

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 2, 2023**

The Springfield Township Planning Commission met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00 P.M., in the Boardroom of the Springfield Township Administration Building, located at 1510 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA 19038. Present at the meeting were Ms. Murray, Mr. Sands, Mr. Devine, Mr. Schaefer, Mr. Harbison, Mr. Mascaro and Ms. Helwig. Also in attendance were Commissioner Baird Standish, Anne Nygard, Community Planner from Montgomery County Planning Commission and Mark Penecale, Director of Planning & Zoning.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

The minutes from the April 4, 2023, Planning Commission meeting were reviewed and approved.

**Commissioner's Report:**

Commissioner Standish informed the Planning Commission that interviews are on-going in the search to replace Commissioner Graham. He discussed the award received by Springfield Township for the renovations and stream bank stabilization done at Mermaid Park. He also congratulated Mr. Harbison on the tree planted at the Public Works Facility in his name.

**New Business:**

**PC1:** The Land Development Plan submitted by 5 Star Venture, LP for the property located at 900 E. Mermaid Lane was presented to the Planning Commission by Mr. Scott Janzen, {Owner & Developer} and Alex Tweedie, Eng. Mr. Janzen provided the Planning Commission with an overview of the proposed project. He stated that development consisted of a full renovation of the front and rear buildings and the demolition of the several storage buildings located to the rear of the property. He informed the Planning Commission that the site has been cleaned up to the point that all the illegally dumped materials, tires, wood chips and brush have been removed. The box trailers used by the prior owner as storage buildings have also been removed from the property. The parking lots will be repaved and defined drive lanes, conforming with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance will be installed. The parking lots will be lined in accordance with Township requirements. The proposed use of the site is undetermined at this time; however, it will be a light industrial use that conforms to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Janzen stated that the front building contains office space, a large shop area and loading bays. The rear building has a small office area and large shop area that remains unchanged from its days as a rail car repair facility. The building renovations are proposed to be started this summer. Mr. Tweedie informed the Planning Commission that no additional building square footage is proposed to be added with this project. He stated that the impervious coverage on the site will be reduced and that he is working with the Township Engineer on a design to filter that sheet flow stormwater on site prior to its discharge into the adjoining park. Mr. Tweedie also stated

that one of the requests associated with the project is the request to allow 16 on-site parking stalls to remain in reserve. The applicant does not believe that light industrial uses will require 34 on-site parking stalls. Approving this request will eliminate an additional 5,000 plus square feet of impervious coverage. A meadow is proposed to be developed to the south of the rear building and additional landscaping will be added to the property. Mr. Tweedie provided the Planning Commission his responses to the Woodrow & Associates Review Letter and the Montgomery County Planning Commission Review Comments.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any questions from the Planning Commission Members.

Mr. Mascaro asked about the filters requested to be installed within the existing inlets to improve water quality prior to discharge.

Mr. Tweedie stated that there are no inlets on the property and the existing drainage pipe is located within an easement that runs through the middle of the property. The pipe allows the stormwater from 1000 and 1100 Mermaid Lane to be discharged into the park.

Mr. Harbison asked if the existing pipe discharges directly to Mermaid Park or if there is anything in place to soften the flow to reduce erosion.

Mr. Tweedie responded that the survey of the property did not include a review of off-site improvements.

Mr. Sands asked why the applicant has requested a waiver from the requirements to install sidewalk along the frontage of the property.

Mr. Tweedie explained that they are not requesting a full waiver. They propose to install a 5-foot-wide sidewalk along the frontage and that the waiver has been requested to reduce the width of the sidewalk from 10 feet to 5 feet.

Mr. Schaefer asked why the applicant has requested a waiver from the requirements to provide a landscape plan. Mr. Janzen explained that the plan proposes additional landscaping and that there are several trees along the shared property line with the park that require maintenance, but he did not see the need for a full landscape plan.

Ms. Helwig explained the importance a Landscape Plan has to the Planning Commission. She stated that the plan allows the Planning Commission to see what trees are proposed to be removed and what trees are proposed to be added. In addition, Mr. Penecale reminded the applicant of the requirements within the Zoning Ordinance and the SALDO for tree replacement for those trees proposed to be removed. A Landscape Plan is required to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the SALDO.

Mr. Mascaro asked Mr. Tweedie to explain the stormwater controls and filters proposed for this development.

Mr. Tweedie stated that he is proposing a landscaped berm to be constructed of earth, stone and mulch that will slow the sheet flow of stormwater off the site and the berm will act as a filter to improve water quality prior to the discharge on the park grounds.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any questions or comments from those in attendance?

Mr. Chris Weth; owner of 1207 Saint Clair Road, asked the applicant if an environmental study had been done on this site. He stated that he is aware of at least three individuals that worked at 1100 and 1200 Mermaid Lane in the 1970's and 1980's that have died of cancer. All of these employees worked in the basement level of the buildings. He stated that there was a spill on the property and he believes that the site is contaminated.

Mr. Janzen responded by informing the Planning Commission that prior to the purchase of the property, both a Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental study was conducted. The testing results were forwarded to DEP for their review and soil samples passed. Mr. Janzen stated that he has spent over \$400,000.00 in the testing and clean-up of the site since he purchased the property 2 years ago. In addition, he informed the Planning Commission that 9 monitoring wells remain on site and those wells are scheduled to be removed within the next two months.

Ms. Helwig asked if there were any additional comments. Seeing none, she thanked the applicant for including the reserve parking on the plan. In addition, she noted the importance of submitting a Landscape Plan. She called for a motion of the Land Development Plan and the requested waivers. The Planning Commission had the following comments.

Section 95-07.H: The requirement for the submission of a Landscape Plan prepared and sealed by the licensed landscape architect. The Planning Commission recommends the denial of this request and feels that a landscape plan would be very beneficial in determining what trees will remain on the property and what existing vegetation is proposed to be removed. In addition, the applicant has indicated that additional planting will be added to the site and a plan plotting the type, size and location of those plantings should be submitted for review.

Section 95-10. A: Requiring the applicant to provide a 60-foot-wide right-of-way and a 40-foot paved cartway for E. Mermaid Lane. The applicant has requested a waiver to allow the street to remain as currently constructed with a 50-foot right-of-way and a 30-foot paved cartway. The Planning Commission recommends approval of this waiver.

Section 95-10. A: The requirement to provide 10-foot-wide sidewalks along the E. Mermaid Lane. The applicant proposes to install 5-foot-wide sidewalks along this frontage. The Planning Commission recommends approval of this waiver.

Section 95-10. A: The requirement to install curbing along the E. Mermaid Lane frontage of the property. The applicant testified that curbing already exists along the entire frontage of the site,

and they will replace any curbing identified by the Township in need of replacement. The Planning Commission offered no recommendation on this request.

Section 95-10. I; The code permits 4-foot-wide sidewalks instead of the 10-foot-wide sidewalks as listed within Section 95-10. A of the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance. The applicant has committed to installing 5-foot wide sidewalks along the entire frontage of the property. The Planning Commission supports the installation of the 5-foot-wide sidewalks.

Section 95-11. E (2); The requirement for the dedication of land suitable for park & recreational use based on the square footage of building area being added to the site. The applicant stated that no additional building area was proposed to be added to the property and that the total building area on the property will be reduced with the approval of this plan. The Planning Commission defers to the Board of Commissioners on this request.

Section 95-11. E. 8; The option to pay a fee in-lieu-of for the required open space. The applicant stated that no additional building area was proposed to be added to the property and that the total building area on the property will be reduced with the approval of this plan. The Planning Commission defers to the Board of Commissioners on this request.

Section 95-11.H; The requirement to install survey monuments at the property corners and all off-sets. The applicant stated that this is a “Will Comply” and no waiver is being requested.

Section 95-11. I; This is the requirement to install the appropriate landscaping to include buffering, street trees and the like. The Planning Commission recommends the denial of this request for the same reasons stated in the requested waiver of Section 95-07. H.

This recommendation to approve the plan as submitted was unanimous with a vote of 7 in favor and 0 in opposition.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted  
Mark A. Penecale  
Director of Planning & Zoning