

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
July 16, 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. Mascaro, Mr. Sands, Mr. Devine, Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Quill. Also in attendance were Commissioner Peter Wilson 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, June 4, 2024.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Wilson informed the Planning Commission that the Board of Commissioners have hired a new police officer, and that the department is now fully staffed. The Township has extended their mutual aid agreement and adopted an Emergency Share Plan. He stated that Ordinance #978 (The Amusement Device Ordinance) was adopted. The Commissioner reviewed the Zoning Hearing Board agenda and provided some detail on the request from Holy Martyrs Catholic Church for the installation of a modular classroom for use as a daycare. The Board of Commissioners extended the facilities contract for an existing basketball program. Commissioner Wilson stated that the Township has approved a contract to have the roof and Administration Building and the Public Works Building inspected structurally to determine if they could support the installation of solar equipment. In closing, Mr. Wilson informed the Planning Commission of appointments made to the review boards and commissions.

New Business:

PC1: The Planning Commission was presented with the request for a waiver of the requirements for the submission of a land development application for the proposed field improvements to the Springfield Township Middle School Complex. Terry DeGroot, P.E. and Douglas Taylor, P.E. provided an overview of the proposed improvements that will include the relocation of the shotput area and the discus area. The plan also includes the relocated of the existing stands and an equipment shed on the property. Mr. Taylor explained that walkways will be added to provide access to the fields and a concrete pad will be installed for the placement of the movable stands.

Ms. Helwig asked if the applicants have received and reviewed the Township Engineer's Review Letter dated July 11, 2024. Mr. DeGroot confirmed that the staff review letter was received and

that he believed the comments listed could be addressed to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer.

Mr. DeGroot stated that he was not sure exactly where the additional landscaping referred to in the review letter would be placed. Mr. Penecale explained that a landscape buffer needs to be installed along the shared property line with the homes that front on Bergan Road. The applicant referenced landscaping being installed as part of the approved land development for the addition to the Middle School Building. Mr. Penecale reminded everyone that the landscaping approved as part of the addition's project was limited to street trees along the Paper Mill Road frontage.

Mr. Taylor stated that the on-site stormwater management system has not been designed and that the School District has been presented with two options. One would include the installation of an underground seepage bed system and the second would be an extension of the existing swale to carry stormwater flows to an existing drainage system. Mr. Mascaro reminded the applicant that what is proposed to be installed must be approved by the Township Engineer.

Mr. Wilson asked if all the proposed improvements would be ADA compliant. Mr. Taylor stated that due to the topography changes throughout the site not all of the playing fields would meet ADA standards.

Ms. Helwig asked about the proposed use of the accessory building and the parking on the surrounding residential streets. Mr. Taylor stated that the shed is used for the storage of sports equipment only and that the School District is willing to address the issue of off-site parking. However, no decision has been reached on that subject.

Mr. Penecale stated that staff suggests that the field use permits be conditioned that parking is prohibited on Bergen Road. Mr. Quill asked if the parks were legally parked. The question was not answered.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional questions. Being none, she asked if there were any questions or comments from the residents in attendance. Ms. Siobhan Duffy, owner of 1206 Bergan Road stated that she was informed of the meeting from her neighbor who received a notice. She did not. Mr. Penecale checked the mailing list and Ms. Duffy is on the list. As we are aware, there are issues with receiving mail in a timely fashion.

Ms. Duffy had several questions about the location of the shotput area, the discus area and the relocated shed. Mr. DeGroot pointed out the proposed locations for those areas.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional questions, seeing none, she asked if there was motion on the request for a waiver from the requirement of a land development submission.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend approval of the requested waiver with the conditions that the applicant install the landscape buffer along the shared property line with the Bergan Road neighbors, an on-site stormwater management system be designed and installed to

the satisfaction of the Township Engineer and that the School District address the issue of parking on Bergan Road during sporting events. The recommendation was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

PC2: Mr. Albert Comly presented a request from the Springfield Township Historical Commission seeking the support of the Planning Commission to revise the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance to include language that would allow the Historical Commission to review subdivision and/or land development applications and provide comment to the Planning Commission. This would be similar to the Shade Tree Commission, the Environmental Advisory Committee or the STEMs Committee.

Mr. Comly stated that the Historical Commission would work within the time limitations already in place for the review of applications and listed within ACT 247 Reviews. He provided a brief overview of what actions the Historical Commission has taken to date and how the Historical Preservation Ordinance lists these reviews as an assigned task of the Historical Commission.

Mr. Comly stated that the Historical Commission would provide applicants a check list of qualifying features, similar to those already established by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. He stated that the information obtained from these reviews would be shared with the Chestnut Hill Conservancy.

Mr. Comly was asked if guidelines have already been established for what an applicant would be required to submit as part of this additional review. He stated that a check list or narrative would be required to be submitted.

Mr. Comly was asked if that information is commonly available to property owners and/or applicants. He replied yes and his answer was confirmed by Mr. Sands.

Mr. Mascaro asked if the checklist was available, and Mr. Comly stated that the Historical Commission was still in the process of completing those guidelines. In addition, Mr. Comly stated that the Historical Commission did not elect to simply go with a date driven trigger but was also looking at architectural elements and use of the building or site.

Mr. Penecale stated that the goal here is not just about preservation of the buildings, but to tour, photograph and create a record for those buildings that are to be demolished.

Mr. Schaefer asked who would determine which applications would be required to submit this additional information. Mr. Penecale stated that information would be forwarded to the Historical Commission members the same as it is currently forwarded to the STEMs Committee or the Shade Tree Commission.

Mr. Mascaro stated that he believes that this was a premature request and that the Historical Commission should bring this back to the Planning Commission once the checklist and guidelines have been determined. Mr. Schaefer seconded this statement. However, both gentlemen stated that they would support the request once additional information was available for review.

Mr. Devine stated that the guidelines are available and that they are listed within the Historical Preservation Ordinance.

Ms. Helwig pointed out that the Historical Commission was seeking the support of the Planning Commission at this time and was not seeking the adoption of specific language. She stated her support and motion was made, seconded and adopted by a vote of 4 in favor and 3 abstaining from the vote. Two of those abstaining were Mr. Sands and Mr. Devine who are both on the Historical Commission. Mr. Quill also abstained from the vote, but it was not for that reason.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Mark A. Penecale
Director of Planning & Zoning