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Planning Commission Meeting Minutes February 17, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Montgomery Township Planning Commission was held at the Township Building at 7:30 pm, Thursday, February 17, 2022. The members of the Planning Commission in attendance included: Jim Rall, Jay Glickman, Rutuke Patel, and Leon McGuire. Also present: Patrick Hitchens, Township Solicitor; and Marianne McConnell, Deputy Zoning Officer.

Approval of Minutes – The November 2021 minutes were tabled for approval for the next scheduled meeting.

Conditional Use Application Caliber Capital, LLC / 739 Bethlehem Pike - The applicant is equitable owner of the 46,914 square foot property located at 739 Bethlehem Pike. The property is currently improved with an 8,225 square foot two-story vacant building (former Fabric Store / Schoolhouse). The applicant proposes to demolish the existing building and construct a new 3,680 square foot one-story car wash with associated drive aisles, parking and double lane stacking. The applicant was granted zoning relief earlier this month in regards to the required landscaped areas and the requirement to provide a loading space.

The applicant's attorney, Matthew McHugh, and Lindsey Brehlinger of Bohler Engineering presented the proposed project to the Commission. The applicant proposes a tunnel express style car wash with 20 vacuum spaces and 3 additional parking spaces for employees. The car wash provides total stacking of up to 22 vehicles from the tunnel to the access drive aisle (18 stacking from the pay station to the access). The Planning Commission members posed questions and concerns to the applicant in regards to timing, stacking, and heavy volume after snowstorms. The applicant provided the following information: Memberships are available and provide a faster option to customers; the pay station reads the license plate and notifies the vehicle to proceed. Non-members are limited to three options to choose from at the pay station. The double lanes merge into one after the pay station. A gate in each lane will open allowing each vehicle to proceed accordingly. An attendant is available at the pay station area and three employees are on site during the hours of operation. Once through the tunnel the vehicle either leaves the site or proceeds to the vacuum stalls (parking area). The applicant testified that it takes a vehicle 20 seconds to move through the tunnel with seven seconds between vehicles.

The applicant confirmed that they will comply with the review letter comments (other than the waivers requested) and stated that the Access Agreement with the adjacent property owner allowing access at the Bethlehem Pike entrance is currently being finalized.

The applicant also conducted a traffic count at another local express car wash to determine needs and has agreed to implement a contingency plan about vehicles spilling onto Horsham Road or Bethlehem Pike during peak times after significant weather events creating increased traffic / volume than normal.

On a motion made by Jay Glickman and seconded by Rutuke Patel, the Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the Conditional Use application subject to Township Consultant and Staff review letters. All in favor.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm. The next meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on March 17, 2022 at the Township Building.