, to appear as a paver patio.

Mr. Schaefer asked about the modifications to the walkways leading to the rear of the building. Mr. Fruck replied that those changes are being made to allow for employee ADA access in that area.

Mr. Schaefer asked if there was a detail of the proposed trash enclosure. Mr. Fruck checked the plans submitted for review and did not find a drawing drawing enclosure. He informed the Commission Members that it would be a gated masonry structure, at least 6 feet in height.

Mr. Harbison asked what the timeline is for the project. Mr. Fruck replied he hopes to start the renovations in the spring.

Ms. Helwig asked that the applicant make note of the driveway to the rear of the site and asked that applicant keep this driveway open during snow events.

Mr. Penecale asked that if a motion is made to recommend approval of the requested waiver, the applicant be required to plant replacement trees for the trees that have been removed along the Bethlehem Pike frontage.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend approval of the requested waiver for the submission of the Land Development Application and Plan for the property located at 1851 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown, PA 19031, with one condition, as follows:

1. The applicant be required to plant replacement trees for the trees that have been removed along the Bethlehem Pike frontage.

PC2: Christin Pionzio, Esq. and Anthony Hibbeln, PE were in attendance to present the plan for the subdivision of 401 E. Mill Road, Flourtown, PA 19031. Ms. Pionzio informed the Planning Commission that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to review the Sketch Plan and solicit comments from the Planning Commission and surrounding neighbors. Ms. Pionzio informed everyone that the plan as presented requires Zoning Hearing Board approval for the frontage of the lot. A building lot in the A-Residential District requires 75 feet of lot frontage and this lot would have 25 feet. She went on to explain that the lot would be 1.01 acres in total lot area, instead of the required 12,500 square feet. She stated that the property would comply with the balance of the dimensional requirements of the A-Residential District.

Mr. Hibbeln explained the layout of the property, the need for the variance and supplied a handout with a proposed design and possible finishes to the interior and exterior of the home. He provided a brief history of the property. Mr. Hibbeln stated that the house would be a custom-built home of between 4,000 and 6,000 square feet in size. The builder would be Deluca Custom Homes which provides start to finish services, from the design, through the built and sale of the home.

Mr. Andre Stephano, the owner of the property, explained to the Planning Commission his involvement with the property from his family's purchase in August of 2019, through Covid and the other reasons the proposed subdivision is required for him to maintain ownership of the property. Mr. Stephano stated that he attempted to contact all his adjoining neighbors and had spoken to many of them.

Mr. Thomas Harkins: owner of 407 Cedar Lane, stated that he is not in favor of the proposed development and believes that this sets a very bad precedent for the Township. The reduction of the frontage by 2/3 of the required provides an opening for every developer from this point moving forward.

Dr. Tchao: owner of 404 Cedar Lane, stated that he is opposed to the development of this property for the following reason: The granting of this variance sets a very bad precedence and the 25 feet requested is too much of a deviation from the required 75 feet. The development of this lot would greatly disrupt the tranquility of this neighborhood. He believes that the frontage for any subdivision of this property should be taken from Mill Road. Dr. Tchao presented a petition signed by 7 families all of whom live on Cedar Lane.

Mr. Richardson: owner of 2021 Cedar Lane, stated that he opposed the subdivision for the following reasons: The number of driveways, the existing fire hydrant and proximity of the new proposed driveway on Cedar Lane and will prevent the Township from plowing this portion of Cedar Lane. There are safety concerns due to the number of small children in this neighborhood. There are several large trees that will have to be removed for this proposed home to be built. He is concerned about the heavy equipment that will be needed coming in through Cedar Lane.

Mr. Onofre Vaquer: owner of 2014 Cedar Lane, stated that Mr. Stephano did contact him to review the plan. He shares a property line with the applicant. He stated that he has two daughters and is concerned with their safety considering the proposed location of the new driveway to service this lot. He and his wife are opposed to this project.

Ms. Ann Griffin: 400 East Mill Road, is opposed to any additional driveways on East Mill Road. She stated traffic concerns, such as speeding and the number of vehicles on the roadway daily.

Mr. Joseph Griffin: 400 East Mill Road, questioned how the construction vehicles and building materials would gain access to the site. There is no answer to that question currently.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional questions. There were none.

Mr. Harbison explained to everyone in attendance the purpose of this meeting and the need for the neighbors to attend the Zoning Hearing Board meeting on Monday, January 22, 2024.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Mark A. Penecale
Director of Planning & Zoning