

SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

November 5, 2020

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

The Planning Commission of South Strabane Township held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. in the Mae C. Reynolds Meeting Room of the Municipal Building, 550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301.

Present: Chairperson Fred Pozzuto, Vice-Chairperson Joe Kopko (via phone), Mr. Jay Gordon (via phone), Ms. Paula Phillis, and Mr. William Ursic

Not Present: Ms. Susan Bayard and Mr. Thomas Steele

Also present: Township Manager Brandon Stanick, Assistant to the Township Manager Patrick Conners, Township Solicitor Chris Furman, and Township Engineer Scott Groom.

Chair Pozzuto led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no Public Comments.

**APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES –  
September 3, 2020**

Mr. Ursic moved to approve the September 3, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Ms. Phillis seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**REVIEW OF APPLICATION FOR PRELIMINARY AND FINAL MINOR SUBDIVISION  
AND LAND DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL FOR THE EMERY SUBDIVISION &  
CONSOLIDATION PLAN ALONG E. BEAU STREET**

Township Engineer Groom read aloud the following review letter into the Public Record:

**Township of South Strabane  
Application for Subdivision Approval  
Preliminary and Final Approval Review  
Minor Subdivision Application – Emery Subdivision and Consolidation Plan**

An application for Subdivision Approval has been received from James Emery III for the Emery Subdivision & Consolidation Plan.

KLH Engineers, Inc has completed a review of the following drawings and documents received by this office for compliance with Township Ordinances:

- Township of South Strabane Application For Subdivision Approval dated September 15, 2020.
- Emery Subdivision & Consolidation Plan prepared by Wind Ridge Engineering Company dated June 2020, Revised October 8, 2020.

## **CHAPTER 206 SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**

### **ARTICLE IV – MINOR SUBDIVISIONS**

#### **206-13 APPLICATION PROCEDURE - Completeness Review**

The application includes all of the required information.

## **CHAPTER 245 – ZONING - Compliance Review - R-1 Neighborhood Residential District**

This property is zoned R-2 Suburban Residential District.

The Subdivision Plat contains the required Table of Zoning Requirements.

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The Township may have additional comments.

The application was reviewed solely for conformance to Township Ordinance standards. We are recommending both preliminary and final approval of the application for subdivision for the Emery Subdivision & Consolidation Plan.

Very truly yours,  
KLH ENGINEERS, INC.

Scott D. Groom, PLS

Ms. Phillis inquired regarding access off of Mum Drive. Mr. Emery noted that proposed lot 4-2 will have an easement and maintenance agreement allowing access off of Mum Drive. Mr. Pozzuto complimented Mr. Emery for the revised plans. Ms. Phillis inquired regarding the landslide detail within the Washington County Planning Commission's review letter. Mr. Pozzuto highlighted that the review letter serves as a general guide to the topographical and geological history for the property. Township Manager Stanick noted the formal verbiage included in the County's review letter is included within the Resolution which will be considered by the Board of Supervisors.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Pozzuto moved to recommend Preliminary and Final Minor Subdivision Approval for the Emery Subdivision and Consolidation Plan along E. Beau Street. Mr. Ursic seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

### **RECONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATION REGARDING SECTION 245-168.1 OF THE TOWNSHIP'S CODE CONCERNING THE USE AND IMPACT OF FRESHWATER AND WASTEWATER IMPOUNDMENTS**

Chair Pozzuto provided a brief history of the Agenda item noting the request emanated from the Conditional Use Application of the Munce Well Pad Freshwater Impoundment. A discussion regarding the content of the proposed Ordinance ensued. Mr. Pozzuto noted that the verbiage regarding the retention facility should be more specific. After a brief discussion, he stated the revised letter L (i.) should read "Tanks are to be placed on cut or engineered fill that must support

a minimum of 3,000 lbs. per sq. ft. of pressure.” Mr. Kopko stated that revised letter L(ii.) should read “core tests have to be performed and the results satisfy the requirements of this Ordinance.” Mr. Pozzuto expressed his desire to see the phrase “within the Agricultural Zoning District” struck from letter U. A discussion ensued regarding fracking completions and their overall impact on the surrounding area(s).

After some discussion, Ms. Phillis moved to recommend approval of the proposed Ordinance with the aforementioned alterations. Mr. Pozzuto seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-1 vote in the affirmative with Mr. Kopko voting no.

## **REVIEW OF THE ZONING DESIGNATION FOR THE PANCAKE NEIGHBORHOOD**

Township Manager Stanick began the discussion by illustrating the Township’s zoning map, highlighting a proposed “before and after” for sections of the Pancake neighborhood. The illustration included proposal to re-zone a portion of the Pancake neighborhood moving from C-2 Commercial to R-4 Residential consisting of 10 lots. The proposal also altered a multi-zoned lot which was proposed as a lot entirely zoned C-2 Commercial, rather than split between R-3 and C-2. Mr. Pozzuto noted the R-4 zoning designation is more in character with the existing housing stock and lot sizes surrounding the affected portion of the neighborhood. Township Manager Stanick noted that a portion of the neighborhood would remain C-2 under the proposal, highlighting an existing railroad right-of-way and existing commercial uses.

Ms. Frances Shrontz of Pierce Avenue inquired regarding her properties in the neighborhood. After some discussion, it was determined that both of her properties would be re-zoned residential under the proposal. Ms. Shrontz stated that she has an agreement in place to sell one of her properties which is currently zoned Commercial to an individual who plans to use the lot for a contractor’s office with storage. She expressed her concerns with the lot being re-zoned from Commercial to Residential. Mr. Pozzuto noted the Planning Commission’s efforts to consider the re-zoning of the Pancake neighborhood at the request of the residents. Ms. Phillis noted that it would be nearly impossible to please all parties, but the Commission would work and listen to all points of view. After some discussion, Township Manager Stanick asked Ms. Shrontz to invite the contract purchaser to discuss his vision with Staff prior to the next Planning Commission meeting.

A discussion ensued regarding the recently established winery (10 McCoy Lane) in the neighborhood. Mr. Gordon noted his concerns with re-zoning immediately after the Conditional Use was granted for the business. Mr. Pozzuto highlighted that there is a certain amount of risk for any business owner, including the possibility of a re-zoning.

Township Manager Stanick then discussed the purpose and authorized uses for the R-4 Residential Zoning District. He then highlighted the associated risks with increased density of a neighborhood noting the existing lots are significantly larger than the requirements for the R-4 District. A discussion regarding the Comprehensive plan and the overall vision for the Township’s future housing stock ensued. Mr. Pozzuto asked Staff to prepare a similar analysis for the Pancake neighborhood using the R-3 Zoning District standards.

## **REVIEW OF SECTION 245-175 OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE CONCERNING STANDARDS FOR DRIVE-THROUGH FACILITIES**

Assistant to the Township Manager Connors discussed the origin of the request noting a Starbucks located in the Trinity Point shopping plaza has experienced large traffic backups in recent months due to the pandemic. He noted Staff has worked with the Mosites Corporation who owns and maintains the plaza to develop a solution to alleviate the traffic. He continued by illustrating photographs of the temporary traffic barriers placed to channel traffic associated with the Starbuck's drive through. He then highlighted the Township Code's current standards for drive through facilities.

Mr. Pozzuto noted that often during the initial Land Development process the actual tenants are unknown for the units with the proposed drive through facilities. Ms. Phillis highlighted that the pandemic is placing a greater amount of pressure on drive through and take out ordering for many restaurants. Mr. Pozzuto stated the impact of drive throughs are use-driven (I.e. Starbucks, Chick-fil-a, etc.) noting the review process often is unaware of the exact use. He stated with the issue being a case by case matter, it may be premature to alter the current drive through regulations. He then drew a parallel to the Township's parking lot requirements which he views as overly burdensome highlighting the Code was written to prepare commercial parking lots for one or two shopping days, leaving vast acres of asphalt vacant for most of the year. He noted imposing similarly burdensome regulations for all drive through facilities could be detrimental for future development. He concluded by stating greater attention could be paid in the future for potential tenants with drive-through facilities.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Ursic moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36p.m. Ms. Phillis seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully,

Patrick M. Connors  
Assistant to the Township Manager