

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

October 20, 2020

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER

On Wednesday, October 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., after due advertisement according to law, a public meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) was held in the Municipal Building, 550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301 and the following were present:

Art Sullivan, Chairperson
James Stewart, Vice-Chair
Andy Rembert, Member

Assistant to the Township Manager Patrick Conners
Mr. Jon Lucas & Mr. Kevin Sims of Washington Health System, Representing the Applicant
Mr. Frank Zatta of Manifold Road

2. ZHB MEETING MINUTES

Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported the September 2, 2020 Zoning Hearing Board meeting minutes were omitted from the packets delivered to members of the Zoning Hearing Board. He apologized for the error. After some discussion, the members of the Board stated the minutes could be considered for approval at a future meeting.

3. PUBLIC HEARING: Consideration of a Special Exception Application Submitted by Washington Health System for an Accessory Structure for the Property located at 240 Wellness Way

Mr. John Lucas, Director of Facilities Management for Washington Health System introduced himself to the Board. After a brief discussion, Assistant to the Township Manager Conners read aloud a summary of the Applicant's request. He reported that on September 18, 2020 the Township received a Special Exception application from the Washington Health System (Applicant), applying for the placement of a temporary medical trailer at the property located at 240 Wellness Way. He highlighted the proposed trailer measures 40' x 8' (320 sq. ft.). He noted that currently, the Applicant is conducting tests using a temporary outdoor tent. He stated the Applicant is seeking a Special Exception subject to Section 245-159 of the Township's Code to assist in the conduction of COVID-19 testing in the C-2 General Commercial Zoning District. He then provided background of the Applicant's property outlining the size of the property, the current use and history of the property, and noted the surrounding zoning designations. He highlighted the trailer is currently stationed on the property, but is not in use, according to the Applicant. He concluded by reading aloud an excerpt of Section 245-159 of the Township's Code, noting that approval of all temporary uses or structures shall be granted for a specific time period, not to exceed six months. He continued by reporting if continued need for the temporary use or structure on an annual basis is demonstrated by the applicant, approval may be granted for annual renewal by the Zoning Officer of the temporary use permit for the temporary use or structure, provided all conditions of the original approval are maintained.

Mr. Lucas discussed the COVID-19 testing procedure currently utilized at 240 Wellness Way. He highlighted the testing occur outdoors with the assistance of a drive through tent measuring 400 sq. ft. He stated that with the anticipated inclement weather it is essential to provide a more weather resistant testing station. Mr. Rembert inquired if a permit has been filed with the Township for the existing tent. Assistant to the Township Manager Conners stated that no permit is on file, but noted due to the circumstances, the Township is not actively seeking to cite temporary structures that are utilized during the Pandemic. He noted the Township's recently implemented moratorium for outdoor dining restrictions and briefly discussed the review process for such requests.

Mr. Lucas continued by outlining the safety features of the temporary trailer, noting the unit includes a negative pressure system and HEPA air filters to ensure the safety of everyone in and outside the testing trailer. Mr. Rembert inquired how testing was conducted. Mr. Lucas noted the testing protocol is a work in progress, but highlighted it is appointment based and all tests require a script from a doctor. He reported that approximately 40 tests are allocated per day. He highlighted that operating hours for the testing site are Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. He emphasized that one patient is tested at a time. Mr. Rembert inquired how many tests could be distributed on a worst-case scenario. Mr. Lucas reported the site has the capacity to test 70-80 individuals daily. A discussion ensued on the testing experience.

Assistant to the Township Manager Conners illustrated photographs and plot plans of the requested Special Exception. Mr. Smider inquired if the trailer would/could move from the illustrated location on the property. Mr. Lucas stated that if permitted, the trailer would be stationary. A discussion ensued regarding the parking situation on the property. Mr. Sullivan inquired regarding signage for the testing facility. Mr. Lucas stated that existing signage is sufficient for the time being, but noted that larger signs may be required in the winter to safely direct patients to the site. He highlighted the existing site serves to alleviate the testing burden on the local hospital infrastructure. A discussion ensued regarding COVID-19.

Mr. Frank Zatta, a resident along Manifold Road, inquired if the current testing center utilizes Quest Diagnostics for test results. Mr. Lucas reported that Washington Health System has replaced Quest with the BD Max testing system which has resulted in expedited test results. Mr. Sullivan inquired regarding the length of time between testing and results. Mr. Lucas reported that results taken between 3-4 hours to report. Zoning Solicitor Smider entered Exhibit A - as all submissions made by the Applicant and Exhibit B - all advertisement and notification of the hearing into the Public Record. Mr. Rembert inquired regarding the proposed lighting of the testing site. Mr. Lucas stated that if needed, all lighting would be in compliance with the Township's standards. He highlighted that operating hours will be conducted during the daytime, but noted some additional lighting may be necessary in the early morning and late afternoon citing the ending of daylight-saving time. He concluded by highlighting the trailer is ready to go and reported that he will work with the Township in any capacity to ensure the operation runs safely.

After some discussion, Mr. Rember moved to approve a Special Exception for a 320 sq. ft. temporary testing trailer at 240 Wellness Way, Washington, PA 15301 per the following conditions:

- The trailer will remain stationary and shall not be relocated without prior authorization by the Township;
- There shall be no Public access to the trailer;
- Operating hours for the temporary use shall be from Monday – Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.;
- All lighting on the property shall meet the Township’s standards; and
- The property owner shall follow all Federal, State, and Township guidelines and protocols concerning COVID-19.

Mr. Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Smider then outlined the proceeding timeline for approval and formal documentation of the Special Exception.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

5. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business to come before the Zoning Hearing Board, Mr. Rembert moved to adjourn. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick M. Conners
Assistant to the Township Manager