

MINUTES  
WEST MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
DATE: June 13, 2023

The meeting was called to order by David Beecher at 7:00 P.M. Members present: David Beecher, Patrick Hein, Richard Gordon and Sonia Wise Others present: Rachelle Sampere, Township Zoning Officer Member Absent: Fred Walters

Tonight's Planning Commission meeting was held in person and broadcasted live over Zoom for viewing purposes only. The Zoom link was posted on the West Manchester Township website under "Latest and Breaking News". Questions and comments were not taken over the Zoom forum.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION: by Patrick Hein to approve the May 9, 2023, meeting minutes as presented.

SECOND: by Sonia Wise

MOTION PASSED: Unanimously (4-0)

**ZONING HEARING BOARD CASES**

**ZHB 23-12 – Donald L. Hake** – requests a special exception §150-85.D and §150-354 for a two-family conversion **located at 1923 West Market Street** (Tax Map: 04; Parcel: 0322) in the Local Commercial Zone.

Mr. Donald Hake presented the request to the Planning Commission members. Mr. Hake stated that the first floor of the building was used as his business office for many years, which was a use by right. The pandemic changed the need for office spaces. Mr. Hake no longer has agents that operate out of this facility. His business is now operated out of his home. He has since marketed the space for permitted uses but has struggled to find a commercial tenant for the space. Mr. Hake's most recent tenant was a massage therapist that only occupied the space for a few months. He explained that he has found that the need for housing is more prevalent than the need for office space. Mr. Hake explained that the building was originally a single-family dwelling that was converted into a commercial unit on the first floor and an apartment on the second floor, meeting the requirements of the Local Commercial Zone. Mr. Hake is requesting a special exception to allow a two-family conversion which would enable him to convert the first floor to a residential dwelling unit. It currently has an eat-in-kitchen, full bathroom, and four rooms. The first-floor tenant would also have access to the basement where they could use the existing washer/dryer hook-ups. The first floor and second floor tenants have separate entrances.

Ms. Sampere stated that since there would be ample parking for the proposed residential unit in addition to the existing residential unit that is there since the existing parking spaces accommodated a commercial and residential use on the property.

**MOTION:** by Patrick Hein to recommend the Zoning Hearing Board grant the special exception subject to the following conditions:

1. There shall be no additional uses permitted on the property.
2. The basement and detached garage shall be used for residential storage only.

3. A building permit application must be submitted, the first floor must be inspected and approved prior to an occupancy certificate being issued for the proposed dwelling unit.
4. The property owner must submit tenant registration forms to the Zoning Department in accordance with Chapter 129 of the West Manchester Township Codified Ordinances

**SECOND:** by Richard Gordon

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously (4-0)

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There were no plans submitted for review at this month's meeting.

### **DISCUSSION**

David Beecher requested the Planning Commission discuss some questions posed by Gannett Fleming ahead of the June 14, 2023 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee meeting. The Planning Commission members indicated that during the Comprehensive Plan process, the following items should be considered: a balance between freedoms as property owners vs. ordinances and regulations to follow, consider adopting a noise ordinance, updating our methods of communication (ie. digital, letters to neighbors, a searchable website), consider allowing more retail/commercial uses along the Carlisle Road and West Market Street corridors, eliminate patchwork zoning map (ie. consider combining and/or eliminating some zoning districts), consider updating the zoning ordinance to streamline uses making it easier for property owners, applicants, attorneys, planners and staff to interpret, consider zoning current zoning trends and allow uses more applicable to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, consider which areas of the Township growth is anticipated and expected, consider any proposed changes to uses in the agricultural zones.

Zoning Officer Sampere informed the Planning Commission members that staff has taken steps to update the Township's website to make it more user friendly. Staff has also implemented the MyWMT smart phone app to push notifications out to those residents who have opted-in to receive communications. West Manchester Township staff posts meeting agendas, minutes, zoning hearing ads on the website under "Latest and Breaking News" or under "Legal Notices" for interested parties to obtain meeting information, etc.

### **ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** by Sonia Wise to adjourn the meeting.

**SECOND:** by Richard Gordon

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously (4-0)

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