

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

The Springfield Township Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00 P.M., in the Boardroom of the Springfield Township Administration Building, located at 1510 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA 19038. Present at the meeting were Ms. Helwig, Ms. Murray, Mr. Sands, Mr. Devine, Mr. Schaefer, and Mr. Harbison. Also in attendance were Commissioner Peter Wilson, Michael Narcowich and Margo Petruska from Montgomery County Planning Commission, and Mark Penecale, Director of Planning & Zoning.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes:

The Planning Commission approved the minutes from their meeting held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Wilson briefed the Planning Commission and the residents in attendance on the grant application in the process of being submitted by Montgomery County, on behalf of Philadelphia, Cheltenham Township and Springfield Township. The grant application will fund a study of existing traffic conditions on Cheltenham Avenue from Ogontz Avenue to Paper Mill Road and make recommendations for a "Road Diet".

New Business:

PC1: Alex and Christopher Ventresca, owners of Venco Building Group presented the subdivision plan for the property located at 210 Sunnybrook Road, Flourtown, PA 19031. Mr. Ventresca explained that the existing property of 18,738 square feet would be subdivided into two lots of 9,369 square feet each. The properties will each have 62.5 feet of frontage on Sunnybrook Road and be served by public water and public sanitary sewers. He explained that this application is for the subdivision of the property only and that the development of the site will require the submission of a Land Development Application.

The applicant addressed the items listed within the Woodrow & Associates Review Letter dated March 12, 2024. The applicant stated that each of the yet to be designed new homes would comply with the required setbacks, coverage limitation and off-street parking requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. In addition, Mr. Ventresca stated that questions concerning landscaping, stormwater management, grading and soil erosion would be addressed at the time the Land Development Application is submitted.

Ms. Petruska asked the applicant about the removal of existing vegetation and the applicant's plans for the planting of replacement trees and street trees.

The applicant stated that these items would be addressed at the time the Land Development application is submitted, by way of a landscape plan.

Mr. Penecale suggested that the applicant submit photographs of the existing vegetation to ensure that a record is on file with the Township, so that a comparison can be done between what exists there now and at the time a Land Development application is submitted.

Mr. Schaefer asked why a landscape plan was not submitted with the subdivision application.

The applicant stated that a complete landscape plan will be submitted with the Land Development Application.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional questions from the Planning Commission members, seeing none, she called for questions or comments from the audience.

Mr. Jason Flax - 204 Sunnybrook Road; stated that he shares a property line with the site involved in this application and he is very concerned with the documentation of several large trees that have already been removed from the property. He would like to know how the stormwater management will be addressed on this site, since his property is at a lower elevation. He also stated that there are deer and other wildlife that use this property and he would like to know if that will be addressed. Mr. Flax stated that he is an architect and a local business owner, as well as a neighbor.

Ms. Helwig stated that the issue of tree replacement and on-site stormwater management would be reviewed by the Township Engineer at the time the land development application is submitted for review.

Mr. Penecale informed everyone that a property of this size does not require a wildlife or native species study.

Ms. Ally Artur – 26 Gordon Road, stated that her family currently owns 210 Sunnybrook Road and the trees that have been removed to date were removed due to damage they received from recent storms. She also stated that the family's goal at the time they purchased the property was to renovate the home for use by her family and her brother who has mobility issues.

Mr. Thomas Harkins – 407 Cedar Lane, stated that his property is located to the rear of 210 Sunnybrook Road, and his concern is stormwater runoff. He informed everyone that his property has a small stream running through it at times of heavy rains and would like to see improvements made to reduce the amount of water that flows into and through his property.

Mr. Michael Vecchione – 405 Cedar Lane, stated that he lives next door to Mr. Harkins, and they cannot afford to have any additional runoff flow onto their properties. Mr. Vecchione informed everyone that what Mr. Harkins testified to is a true statement.

Ms. Katie Ulsh – 214 Sunnybrook Road, stated that there are a lot of trees along the property line and asked if any of those trees will be removed. She is concerned that two new homes will reduce property values in the neighborhood. She is also concerned with the impact this development will have of the wildlife in the neighborhood.

Ms. Kristen Frank – 213 Sunnybrook Road, asked what the applicant has planned for the property if the subdivision is approved. She also asked if there was a schedule for the construction of the two homes.

Mr. Ventresca stated that the plan at this point is to subdivide the property into two conforming lots. No decisions have been made on the construction of the two single family dwellings. As the development plan moves forward, they will be submitting a land development plan to the Township for review.

Mr. Narcowich stated that he forwarded two aerial photos of the property from 2022 that clearly show the mature trees on the property that have been removed. Those prints will be added to the application folder.

Mr. Jon Cobb – 224 Sunnybrook Road asked if the plan is to subdivide the property, build one house and sell off the other lot. He also asked how the Township holds the applicant responsible for the conditions of the land development approval if the applicant is no longer the builder.

Mr. Penecale used the example of 500 and 502 E. Gravers Lane as to the Township's ability to have a two-lot development span over the course of several years, with two separate builders, and still ensure that the conditions of the land development approval are still complied with. He also explained that the Township hold the job completion escrow if developer does not complete the public improvements.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional questions or comments from either the Planning Commission members or the audience. With no additional comments, she asked if there was a recommendation:

A motion was made to recommend approval of the application with the conditions that prior to the release of any permits for the development of this property, the applicant is required to obtain land development approval from Springfield Township. Secondly, the applicant is required to submit photographs of the existing vegetation on the property. The motion was seconded, and a vote was taken. The Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the application with the two conditions by a vote of 5 in favor and 1 opposed.

Ms. Helwig thanked the residents for attending the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was not completed.

Mr. Penecale asked Mr. Narcowich when the Planning Commission could expect the completed version of the revised Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance for a final review.

Mr. Narcowich stated that with the revisions sent in on the “Submission Requirements, Studies and Reports” that he received, he would hope that by summer’s end, a final draft would be ready.

The Planning Commission had a brief discussion on their plans to review the Comprehensive Plan or the Zoning Ordinance next. The Planning Commission was reminded that the Board of Commissioners may elect to offer as direction as what they would like to see addressed first.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Mark A. Penecale
Director of Planning & Zoning