

**SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP
ZONING HEARING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

NOVEMBER 14, 2022

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

On Monday, November 14, 2022 at 5:58 p.m., after due advertisement according to law, a Public Meeting of the South Strabane Township Zoning Hearing Board (“ZHB”) was held at the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301) and the following were present:

Art Sullivan, Chairperson
James Stewart, Vice-Chairperson
Michele Tysiak

Also Present

Jim Sutter, Assistant to the Township Manager
Michael Cruny, ZHB Solicitor
Sheila Rozanc, Stenographer

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Sullivan lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF THE ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Chair Sullivan moved to approve the September 12 and October 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH

Ms. Rozanc administered the oath to those in attendance.

4. PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FROM BROWN’S TOWING FOR A USE BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 55 DAVIS SCHOOL ROAD IN THE C-2 ZONING DISTRICT TO OPERATE AN AUTOMOTIVE TOWING SERVICE PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 245-121 OF THE ZONING CODE REGARDING COMPARABLE USES NOT SPECIFICALLY LISTED

On August 3, 2022 the Township received an Application for a Use by Special Exception from Brown’s Towing (“Applicant”), seeking to operate and maintain an Automotive Towing Service facility at 55 Davis School Road (“Property”) in the C-2 Zoning District pursuant to the provisions of Section 245-121 of the Zoning Code regarding Comparable Uses Not Specifically Listed. Chair Sullivan stated the ZHB has received the application and submitted materials and noted it is fairly comprehensive. He asked the Applicant if they had anything to add to their submittal.

Joseph Brown, owner and operator of Brown's Towing, stated his company has been in business since 2000 and incorporated in 2011. Mr. Brown stated he currently operates out of Meadville, Greenville and Erie and described the overall operations. He stated they respond to approximately 100 calls per day and employ 20 people.

Upon a question from Chair Sullivan, Mr. Brown stated they have not had any conversations with neighboring property owners. Chair Sullivan noted they have not received any comments from neighboring property owners. Mr. Brown stated there will be one dispatcher on site. Chair Sullivan, noting there will be eight drivers based out of the Property, asked if there will be as many as eight vehicles parked during business hours. Mr. Brown confirmed there would be at least eight vehicles parked at the Property. Mr. Stewart noted the Property has plenty of space for parking.

Upon a question from Mr. Stewart, Mr. Brown confirmed they would not augment their operations to include state inspections, repairs, etc. Chair Sullivan asked if maintenance on their own vehicles will occur at the Property. Mr. Brown stated he has an off-site third party that performs any maintenance work unless it is in enough disrepair to make relocation impossible. A discussion on who performs the various maintenance and repair activities ensued.

Chair Sullivan asked if there would be any changes made to the lighting currently on site. Mr. Brown stated they will install solar lights. In response to a question from Chair Sullivan, Mr. Brown confirmed the lighting standards required by the Township will not be exceeded. Chair Sullivan asked if towed vehicles will always go to another site and not be stored at the Property. Mr. Brown confirmed this to be the case, but stated there are rare instances where the State Police will put a hold on a vehicle where it will be stored on site. He stated in these instances the vehicle would be stored in a building.

Upon a question from Mr. Stewart, Mr. Brown confirmed he is expanding his area of operation. A discussion on signage ensued. Solicitor Michael Cruny inquired on the hours of the operation. Mr. Brown stated there will be drivers available 24 hours a day and a dispatcher will be on site from 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. He stated the dispatcher's hours may be extended for inclement weather. In response to questions from Mr. Stewart, Mr. Brown stated they use rollback trucks and will tow vehicles up to 26,000 pounds in weight. Mr. Brown also confirmed the trucks will have back-up beepers. Mr. Brown reiterated the drivers will pick up their trucks, but leave and not return until they are done working.

Ms. Rozanc swore in Glenn Teeter at this time.

Mr. Teeter stated he is the owner of the location and was under the impression there was an automotive towing service at the Property in the past. Mr. Teeter stated the Property is in a remote area. He stated there were other interested parties in the location and he believes the Applicant is the best choice for the Property and the Township.

Mr. Cruny read the following items into the Public Record:

Exhibit A – Application for Use by Special Exception;

Exhibit B – Legal Notice published in Observer-Reporter;

Exhibit C – Neighbor notice letter; and
Exhibit D – Staff Memorandum dated November 9, 2022.

Chair Sullivan moved to enter Exhibits A-D into the Public Record. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Chair Sullivan moved to approve the application from Brown's Towing for a Use by Special Exception for the property located at 55 Davis School Road in the C-2 Zoning District to operate an Automotive Towing Service pursuant to the requirements of Section 245-121 of the Zoning Code regarding Comparable Uses Not Specifically Listed. Ms. Tysiak seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

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

There were no comments from the Public.

6. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:11 p.m. Chair Sullivan moved to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss potential litigation. Ms. Tysiak seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote. The ZHB returned from Executive Session at 6:40 p.m.

As there was no further business to come before the ZHB, Chair Sullivan moved to adjourn. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Sutter
Assistant to the Township Manager / Assistant Zoning Officer