

SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 6, 2022

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

The Planning Commission of South Strabane Township held its Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 6, 2022 at 7:04 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Municipal Building, 550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301.

Present: Thomas Steele, Chair; Jay Gordon, Vice Chair; Joe Kopko (via Zoom); Paula Phillis; and Fred Pozzuto

Not Present: None

Also Present: Brandon Stanick, Township Manager; Jim Sutter, Assistant to the Township Manager (via Zoom); Scott Groom, Engineer; and Dennis Makel, Solicitor

Mr. Pozzuto led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Pozzuto announced Planning Commission will take Agenda Item #10 first and then return to the regular order of the agenda.

Ms. Phillis arrived at 7:05 p.m.

REORGANIZATION FOR 2022

Mr. Pozzuto announced the Planning Commission would reorganize as follows for 2022:

- Chair – Thomas Steele
- Vice-Chair – Jay Gordon
- Secretary – Paula Phillis

**APPROVAL OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES –
DECEMBER 2, 2021**

Chair Steele announced this item is tabled to allow staff time to prepare the minutes for consideration at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Planning Commission allocates a period of time during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the Planning Commission on any matter. Each person addressing the Planning Commission is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three (3) minutes.

There were no comments from the Public.

PREAPPLICATION MEETING WITH MENARD, INC. REGARDING A PROPOSED COMMERCIAL RETAIL BUILDING ALONG OLD MILL BOULEVARD, FURTHER IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL NOS. 600-003-00-00-0020-11, 600-003-00-00-0020-09 AND 600-003-00-00-0020-10, IN THE C-2 COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT

Chair Steele introduced the item. On December 22, 2021 the Township received preliminary plans from Menard, Inc. (d/b/a/ Menards) for a proposed Commercial Retail Building (“Development”) along Old Mill Blvd., further identified as Parcel Nos. 600-003-00-00-0020-11, 600-003-00-00-0020-09 and 600-003-00-00-0020-10 (“Property”) in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District. The Property is approximately 45 acres in size and located to the north of the Old Mill commercial development and is currently vacant. The Applicant proposes to construct and operate a Menards home improvement store on the Property. Specifically, it would consist of a big box retail facility, a garden/shipping center and a detached drive-thru lumber yard. A parking area with 437 total stalls will also be constructed with associated lighting and additional stormwater facilities.

Mr. Nicholas Brenner, Real Estate Representative from Menard, Inc., provided an overview of the store. He stated Menards is a little bigger than their competitors and they sell more than just home improvement goods. He highlighted the drive-through lumber warehouse, describing it as fenced lumber yard with a two-lane exit manned by employees. Mr. Brenner stated they are attempting to not “overpark” the site and that approximately 425 spaces tend to work for their business.

Mr. Gordon raised concerns over the entrance/exit the store would have to Berry Road and the additional traffic it would cause. Mr. Pozzuto asked about the frequency of delivery trucks the Applicant is expecting. Mr. Brenner stated they expect 3-5 delivery trucks each day. He added they should not be using the back access point from Berry Road and instead use the access from Route 19. Mr. Gordon stated the concern over Berry Road has more to do with local traffic, raising an example of pickup trucks carrying lumber from the store and heading North. He noted in this example there would be a temptation to take Berry Road to Manifold to the Interstate 79 interchange. Mr. Gordon stated he would like to hear from Police Chief Drew Hilk regarding his experience on Berry Road. Mr. Kopko expressed agreement with Mr. Gordon’s concerns and stated he would like to see this explored in more detail.

Mr. Sam Adler, representing the Property owner, stated the Development will not exceed the traffic which would have been generated under the now defunct project previously granted Land Development approval for the site. Discussion regarding Berry Road ensued. Mr. Gordon noted Berry Road is an old country road which requires attention.

Chair Steele inquired on the timeline of the Development. Mr. Brenner stated they are 90% complete with their wetlands application. He noted there are significant issues regarding this matter with the site and it will take 9-12 months for this to be processed. He expressed a desire for this process to be completed in the Fall and then to start construction. He stated construction is anticipated to take two seasons.

Township Engineer Scott Groom noted one of the parcels is designated as a conservation parcel. Mr. Adler stated he believes this issue has been handled. Mr. Kopko asked if this plan will involve

re-routing a section of Old Mill Boulevard. Mr. Adler confirmed this to be the case and described the proposed re-routing in more detail. Mr. Kopko reiterated the Planning Commission would like information regarding accident data on Berry Road from the Police Department. The preapplication meeting concluded at this time.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLIATION FOR A TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING CODE FROM AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY TO ALLOW “MINI WAREHOUSE OR SELF-STORAGE FACILITY” AS A CONDITIONAL USE IN THE C-2 COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT

Chair Steele introduced the item. On December 17, 2021 the Township received an application for a text amendment from Amerco Real Estate Company (“Applicant”) for a text amendment to Section 245-63B of the Zoning Code to allow “Mini Warehouse or Self-storage Facility” as a Conditional Use in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District. The Applicant represents the U-Haul Vehicle Rental Facility located at 960 Washington Road (“Facility”) and is under contract to purchase two adjacent parcels (Parcel Nos. 600-001-01-02-0013-01 & 600-001-01-02-0013-00) to the northeast (“Property”). The Facility and Property are both located in the C-2 Commercial Zoning District.

The Zoning Code defines “Mini Warehouse or Self-storage Facility” as, “a building or group of buildings in a controlled-access and fenced compound that contains various sizes of individual, compartmentalized and controlled-access stalls and/or lockers leased to the general public for a specified period of time for the dead storage of personal property.” This use is currently only authorized in Industrial Zoning Districts. The Applicant wishes to purchase the Property in order to expand their current operations. They propose to construct two buildings serving as self-storage facilities. Because “Mini Warehouse or Self-storage Facility” is not permitted in the C-2 Zoning District, the Applicant is seeking the proposed text amendment to the Zoning Code.

Mr. Bernie Rabik, legal counsel for the Applicant, provided an overview of the request.

Solicitor Dennis Makel read the following exhibits into the record:

- Exhibit A – Application and related materials received December 17, 2021;
- Exhibit B – Drawing #1 of the Property;
- Exhibit C – Drawing #2 of the Property;
- Exhibit D – Proof of advertisement of Public Hearing in Observer-Reporter; and
- Exhibit E – Handout detailing proposal from Applicant.

Mr. Michael Zemba, Area District Vice President for U-Haul, was sworn in by the stenographer at this time.

Mr. Zemba explained the Applicant’s interest in the Property, stating they have a sales agreement with the current owner and are looking to receive approvals prior to closing. He stated the goal is to purchase the Property in order to expand the current Facility to incorporate self-storage. Mr. Zemba stated the proposed use is low impact and produces little traffic flow. He expressed the opinion the use is consistent with the goals of the Township’s comprehensive plan. Mr. Zemba stated the request would not result in any danger to the health, safety and welfare of Township residents.

Referencing the five-acre minimum lot size requirement in the Industrial Zoning Districts for “Self-storage facilities” Mr. Pozzuto inquired on the size of the Property. Mr. Zemba stated the existing Facility is 6.1 acres and the combined area of the Property in question is 2.31 acres. Mr. Pozzuto noted the difficulty in examining the drawings provided by the Applicant and requested the Applicant provide larger drawings for the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Stanick inquired on the three existing residential structures on the Property. Mr. Zemba stated all of them will be demolished. Ms. Phillis asked for clarification on if the Applicant currently has a sales agreement with the current Property owners. Mr. Zemba confirmed this to be the case and introduced Megan Moore, who was in attendance representing the sellers. A brief discussion ensued on the history of the Property.

Ms. Phillis asked Ms. Moore if there was anything the sellers wanted to express to the Board. Ms. Moore stated there was nothing to her knowledge and added they are excited about this going forward. A brief conversation ensued off the record.

Mr. Makel asked if the examples of self-storage facilities provided in the proposal were similar to what they wished to build on the Property. Mr. Zemba confirmed this to be the case and brief discussion ensued on the details of the proposed facility.

Mr. Stanick raised two points. First, the Text Amendment be contingent on Land Development approval and building permits being issued. Second, the Planning Commission secure design rights and the authority to approve the design of the structure. Mr. Rabik stated they would have no objections to these items. Ms. Phillis asked for clarification on if the Applicant will be consolidating the parcels comprising the Property with the parcel on which the existing Facility is located. Mr. Zemba confirmed they would be doing this.

Chair Steele stated he would like to see a draft of the proposed text amendment prior to making a recommendation. A discussion ensued on the exact language of the proposed amendment. Mr. Kopko stated he would like to see drawings indicating how the facility will appear on the Property, given the challenging topography. A discussion ensued on the existing 20-foot height requirement for “Mini-warehouse or Self-storage Facilities”.

Ms. Moore was sworn in at this time.

Ms. Moore stated her desire the Sales Agreement not be made public without the permission of the sellers. Mr. Makel suggested the Sales Agreement be returned to Ms. Moore, but it was then determined it had never been provided or entered into the Record. Mr. Stanick requested Ms. Moore obtain her client’s signature for the zoning application. Ms. Moore indicated she would do so.

Mr. Pozzuto moved to enter Exhibits A-E into the Public Record. Ms. Phillis seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Gordon moved to continue the hearing to provide the Applicant the opportunity to provide a draft of the proposed text amendment and drawings of the proposed facility. Mr. Pozzuto seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

CONSIDERATION OF FINAL PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL FROM MEADOWS LANDING ASSOCIATES, LP. FOR THE MEADOWS LANDING PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT LOCATED ALONG LANDINGS DRIVE & U.S. ROUTE 19, PARCEL NO. 600-001-00-00-0017-18, IN THE R-4 RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICT

Chair Steele introduced the item. On October 15, 2021 the Planning Commission received applications from Meadows Landing Associates, LP. (“Applicant”) for Final Planned Residential Development (“PRD”) Approval for the Meadows Landing PRD (“Development”) located along Landings Drive and U.S. Route 19, commonly known as Parcel No. 600-001-00-00-0017-18 (“Property”), in the R-4 Residential Zoning District. The application for Final PRD Approval was initially considered at the December 2, 2021 Planning Commission meeting. Consideration of the application was tabled per the comments from the Township Engineer being addressed and the receipt of the Washington-East Washington Joint Authority’s (“WEWJA”) sewer capacity letter.

Chair Steele noted there was no one representing the Applicant in attendance. It was the consensus of the members of the Planning Commission they should recommend denial given Applicant not being in attendance.

The Planning Commission provided Ms. Charlene Scuvotti, resident on Pine Valley Road, appearing over Zoom, the opportunity to express her concerns regarding the proposed Development at this time. Ms. Scuvotti stated she had been in touch with the Washington County Conservation District (“WCCD”) and Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”) regarding their completeness letter to the Applicant. She stated these entities have yet to receive a response from the Applicant regarding the letter. Ms. Scuvotti at this time read the comments the letter from the WCCD and DEP had noted to the Applicant.

Mr. Jeff Bull requested his concerns regarding the Development be heard as well. He noted KLH Engineers has not recommended approval based on their review letter. He noted WEWJA has not issued a capacity letter indicating they have given approval or can handle the Development. Mr. Bull made comments regarding the Township’s recent termination of the South Strabane Township Sanitary Authority.

Mr. Pozzuto moved to recommend the Board of Supervisors deny Final Planned Residential Development Approval for Meadows Landing Associates, LP. for the Meadows Landing Planned Residential Development Located along Landings Drive & U.S. Route 19, Parcel No. 600-001-00-00-0017-18, in the R-4 Residential Zoning District. Mr. Kopko seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FOR PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT FROM WASHINGTON PENN PLASTIC CO., INC. FOR A PARKING LOT EXPANSION LOCATED AT 2020 N. MAIN STREET IN THE I-1 INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT

Chair Steele introduced the item. On December 15, 2021, the Township received an application from Washington Penn Plastic Co., Inc. (“Applicant”), for Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval, for the expansion of an existing parking lot located at 2020 N. Main Street (“Property”) in the I-1 Industrial Zoning District. The Applicant had originally submitted an application on May 5, 2021 and was subsequently granted Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval from the Board at their August 24, 2021 meeting. They are required to obtain approval again due to changes made in response to Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (“PennDOT”) review.

The Applicant is seeking to expand existing parking lot facilities by constructing a new parking area on the site. The proposed parking lot will be located in the front yard along N. Main Street. The total width of the proposed area will be 62 feet, while the length will be 149 feet, for a total area of 9,238 square feet of additional impervious surface. The area will consist of 25 new parking stalls, including 2 ADA compliant handicapped stalls. The parking stalls will be 9 feet by 18 feet, while the ADA handicapped stalls will be 11 feet by 20 feet. A 15-foot landscape buffer will be planted between the new parking lot and N. Main Street in addition to a mulch bed. The original plan included an asphalt pad with drainage onto N. Main Street. PennDOT did not approve of this plan and will not issue a Highway Occupancy Permit. The Applicant has adjusted the plans to remove the drainage onto N. Main Street and replace approximately 47% (4,300 square feet) of the pad with pervious pavement.

Mr. Groom had previously provided the following Engineer Review Letter:

**Township of South Strabane
Washington Penn Plastic Parking Lot Expansion
Application for Land Development Plan Approval**

An application for Land Development Plan Approval was received on December 23, 2021, submitted by Audia Group for the proposed Washington Penn Plastic Parking Lot Expansion.

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 Land Development Plan Approval.
- Land Development Plans prepared by HMT and Associates, dated April 29, 2021.

**Chapter 109 Excavations, Filling and Grading
109-6 Responsibility of Administrator**

§109-6.F.(1) A slope greater than 3H:1V is considered to be a steep slope and will require a slope stability analysis as described in the chapter.

**Chapter 198 Stormwater Management
198-3 Applicability**

§198-3.A.(4) Construction of or addition of new impervious or semipervious surfaces (i.e., driveways, parking lots, roads, etc.). A revised Stormwater Management Plan is Required.

**Chapter 206 Subdivision and Land Development
Article VI – Land Development Procedures
206-35 Submission of Application; Review**

§206-35.C.(2) If, after receiving the Township Engineer's completeness review, the applicant fails to submit a revised application in adequate time for the Township Engineer to review it, or the revised application fails to adequately address the deficiencies cited in the completeness review, the Planning Commission may table consideration of the application until the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission. If necessary, the Planning Commission may request that the applicant grant the Board of Supervisors an extension, in writing, of the ninety-day period to act on the application. It has been longer than ninety days since the previous engineering review. A new Application for Land Development Plan Approval is required.

206-36 Preliminary and Final Application Requirements

§206-36.C A copy of the applicant's cover letter transmitting the application to the Washington County Planning Commission for review is required.

§206-36.I.(1) A boundary survey by a registered professional land surveyor of the lot or lots of record on which the land development is proposed.

§206-36.I.(3) The name, address, certification and seal of the registered surveyor who prepared the survey is required.

§206-36.I.(8) Dates of preparation and dates of all revisions to the plan.

§206-36.I.(12) Final grading plan that demonstrates compliance with Chapter **109**, Excavations, Filling and Grading, of the Code of the Township of South Strabane.

The Township may have additional comments.

The Land Development Application was reviewed solely for conformance to Township Ordinance standards. The application submitted contains deficiencies that need to be addressed by the applicant. A written response must be provided addressing the above items, including a revised plan. We are recommending approval of the Land Development Application for the Washington Penn Plastic Parking Lot Expansion contingent upon the deficiencies being addressed.

Very truly yours,

KLH ENGINEERS, INC.



Scott D. Groom, PLS

Mr. Pozzuto moved to recommend the Board of Supervisors grant Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval for Washington Penn Plastic Co., Inc. for a Parking Lot Expansion Located at 2020 N. Main Street in the I-1 Industrial Zoning District. Mr. Gordon seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FOR PRELIMINARY AND FINAL MINOR SUBDIVISION APPROVAL FROM THOMAS AND YVETTE KISLING FOR THE KISLING SUBDIVISION PLAN NO. 1 LOCATED AT 1885 E. BEAU STREET IN THE A-1 AGRICULTURAL ZONING DISTRICT

Chair Steele introduced the item. On December 23, 2021 the Township received an application for Preliminary and Final Minor Subdivision approval from Thomas and Yvette Kisling (“Applicants”) for the Kisling Subdivision Plan No. 1 (“Development”) located at 1885 East Beau Street, further identified as Parcel No. 600-002-00-00-0008-02 (“Property”) in the A-1 Agriculture Zoning District.

The Property is approximately 73 acres and is accessed through a private drive off of E. Beau Street. There is one dwelling on the Property, which is the residence of the Applicants. There are existing 50-foot rights-of-way on the eastern and western sides of the parcel. Sewage is provided through an on-lot septic system. The Applicants propose to subdivide the parcel into the following 5 lots: Parcel #1, 13.358 acres in size; Parcel #2, 11.879 acres in size; Parcel #3, 14.736 acres in size; Parcel #4, 15.220 acres in size; and Parcel #5, 12.546 acres in size. The existing house will be located on Parcel #1. The proposed Development carves out a 50-foot right-of-way that will be used to provide access to the proposed lots. As the maximum number of lots that can be served by a private road is five, the Applicants are requesting a modification from the requirements of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (“SALDO”) to allow five lots along a private road.

Mr. Groom had previously provided the following Engineer Review Letter:

**Township of South Strabane
Application for Subdivision Approval
Preliminary and Final Approval Review
Minor Subdivision Application – Kisling Subdivision Plan No. 1**

An application for Subdivision Approval has been received from Yvette Kisling for Kisling Subdivision Plan No. 1.

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 Subdivision Approval dated December 23, 2021.
- Kisling Subdivision Plan No. 1 prepared by HMT and Associates dated December 22, 2021

CHAPTER 206 SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

ARTICLE V – MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS

206-20 PRELIMINARY APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS-Completeness Review

All applications for preliminary approval of a major Subdivision shall include the following:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| §206-20.C | A copy of the applicant's cover letter transmitting the application to the Washington County Planning Commission for review. |
| §206-20.E.(1) | A topographical survey of the total proposed subdivision by a registered professional engineer or registered professional land surveyor. |

- §206-20.I.(9) The existing platting of land adjacent to the site, including the names of adjoining owners, and all existing sewers, water mains, culverts, petroleum or gaslines and fire hydrants on or within 100 feet of the site shall be shown.
- §206-20.I.(10) The names of all adjoining subdivisions.
- §206-20.I.(11) Existing watercourses, wetlands, tree masses and other significant natural features.
- §206-20.I.(14) A wetlands determination report for all sites which have hydric soils or soils with hydric inclusions and, if applicable, a wetlands delineation report for all jurisdictional wetlands on the site and the design techniques proposed to accommodate them.
- §206-20.I.(15) Contours at intervals of elevation of not more than five feet where the slope is greater than 10% and at intervals of not more than two feet where the slope is 10% or less.
- §206-20.I.(18) Existing streets and rights-of-way on or adjoining the site, including dedicated widths, roadway widths, approximate gradients, types and widths of pavements, curbs, sidewalks and other pertinent data.
- §206-20.I.(19) Existing and proposed easements, locations, widths and purposes.
- §206-20.I.(25) The location of all existing sewer lines, culverts, or other underground structures, with pipe sizes and types, together with a preliminary layout of necessary extensions of, or additional, sewer lines or other proposed underground utilities, and indicating easements for public utilities, sewage and drainage.
- §206-20.I.(27) The type and location of proposed public improvements and the distance to each existing utility.
- §206-20.I.(31) Plan monumentations, as required by § 206-53 of this chapter. We recommend waiving the concrete monuments requirement under §206-53 A. All points and corners should be monumented with standard iron or steel pins.

206-25 FINAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS-Completeness Review

- §206-25.E The final plat, in accurate and final form for recording, which clearly delineates the following:
- §206-25.E.(16) Location, type and size of all monuments and lot markers in accordance with the standards and requirements of § 206-53 of this chapter and the Washington County Planning Commission and an indication of whether they were found or set.
- §206-25.E.(19) Certification clauses shown in Appendix IV, as applicable.
The Owner's Adoption, Individual Acknowledgement, and Recommendation of the South Strabane Township Planning Commission need to be revised to match Appendix IV.

CHAPTER 245 ZONING

ARTICLE II – TERMINOLOGY

245-9 DEFINITIONS

YARD, FRONT

A yard extending between side lot lines across the full lot width from the street right-of-way line to a line parallel to the front lot line known as the "front building line," the minimum horizontal distance required by this chapter.

The setback lines shown along the existing 50' Right of Ways for Parcel #1 and Parcel #5 should be shown as 50' front setback lines.

ARTICLE IV – A-1 AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT**245-16 AREA AND BULK REGULATIONS**

§245-16.D.(1) Minimum front yard: Principal and accessory structures: 50 feet.

§245-16.E.(1) Minimum rear yard: Principal structures: 50 feet.

§245-16.E.(2) Minimum rear yard: Accessory structures: 20 feet.
The setback lines need to be shown correctly on the plans.

The Township may have additional comments.

The Application for Subdivision Approval contains deficiencies that need to be addressed by the applicant. The application was reviewed solely for conformance to Township Ordinance standards. Revised plans and a review response letter stating how these comments were addressed, shall be submitted to address the above comments. We are recommending both preliminary and final approval of the application for subdivision for subdivision for Kisling Subdivision Plan No. 1 contingent upon the deficiencies being addressed.

Very truly yours,
KLH ENGINEERS, INC.



Scott D. Groom, PLS

Mr. Pozzuto raised a concern with the proposed lots and inquired the Applicant regarding approved perc sites. He noted the lots may not pass perc tests.

Mr. Pozzuto moved to continue consideration of the application to provide time for the Applicant to address comments in Engineer Review Letter and conduct perc tests. Mr. Gordon seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Pozzuto moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. Ms. Phillis seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully,

Jim Sutter
Assistant to the Township Manager