

MINUTES
WEST MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
DATE: March 12, 2024

The meeting was called to order by David Beecher at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Planning Commission Members:

David Beecher – Present
Felicia Dell – Present
Patrick Hein – Absent
Jennifer Smith-Funn – Present via Zoom
Fred Walters – Absent

Staff:

Rachelle Sampere, Zoning Officer – Present
Rainer Niederoest, Dawood Engineers – Present

Tonight's Planning Commission meeting was held in person and broadcasted over Zoom.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: by Felicia Dell to approve the January 9, 2024, meeting minutes. (The February 13, 2024 public meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather.)

SECOND: by Jennifer Smith-Funn

MOTION PASSED: Unanimously (3-0)

ZONING HEARING BOARD CASES

ZHB 24-04 – Justin Reimold and Henry Reimold – request a special exception §150-9 Uses Not Specifically Permitted (home occupation for contractor's office ancillary to the permitted use); in the alternative request a variance §150-14 Permitted Uses to permit a home occupation (contractor's office) and a variance §150-12.1 to allow more than one principal use per lot **located at 1730 West College Avenue** (Tax Map: IH; Parcel: 0033F) in the Agricultural Zone.

Mr. Justin Reimold presented the request. He stated that his parents are the current property owners. In order to purchase the property and make it financially feasible for his family, he must be able to operate his family business, a contractor's office, on the same property as the existing single family detached dwelling. They would like to keep the property in the family. The property is located in the Agricultural Zone. Mr. Reimold explained that there would be no outdoor storage of materials, as he currently rents a laydown lot nearby at Woodberry Farms. There would be some pick-up trucks, trailers and some construction equipment stored on the subject property similar to the equipment that would be permitted on the property as part of the farm/agricultural use. There would be approximately 10 full-time employees and seasonal employees coming to the property beginning at 6:00 a.m. and leaving the property no later than 7:00 p.m. The employees would come to the subject property to pick up their work vehicles (ie. pick-up trucks, trailers, etc.) to take them to the construction job sites. Mr. Reimold does not anticipate any customers or clients coming to the subject property. There would be no business sign on the subject property. Mr. Reimold indicated that the contractor's office is not specifically permitted elsewhere in the Zoning Ordinance which is why he requested a Special Exception pursuant to Section 150-9.

Zoning Officer Sampere's interpretation is that a contractor's office, while not specifically defined in the Zoning Ordinance, meets the definition of a business office, which is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as

an office used in the management, control or administration of another business activity. Zoning Officer Sampere's interpretation is that the proposed use of the subject property is provided for in other zoning districts within the Township, therefore a special exception would not be appropriate in this case.

Mr. Reimold explained that his property is situated between the solar energy farms currently under construction and an active quarry. He does not believe that his proposed business office with full-time and seasonal employees would be detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood. He also indicated that several neighbors are planning to attend the Zoning Hearing Board meeting to show they are in favor of this application.

After some discussion between the Planning Commission members, a consensus was reached that a special exception would not be appropriate and that the variances would be necessary. While a hardship was not presented by the applicant, Ms. Dell agreed that the vehicles and/or equipment associated with the proposed business would be similar to the farm equipment permitted in the Agricultural Zone and that the variances requested would be necessary. Dr. Beecher asked if there would be any business activity visible from surrounding areas or from the public street. Mr. Reimold stated that no business activity would be visible except for the occasional vehicle or trailer which would be permitted to be stored on the property.

MOTION: by Jennifer Smith-Funn to recommend the Zoning Hearing Board grant the variances requested subject to the following conditions:

1. Full-time and/or seasonal employees not living on the subject property shall not arrive at the property before 6:00 a.m. and shall leave the property no later than 7:00 p.m.
2. The maximum number of full-time employees shall not exceed 10 full-time employees.
3. There shall be no signs identifying the proposed business on the subject property.

SECOND: by Felicia Dell

MOTION PASSED: Unanimously (3-0)

NEW BUSINESS

T-886 Final Land Development Plan Building 8 Expansion for BAE Systems Land and Armaments, LP – to depict a 3,995 square foot building expansion and a 4,804 square foot canopy addition to existing Building #8 located at 1100 Bairs Road (Tax Map: HG; Parcel: 0056A) in the General Industrial (I-3) Zone. Review/Action. *(Tabled due to inclement weather on February 13, 2024)*

Mr. Grant Anderson, P.E. of Site Design Concepts, Inc. presented the final land development plan on behalf of BAE Systems Land and Armaments, LP. Mr. Anderson explained that the proposed building expansion on building #8 and canopy addition would be constructed over existing impervious area. They would not be required to provide additional stormwater management; however, they will be relocating a storm sewer pipe in the area of the proposed construction which would still diver the stormwater to the same discharge point on the parcel. There would be no proposed increase in water and sewer consumption. The proposed building expansion and canopy area is needed to increase the efficiency of the current operations.

Rainer Niederoest of Dawood Engineers explained that the stormwater management comments on his memo have been addressed by the Applicant. Zoning Officer Sampere explained that the remaining open comments on her review memo were administrative comments. Staff did not have any objections to plans being recommended for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

MOTION: by Felicia Dell to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the final land development plan subject to the following comments being addressed prior to the plan being recorded:

1. A statement on the plan indicating any waivers. This statement must be revised, prior to recordation of the plan, to acknowledge the outcome of the requested waivers. (§121-14.D.14 & §121-15.D)
2. The signatures and seals of the individuals responsible for the plan shall be affixed to the plan prior to approval by the Board of Supervisors. (§121-15.F)
3. The notarized signature of the owner(s) shall be affixed to the plan prior to approval by the Board of Supervisors. (§121-15.F.4)
4. All administrative items shall be addressed prior to plan recording (payment of all invoices, etc.)
5. All final plans, as recorded, shall be submitted in electronic format (i.e. PDF) Please scan and email a copy with all required signatures and recording information on the plans to WMT after recording.

SECOND: by Jennifer Smith-Funn

MOTION PASSED: Unanimously (3-0)

MOTION: by Felicia Dell to recommend the Board of Supervisors grant the following requested waivers:

- W1. Preliminary Plan. (§121-9)
- W2. Location of existing features within 200 feet of the subject tract. (§121-14.C.3)
- W3. Drafting Standards. (§121-14.A.1 & §121-15.A)
A waiver is being requested for the 1" = 150' scale plan on Sheet C-3.
- W4. Location and Description of Existing Lot Markers and Monuments. (§121-14.B.11 & §121-15.B) A waiver request from requiring property markers to be set has been added to the Title Sheet.
- W5. Sidewalks and Curbs. (§121-25)

SECOND: Jennifer Smith-Funn

MOTION PASSED: Unanimously (3-0)

DISCUSSION

Zoning Officer Sampere informed the Planning Commission members that Michelle Brummer of Gannett Fleming will be attending the April 9, 2024 Planning Commission meeting to give an update on the Township's Comprehensive Plan preparation.

Dr. Beecher informed the Planning Commission members that he and Zoning Officer Sampere will be attending Planning Commission training through PMPEI on March 13, 20 and 27, 2024.

ADJOURN

MOTION: by Jennifer Smith-Funn to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: by Felicia Dell

MOTION PASSED: Unanimously (3-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.