

Mr. Douglas Worley called the Regular Meeting of the Franconia Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm on Monday, April 2nd, 2018. Planning Commission Members present included Keith Kneipp, Steven Barndt, Kyle Koffel, and Nancy Shelly. Director of Planning and Zoning Beth T. Gooch, Township Engineer Douglas Rossino, and Township Solicitor Eric Wert. Chairman Jerry Delong was absent and excused. Ms. Patricia Alderfer was also absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairman Worley asked if there were any comments or corrections to be made to the minutes, hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Barndt made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 5th, 2018 regular meeting. Ms. Shelly seconded the motion. The motion passed, 5-0.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

OLD BUSINESS

Stefanowicz (#01-18) Mr. Rick Mast from Mast and Associates, was present on behalf of Luke Stefanowicz and Mr. Stefanowicz's father. He summarized the application before the board. The property is jointly owned by Luke and his father. The plan is to subdivide a lot off the back in which Luke will develop and reside. The current plan is for property located on Creamery Road adjacent to the Turnpike. Public sewer is to going to be extended and use a low-pressure grinder system according to the Franconia Sewer Authority. There is pressure to have the sewer pipe run before the Turnpike Commission and PennDOT complete their resurfacing work. Mr. Mast stated that for the short term the newly created lot will use a pump and haul system and be serviced by a private well. Originally the applicant submitted a conditional use request, during Township Engineer review it was determined that the option for lots existing prior to January 16, 2006, the R-175 dimensional requirements can be applied. The newly created lot is not a flag lot as it has the required road frontage. The property is relatively steep and the house will be located in the back of the lot where there are some relatively nice views. The plan proposes to share the existing access to Creamery Road through an easement. Mr. Mast commented on a few items in the Engineer review letter. He requested an interpretation regarding required side and rear yards. Due to the irregularity of the triangular shaped lot, Mr. Mast stated that the location if any of the rear yard could be applied to either side of the property. Mr. Rossino reported that the review applied the side yard to the area along the Turnpike. If that setback was applied it would push the house closer to Creamery Road not the Turnpike. Mr. Mast reported that should the

house need to be pushed forward on the lot the view would be negatively affected. Mr. Rossino agreed that it can be discussed since it does not fit the definition of a corner lot. Mr. Barndt commented that if both yards could be considered side yards, and make argument that there is no rear yard, then the house could remain in its proposed location. Both Mr. Worley and Mr. Kneipp agreed that the location of the house is a good one. Solicitor Wert will be in touch with a legal interpretation for the yard requirements on such lot.

Mr. Mast stated that a second issue is in the interpretation of the Rural Residential Zoning Ordinance. He refers to the portion requiring open space only appears within the conditional use section. Mr. Mast suggested that Solicitor Wert take a look and weigh in on that interpretation as well. Mr. Mast stated that there will be 64,000 square feet of open space on lot two, it just would not be a separate parcel or have an easement over a portion of the lot.

Mr. Mast announced that waivers would be requested regarding road improvements and the drainage issue will be addressed. Mr. Rossino informed the board that currently water flows from the property onto Creamery Road and there is no swale in place along the road way to handle the water. Mr. Mast added that the drive slopes right down to the street and that too will be addressed. Mr. Rossino recommended that the plans show the proposed sewer and that if easements are required that they be taken care of all at once during the recording process. Mr. Worley questioned the shed and accessory building on the plans. Mr. Mast responded that the shed that crosses the property line will either be moved or removed and the remaining accessory buildings will be located within the building envelope of the existing lot by flipping the side yards proposed on the plans. Mr. Worley recommended, and was agreed by Mr. Mast, that the plans be cleaned up to address the comments made and return next month to discuss approval.

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

ZONING HEARING BOARD APPLICATIONS

303 Harleysville Pike – Ms. Gooch reported that a Zoning Hearing is scheduled for Thursday April 5th, 2018. The applicant, Ramoco Marketing LLC is requesting set back variances for a canopy to be installed over existing gas pumps and dimensional variances for a new sign. The property is located within the R-100 zoning district of the Township and has received a use variance for the gas station operation in the past.

OTHER BUSINESS

Allebach Tract – Mr. Rick Mast presented to the board a proposed subdivision of the property located at the corner of Cowpath and Forest Road. Previous proposals from former owners showed higher density and had attempted to request a variance to utilize the Mixed Residential Concept. The Township denied the request and this new plan shows a by-right design. Mr. Mast stated that the parcel is approximately 14.6 acres and the present owner wishes to preserve the existing barn building and structures. In order to do so that lot would be 2.6 acres and the remaining lots will either meet or exceed the lot size requirements. The plan shows 10 single family homes with a cul-de-sac that meets the criteria of the code. The building envelopes are very large and the one proposed flag lot meets the double dimensional requirements. The remaining lots all have the required street frontage will be accessed along the new interior road instead of Cowpath Road. The plan also shows the existing access to the dwelling to remain instead of entering through the cul-de-sac. Mr. Mast reported that curbing is proposed along the interior and the cul-de-sac and potential road widening can be discussed at a later date. He added that the possibility of regulatory waters on lots 5 and 6 will also be looked into. Mr. Barndt asked if there is proposed public sewer. Mr. Mast responded that it is his understanding that it is available but will confirm with the Franconia Sewer Authority. Mr. Kneipp questioned a possible trail connection. Mr. Barndt added that the trail would only work if it made sense. Mr. Worley commented that he does not see any reason for objection to the proposal. Mr. Barndt stated that the existing farm likely contains more than one residential unit and there are possibly at least three living units and would all need to hook up to public sewer.

Public Comment – Mr. Glenn Godshall, representing Hagey Coach and Tours and Hagey Transportation Services of 210 Schoolhouse Road, was present to address the board about a potential project coming their way that had recently received zoning approval. He stated that the current transportation operation has been at this location since 1990, has roughly 215 employees and has witnessed significant growth on the street. He informed the board that Gorski Engineering had submitted a subdivision plan that was approved in 1991 using the R-130 zoning requirements at that time. Mr. Godshall stated that Gorski Engineering wishes to combine lots 3 and 4, on the plans that he obtained from the recent zoning hearing. The variance was to allow the driveway in the side yard of the Limited Industrial lot.

Mr. Godshall pointed out that there is a large amount of commercial traffic and the 3-year expansion plan for the Turnpike will only add to it. Mr. Rossino commented that the work for the Turnpike has not yet been approved or determined the exact route for construction. Mr. Godshall raised concern that the bus gate and the employee entrance are not a safety issue. He stated that the employees coming in are not an issue but it is coming out that is the concern. When making a left out of the Hagey facility drivers have to face full speed commercial trucking traffic. He explained that the bus driveway has the best sight line in that area. The proposed drive on the Gorski plans spilt the heart of the Hagey property. Gorski is proposing the use of 40,000 square foot of building that will add to commercial trucking. Mr. Rossino stated that no official plan submissions have been made at this time. He added that the applicant would need to meet with PennDOT since PennDOT dictates what will happen on that road. Sight distances will be looked at and could even become a lighted intersection depending on the number of trips. He added that a traffic study will be required that may even affect intersections further down the road. Mr. Kneipp suggested that the drive be flipped to align with Hagey Center Drive. Mr. Godshall expressed his dislike for a traffic light, stating that it is a timing sequence issue. He reported that he could have up to 175 vehicles at pick up time all in the same window. He added that while he is not against the development of the land, he does want the drive to line up with Hagey Center Drive. The consensus of the Planning Commission is that they are in agreement. Mr. Worley responded that the concerns would be forwarded along to Gorski.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Monday May 7th, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Barndt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kneipp seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth T. Gooch,

Director of Planning and Zoning