

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
FEBRUARY 24, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Walker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Peter Chase, Don Wright, Les Walker, James Daley, Anna Thomas and Dave Wong. Also present were Anthony Tallarida, Township Engineer, Anthony Giovannini, Township Solicitor, Samantha Smith, Community Development Director and Laura Zapata, Recording Secretary.

Members Absent: Harold Levy

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Walker said the minutes of the November 25, 2024, December 17, 2024 and January 27, 2025 meetings were not available.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

There were no comments during courtesy of the floor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Walker noted the correspondence as listed on the Planning Commission agenda of February 24, 2025 and asked that if there was anything new. Ms. Smith said the township's lighting consultant's review letter was received for the Victaulic Parking Lot Expansion Site Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

- **VICTAULIC PARKING LOT EXPANSION SITE PLAN**

The applicant proposes a 140-space parking lot for use during shift changes and when spaces are lost for snow storage at 157 Commerce Park Dr (Hecktown Road Business Park Lot #4), within Bethlehem Township's Office Business Zoning District. The property is presently occupied by a 387,000-square-foot plus warehouse, along with related site improvements, the majority of which are located within Lower Nazareth Township. The property is served by public water and sewer.

Tyler Freed, Mease Engineering, said he was in receipt of all the review letters except the one pertaining to lighting. Ms. Smith gave him a copy of the letter. Mr. Freed said he will comply with all the comments and was seeking preliminary/final plan approval. Mr. Walker asked if an expansion was planned. Mr. Freed said an internal second floor office expansion was not fully planned and they were limited by the number of parking spaces. Mr. Walker asked if the tenants use the entire building. Mr. Freed said yes. Ms. Smith said her department will make sure they comply. Mr. Wong said he would like to see a marked crosswalk with proper lighting for safety. Mr. Freed said they will provide signage and a reflective painted crosswalk. Mr. Wright asked if there were homes nearby. Mr. Freed said there are but barriers are already in place. Mr. Walker asked if they would be required to come before the Planning Commission again. Ms. Smith said only for permit and zoning.

Glenn Krier, 3942 Kenrick Drive

Mr. Krier asked how many parking spaces are proposed. Mr. Freed said 139 spaces.

Tom Keefer, 3805 Carter Road

Mr. Keefer asked how many of truck spaces were proposed. Mr. Walker said none as they are all spaces for cars.

Mr. Daley made a motion to recommend preliminary/final plan approval of the Victaulic Parking Lot Expansion – Site Plan to the Board of Commissioners based on the following review letters:

- Township Engineer's review letter dated February 17, 2025
- Zoning Officer's review letter, dated February 13, 2025
- Fire Marshal's review letter dated February 19, 2025
- Thomas Comitta Associates' review letter dated February 19, 2025
- Lighting Consultant's review letter dated February 24, 2025.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Chase and carried unanimously.

• **4444 WILLIAM PENN HIGHWAY SITE PLAN**

Mark Bahnick, Van Cleef Engineering Associates, the applicant proposes to convert an existing single-family dwelling into a medical office building and provide associated site improvements at 4444 William Penn Highway. The property is approximately 1/3 of an acre, in the Medium Density Residential (MDR) and Neighborhood Enhancement Overlay Districts. The property is served by public water and sewer. The proposed limited office conversion is a permissible use in the MDR District via special exception.

Mike Gula, Van Cleef Engineering, explained the project, indicating there would be one employee in addition to the doctor and patients are limited. Mr. Gula stated that the Zoning Hearing Board had issued variances. Mr. Walker asked the type of office. Mr. Gula said that the practice provides Botox, other skin care, and is a private practice currently located up the street. Mr. Walker said that he doesn't think there is enough parking.

Barry Roth, 4323 Chetwin Terrace

Mr. Roth stated that he needs to know about runoff. Mr. Walker explained that this project is exempt from stormwater management regulations because it's less than 5,000 square feet. Mr. Wong asked how much additional square footage will be added. Mr. Tallarida stated that 1,300 square feet are proposed.

Mr. Wright made a motion to recommend site plan approval of the 4444 William Penn Highway Site Plan to the Board of Commissioners based on the following review letters and acquisition of a PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permit:

- Township Engineer's review letter dated February 17, 2025
- Zoning Officer's review letter, dated February 12, 2025
- Fire Marshal's review letter dated February 19, 2025
- Thomas Comitta Associates' review letter dated February 19, 2025
- Lighting Consultant's review letter dated February 24, 2025.

OLD BUSINESS

• **FIELDS AT FARMERSVILLE PRELIMINARY PLAN**

The applicant is proposing to develop a 50.37-acre tract as a residential subdivision, which is permitted by right in the Medium Density Residential Zone. A total of 108 housing units are proposed with the following breakdown: 42 single family detached units, 8 single family attached twins, and 58 attached townhouses. The plans also propose a dog park and an additional 26-space parking area. The project would be served by public water and sewer.

The Board of Commissioners has a deadline of June 30, 2025 to act on this plan.

David Wilson, Colliers Engineering, provided a status update regarding the overall project, farmhouse lot, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) permitting, landscaping and the interplay of road improvements, BTMA and culvert improvements on Farmersville Road, among other things. Mr. Wilson stated that he was proposing to have a meeting with the Township's Public Works Department regarding internal retaining walls and roadways. Mr. Walker said ultimately, once an agreement is in place for escrow, then the PC can talk about deferrals but the developer needs to get there first, and needs to get in a room with stakeholders. Mr. Walker also suggested that Mr. Wilson consider different retaining wall types to reduce concerns internally. Mr. Wilson replied with potential options. Mr. Tallarida said that he doesn't know if gabion is the right option. Mr. Daley asked for an explanation of gabion walls and Mr. Walker responded. Mr. Wright said that he hadn't looked at the plans in two years but wanted to verify HOA ownership and stated concerns about how field changes are handled during construction. Mr. Tallarida said that as-built plans at completion reflect a lot of changes. Mr. Wilson said that the need to get approval from DEP, which will show the wall types. Mr. Wright asked if the HOA will own the floodplain area. Mr. Wilson said the open space lots will have operation and maintenance ((O&M) requirements from the Township and cash will be provided in a capital reserve fund for forecasted costs. Mr. Wilson also stated the development agreement also requirements maintenance. Mr. Wright stated he wants a note on the plans indicating who is responsible for public streets and curbing. Mr. Tallarida explained to Mr. Wright that older HOAs have the sort of issues he concerned about being all these protections weren't in place. Mr. Daley stated that he has concerns about putting things off, in reference to deferrals for culvert and roadway improvements along Farmersville Road. Mr. Tallarida stated that CVS (used as an example) is a unique case and he doesn't see that happening in this situation. Mr. Walker asked if there would be a monetary contribution. Mr. Tallarida said that it's possible but hasn't been determined.

Patty Pologruto, 2717 Bachman Dr

Ms. Pologruto referred to major PPL powerlines through the property. Mr. Wilson said that PPL has approved the layout and the homes are outside of the PPL right-of-way. Mr. Walker inquired about a setback from the wires.

Paul Wegrzynowicz, 4147 Walter Rd

Mr. Wegrzynowicz asked when this project would eventually be over. Mr. Tallarida explained that DEP and Conservation District permitting can be lengthy and final plan approval process with the Township will also be required. So, he stated, there's really no way to guess.

Mr. Walker made a motion to table the Fields at Farmersville Preliminary Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Daley and carried unanimously.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARMENT MEMO

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

- **4167 GREEN POND ROAD BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT (NO SUBMISSION MADE)**
- **BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP SELF STORAGE EXPANSION #2 LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NO SUBMISSION MADE)**
- **FIELDS AT FARMERSVILLE PRD (NO SUBMISSION MADE)**
- **PAXOS MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT (WAWA) – PRELIMINARY/FINAL (NO SUBMISSION MADE)**
- **PRIMROSE SCHOOL LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN – (CONSIDERATION TABLED)**

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wong made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Daley and carried unanimously.

NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, March 24, 2025 – Regular Public Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary

Samantha Smith
Community Development Director