

SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 2, 2024

The Swatara Township Planning Commission regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Chad Martin at 7:00 pm at the Swatara Township Municipal building, 599 Eisenhower Boulevard, Harrisburg, PA. The call to order was followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members of the Commission present:

Chad Martin, Chairman	Karen Bear
Chuck Bowser, Vice Chairman	Mark Caruso
Katie Ibberson	

Also Present: Robert Ihlein, Township Director of Planning and Zoning and Secretary for the Commission, Danielle Derolf, P.E. with Dawood Engineering, Michael Hess, P.E. for HRG, and Karen Dixon, planner with Dauphin County Planning Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Caruso made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2024, meeting. Mrs. Ibberson seconded the motion. The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS, INCLUDING STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

There were no comments from those in attendance.

OLD BUSINESS - SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS:

a. Plan No. 2023-12C: “Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Swatara Paxton Developers LLC – Proposed Wawa Food Market and Fueling Station”, dated 11/21/2023

Project: proposing to redevelop the current Hoss’s Restaurant site on the corner of Route 322 and Bridge Road to a Wawa store and fueling station

Location: 9009 Bridge Road

PLAN STATUS: Accepted for review on ; BOC ACTION BY (90 days), EXTENSION GRANTED BY APPLICANT TO May 31, 2024

Applicant: Swatara Paxton Developers, LLC

WAIVER REQUESTS:

SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 2, 2024

The applicant was represented by Claudia Shank, Esq., of McNees Law. She came to provide a status update. Comments on the land development plans have been provided by the Township and County reviewers. The applicant is in the process of assembling a response to all those comments, as well as comments from PennDOT regarding the application for 2 Highway Occupancy Permits. Eric Mountz of Traffic Planning & Design reported on the Traffic Impact Study process. The scoping meeting for the TIS was held with PennDOT and Dawood in late 2023. TPD then prepared the study, which was reviewed by Dawood. TPD then submitted responses to the comments and design plans to PennDOT for review. Their response to the study is that the proposed project will generate traffic sufficient to warrant a 375-foot-long right turn lane from Route 322. This presents an engineering challenge because there is a steep drop off at the edge of the road down to the subject property. A retaining wall may be a solution, but DOT does not want the wall to be in the road right-of-way. The engineers for the applicant are trying to develop other solutions to meet this requirement. Mr. Mountz also addressed pedestrian traffic on Bridge Road. A crosswalk near Schiavonni Park may be possible with a flashing beacon warning if DOT will allow it. Another solution the applicant is looking into is the possible purchase of the adjoining lot. This would allow people in the park and on the river trail to access the convenience store by going under Bridge Road rather than across it. The applicant will need a month or more to develop the final solutions to these issues and expect to return in June.

ACTION: None taken.

b. Plan No. 2024-01C: “Preliminary / Final Land Development Plan for Steelton Terminal for Equity Development Partners”, dated 02/16/2024

Project: proposing to construct 3 warehouse / truck terminal buildings that will mainly be located in Lower Swatara Township and Steelton Borough; entrance will be in Swatara.

Location: Quarry Road and Harrisburg Street

WAIVER REQUESTS:

1. Section 253-10A - 11 requiring the submission of a Preliminary Plan
2. Section 253-32 – requiring the construction of sidewalks
3. ADDED: .MODIFICATION OF SECTION 253.10A(1)(b)[5] REQUIRING PLANS TO BE DRAWN AT A SCALE OF 1 INCH = 100 FEET

Mr. Jeramy Bittinger, P.E. of Landworks Civil Design present the plan. The applicant owns several parcels that are located in 3 municipalities. The largest warehouse building is located in Steelton. Only small portions of 2 buildings are in Swatara. The primary entrance will be from Harrisburg Street and Quarry Road off Eisenhower Boulevard. The primary entrance will be from Harrisburg Street and Quarry Road off Eisenhower Boulevard. He is waiting for all of the comments from the 3 municipalities and will then work on revisions to the plans. Ms. Derolf commented that she is waiting for the Traffic Impact Study report from Traffic Planning & Design and will share it when it becomes available. She also noted that all of the truck traffic would be coming out to the intersection of Quarry Road and Eisenhower Boulevard, which is controlled by Swatara Township.

ACTION: Mr. Bowser made a motion to postpone review of the plans until the next meeting. Mrs. Ibberson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 2, 2024

b. Plan No. 2024-02C: “Final Land Development Plan for Stephen & Linda L. Lenkevich – 7841 & 7901 Witmer Drive”, dated 02/20/2024

Project: minor land development and lot consolidation to construct an addition on to an existing commercial building

Location: 7901 Witmer Drive

WAIVER REQUESTS:

1. Section 253-10A - 11 requiring the submission of a Preliminary Plan

Ben Kirk of Burgett Associates presented the plan for the applicant / owner. The initial plans have been revised to satisfy the comments from all of the reviewers. It came to light that the applicant will need approval of a modification to allow for a larger scale for the plan drawings. The applicant will also be requesting a deferral of the requirement to construct sidewalks.

ACTION: Upon hearing there were no other issues to address, there was a consensus to recommend approval of the waiver, modification and deferral. Mrs. Ibberson made a motion to recommend conditional approval of the plans to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Bowser seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Plan No. 2024-03C: “Preliminary / Final Land Development Plan for Swatara Exchange”, dated 02/27/2024

Project: re-development of the Harrisburg Mall property with retail and flex space buildings and outparcels for related uses.

Location: 3501 Paxton Street

WAIVER REQUESTS:

1. Section 253-10A - 11 requiring the submission of a Preliminary Plan
2. Section 253-32 – requiring the construction of sidewalks in specific locations.
3. ADDED: 253.19.B.3 – regulating the subdivision and land development of properties that front on a limited access highway.

Joshua Hoffman, P.E. of Pennoni Associates presented the plans. With him was Karen Watsic, Vice President of Development with St. John Properties, representing the owner. The evolution of the mall property will feature a new mix of retail, restaurants, a convenience store, and light industrial uses. They have received a letter from the Township Authority that a sewage facilities planning module will not be needed because the need is similar to the former mall. The Traffic Impact Study is still being assembled by Traffic Planning & Design, and the report is due by May. Overall impervious surface area is being reduced. The applicant is working on a comprehensive response letter to all of the review comments.

There was discussion about sidewalks and the proposed internal road network. PennDOT will be providing sidewalks along the Bass Pro frontage on Paxton Street as part of the I-83 widening project. The developer will install them the rest of the way to Mall Road. There will be sidewalks along the new buildings. There are 2 areas where sidewalks are not feasible due to physical constraints, those being along the Route 441 frontage and along the Mall Road frontage. Waivers will be requested for these

SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 2, 2024

areas. The proposed plans show a wide driveway from Paxton Street through the property to Friendship Road. Ms. Dixon, County Planner, commented that this road has the potential to become a short cut for people coming off the I-83 exit to get to Route 441. The applicant will look into what measures can be taken to reduce thru-traffic.

ACTION: Mrs. Bear made a motion to postpone review of the plans until June. Mr. Bowser seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS - SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Plan No. 2024-04C: “Preliminary Land Development Plan for Swatara Township Bishop Park”

Project: development of a new municipal park

Location: Highland Avenue near Eisenhower Boulevard

WAIVER REQUESTS:

1. Section 247-14.B.1 – regarding the rate controls on the 1-year storm for Point of Interest #1.

Betsy Davison, P.E. of HE Black and Associates presented the plan. This is a preliminary plan that shows development of the 23-acre park in 2 phases. The Township has received a grant from the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources for phase 1. This phase includes construction of the main driveway, several parking areas, stormwater management facilities, and other basic park amenities.

ACTION: Mrs. Ibberson made a motion to accept the plans for review. Mrs. Bear seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – PLANNING INFORMATION, ISSUES AND ORDINANCES

Discussion regarding land use and zoning issues selected by the Commission that may be addressed and recommended to the Board of Commissioners:

This list submitted in January 2024 for suggested clarifications and corrections to the zoning ordinance:

- a. Improved definitions of lots and yards with new graphics
- b. Minimum lot sizes for dwelling units in the Commercial zoning districts (see “Attachment 2” from ordinance)
- c. “Home Occupation” – the wording used in the definition section is different than that used in additional regulations 2095-96.D(9) – “minor” vs “light”, etc.
- d. “Night Club” – no definition, plus the Use Table H indicates there are additional requirements in 295-39, but there are none
- e. Commercial Fences – no distinction in the zoning ordinance made between residential and commercial uses. The current maximum height for all fences is 6 feet.
- f. (NEW FOR MARCH) – industrial scale food & beverage processing including beer brewing, alcohol

SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 2, 2024

distilling, vinegar & pickling of foods, sugar refining. These uses are not mentioned in the Township zoning ordinance and are regulated in the City of Harrisburg ordinance

Discussion: Mr. Ihlein shared a presentation regarding item b, minimum lot sizes for dwelling units in the Commercial zoning districts in March. He presented a new draft of his research from Susquehanna Township, Lower Paxton Township, and the TRPC Model Ordinance. There is great variation in the way permitted housing densities are depicted in these ordinances and a wide range of possible densities. It was suggested that he look at the Mechanicsburg Borough ordinance for additional research.

OTHER BUSINESS – PLANNING INFORMATION, ISSUES AND ORDINANCES

There was no other business.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. TCRPC annual luncheon to be May 9, 2024, at the Marriott Hotel on Lindle Road – Mr. Ihlein will be submitting the names of those who want to attend.

- b. **Next meeting – May 7, 2024**

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no additional comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bowser made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Caruso seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Ihlein