

AGENDA ITEMS

- Conditional Use – Mark’s Jewelers
- Plan Review - Mark’s Jewelers
- MCPC – 2040 Comprehensive Plan Presentation

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

July 16, 2015

The July 16, 2015, meeting of the Montgomery Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Jonathan Trump at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Commissioners Leon McGuire, James Rall and Ellen Reynolds. Absent were Commissioners Jay Glickman and Steven Krumenacker. Also present was Bruce Shoupe, Director of Planning and Zoning, and Candyce Fluehr Chimera, Supervisor Liaison.

The minutes of March 19, 2015, were approved as submitted.

There were no public comments. However, a visitor was present; a Boy Scout who was attending as a requirement for a merit badge.

Mark’s Jewelers – Conditional Use Application

Mark’s Jewelers – Land Development Plan

The first item on the agenda was a discussion of the Conditional Use application and Land Development plan for DJZZ Enterprises, Mark’s Jewelers. Wendy Feiss McKenna, attorney, Rolph Graf, engineer, and Jim Brusilovsky, owner, were present to address these proposals. Ms. McKenna advised that Mr. Brusilovsky was the owner of the property at 975 Bethlehem Pike. It was the old E.A. Dages building. They were proposing to renovate the building as a retail jewelry store. Retail use is permitted in the Highway Limited Industrial Overlay District as a conditional use. Ms. McKenna advised that they had received several variances from the Zoning Hearing Board. They have also submitted a land development plan and would like to discuss both proposals with the Planning Commission. The Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on the conditional use application on July 27, 2015. Ms. McKenna stated that they would like to receive a recommendation from the Planning Commission. Mr. Trump asked if everyone was alright with discussing the proposals together as the plan was the same for both applications. Mr. Graf then presented the land development plan for the project. He advised that the applicant wished to renovate the existing building, construct new parking areas, stormwater management area and install landscaping improvements. He advised that there would be an access to the rear of the property which was shared by adjacent properties. This road would allow traffic to flow out to Stump Road. He stated that the maintenance of this road was shared. Each property owner was responsible for their portion of the road. Mr. Graf advised that they had received review letters from all of the township consultants and that they would comply with the majority of their comments. However, there were some waivers which they were requesting. The waivers are as follows:

1. Section 230-78.A (ZONING) - this section of the Zoning Ordinance requires a 25 foot wide landscape screening buffer be provided along all property lines. The applicant has received a variance from this requirement along the Bethlehem Pike frontage. If the property abuts commercial or industrial uses the side and rear property buffers can be reduced or waived if deemed appropriate by the Montgomery Township Board of Supervisors. *The applicant asks that the Township please consider that the properties along the left and right sides of the subject property are improved and both zoned HI-Highway Industrial. The property on the left contains a hotel with no buffering. The property on the right contains a retail thrift shop with no buffering. Shrubs are proposed along the left side of the Mark's Jewelers building. There are no significant proposed improvements along the right side of the building. The architectural improvements to the existing building will improve the view for the surrounding properties. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver provided that the buffer is delineated in the record plan to the greatest extent possible.)*
2. Section 205-10.H (4) - the applicant proposes angled parking in the side parking lot. This section of the ordinance does not provide provisions for this configuration. *The applicant is requesting a waiver from the stall angle, dimensions and aisle width requirements. The applicant asks that the Township please consider the unique orientation of the building, leaving approximately 60 feet between the existing building and property line. There is insufficient space for perpendicular parking resulting in the angle parking layout. Traffic circulation will be restricted to one-way. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver.)*
3. Section 205-17.D (1) - per the requirements of this section, the applicant should install curbing along the driveways providing access to the rear of the property and to the enclosed parking area. *The applicant asks that the Township please consider that the driveways along the rear of the property are existing and are only being widened as part of this proposal. Runoff from the existing driveways can be better treated by the surrounding lawn without curbing. Installation of curbing will result in additional tree loss around the rear of the building. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver provided that the applicant utilizes the adjacent grass areas to address storm water runoff volume and water quality.)*
4. Section 205-17.D (1) and 205-22. A - per the requirements of this section the Township should determine whether curb and sidewalk should be provided along the Bethlehem Pike frontage. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that Bethlehem Pike is a state roadway and will require a PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit. Also consider there is no other curb and sidewalk along Bethlehem Pike in the vicinity of the subject property. (The Board of Supervisors should determine whether curb and sidewalk should be provided along the Bethlehem Road frontage.)*
5. Section 205-49.C - per the requirements of this section the landscape plans shall be prepared by a Landscape Architect registered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that the project is a redevelopment of an industrial site and they therefore propose minimal landscaping. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver.)*
6. Section 205-52.B (4)(a) - per the requirements of this section a total of 56 shade trees and 112 shrubs are required to meet softening buffer requirements around the property perimeter. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that the project is a redevelopment of an existing industrial site. Minimal improvements are being expanded towards the common property lines with the neighboring properties. The building and parking will be improved and will be an enhancement to the surrounding properties. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver*

provided a fee in lieu is submitted for the deficient plant material, or the plant material is installed in another location within the Township. The plan is deficient by 52 shade trees and 112 shrubs. $52 \times \$350 = \$18,200$ and $112 \times \$65 = \$7,280$.)

7. Section 205-52.D - per the requirements of this section a total of 8 shade trees and 222 shrubs are required parking lot landscape requirements. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that 5 shade trees and 105 shrubs are being provided pursuant to this section. There is insufficient room for the remaining required trees around the parking lot. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver provided a fee in lieu is submitted for the deficient plant material or the plant material is installed in another location within the Township. The plan is deficient by 3 shade trees and 117 shrubs. $3 \times \$350 = \$1,050$ and $117 \times \$65 = \$7,605$)*
8. Section 205-52.D (1)(c) - per the requirements of this section parking islands are to be not less than fifteen feet in width and contain not less than 290 square feet of planting area. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that they are proposing parking islands of approximately 10 feet wide. There are physical constraints between the edge of the existing building and property line limiting the amount of space dedicated to parking and islands. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver.)*
9. Section 205-53.C.4 - per the requirements of this section the applicant is required to provide replacement trees if disturbance is proposed in excess of the required preservation amounts. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that they are preserving a number of existing trees along the rear sides of the building. Some existing tree disturbance is necessary to improve the rear driveways and install the stormwater management system. However, there is no space remaining for any additional replacement trees. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver provided a fee in lieu is submitted for the deficient plant material or the plant material is installed in another location within the Township. Tree replacement calculations are required to determine the extent of the waiver.)*
10. Section 205-10.H (7)(b) - per the requirements of this section the handicapped parking spaces must be increased to 12 feet wide. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider that they are proposing a minimum 8 foot wide space with 8 foot wide unloading zone. The proposed space configuration complies with ADA criteria. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver.)*
11. Section 205-24. A - per the requirements of this section street lighting shall be installed along each street in a subdivision and along each street front abutting a public street. *The applicant is asking that the Township please consider there are 2 existing street lights at the entrance to the property. They are also proposing internal site lighting. (The consultants have no objection to this waiver.)*

A discussion of the waiver requests occurred. The Planning Commission members had no objection to the waiver requests with the understanding that it was only to the extent that the Township consultants had recommended. The members were concerned regarding the flow of traffic around the parking lot. They wished to make certain that there was appropriate signage to reflect the direction of the traffic. The Planning Commission also mentioned the condition of the roadway behind the property. They were concerned with both the condition of the roadway and lighting. Mr. Graf explained that Mr. Brusilovsky was also concerned for the safety of his employees and customers. They would be installing more lighting in that area. He further stated that they would do what they could as far as the roadway was concerned, as Mr. Brusilovsky did not own the entire road. After some further discussion a motion was

made by Ms. Reynolds, seconded by Mr. McGuire, to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the requested waivers be approved to the extent that they are recommended by the Township Consultants. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. McGuire then made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the preliminary/final plan be approved subject to satisfactory compliance with all comments of the Township consultants. Motion was seconded by Ms. Reynolds and carried unanimously. Chairman Trump stated that the Commission also needed to make a recommendation on the Conditional Use application. Mr. Graf explained that they had received review letters from the Township consultants and would comply with all of their comments. Chairman Trump then made a motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use application to the Board of Supervisors. Motion was seconded by Mr. Rall and carried unanimously.

Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan 2040

Members of the Montgomery County Planning Commission were in attendance to present an overview of the County's Comprehensive Plan 2040. Crystal Gilchrist, Matt Edmond, Matt Popek and Steve Kline were present from MCPC. Ms. Gilchrist presented an overview of the County's 2040 Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the 2015 Implementation Plan is attached to these minutes. The Planning Commission members thanked Ms. Gilchrist for the presentation. She distributed information from the County Plan and further advised that they were available for any questions.

This meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Marita Stoerrle
Development Coordinator/
Recording Secretary