

**SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 16, 2024**

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. Helwig, Ms. Murray, Mr. Mascaro, Mr. Sands, Mr. Devine, Mr. Schaefer, and Mr. Quill. Also in attendance were Commissioner Peter Wilson, Michael Narcowich and Margo Petruska from Montgomery County Planning Commission, and Mark Penecale, Director of Planning & Zoning.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

The Planning Commission approved the minutes from their meeting held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

**Commissioner's Report:**

Commissioner Wilson briefed the Planning Commission and the residents in attendance on the discussions that took place at the Board of Commissioner's meeting on April 10, 2024. He invited everyone to attend the "No Stigma & No Shame" day to be held on April 20, 2024. He updated everyone on the extension granted on the pending subdivision application for 40/42 Grove Avenue and the extension granted to Mount Saint Joseph's Academy on their pending land development application. He informed the Planning Commission that Stacey Blankin has been re-appointed to the Planning Commissioner for another four-year term and that the Board of Commissioners have appointed Mr. Sands and Mr. Schaefer to the UCC Appeals Board. Commissioner Wilson invited everyone to attend the Arbor Day events that will be held on April 27, 2024, at Wyndhill Park. The Township will once again be giving away 30 trees to the lucky residents that are selected through the lottery. Sign-up is either in-person or through the Township Website.

**New Business:**

**PC1:** The Land Development Plan for the proposed alterations and additions to the Springfield Township School District's Middle School Complex was presented by Loren Szczesny, Esq. and Christopher Jensen, PE. Mr. Jensen provided reduced copies of the plans to the residents in attendance. He discussed the need for the 22,000 square foot addition and the alterations to the traffic circulation on the site. The proposed additions will improve ADA accessibility at the entry points to the building, provide additional storage for the music and arts department and include a theater. Mr. Jansen provided the Planning Commission with an overview of the project and explained that the proposed additions to the building would greatly increase security at the

entry points to the building. The alterations to the traffic circulation on the site will provide a defined loop for student pick-up and drop-off, and still provide emergency access by way of several gates that have been added to the plan. He informed everyone that the project included two additional underground detention basins and an extension of geothermal field located under the existing baseball field. This plan will also increase emergency access to the building with the use of ground stabilization blocks to provide access to the RT 309 side of the building. Finally, Mr. Jansen explained the placement of the additional parking lot on the site.

Mr. Szczesny informed the Planning Commission of the dimensional variance that was granted by the Springfield Township Zoning Hearing Board for the setback from the shared property line with Route 309. The variance allowed the setback to be reduced from 75 feet to 35 feet. He also explained that the proposed addition would be in the same location as the existing outdoor basketball courts.

Ms. Helwig asked if additional trees could be planted along the Paper Mill Road frontage, since the proposed number of new trees is far short of the number of mature trees that are proposed to be removed. A discussion of the request followed.

Mr. Jansen stated that additional trees could be planted along the Paper Mill Road frontage, providing they did not cause a sight obstruction.

Mr. Penecale reminded the applicant that they have 721 feet of frontage along Paper Mill Road and that he is certain that the applicant could plant the six additional trees requested by the Planning Commission without causing a sight obstruction.

Mr. Quill asked if PennDOT was consulted prior to the reduction of the building setback from 75 feet to 35 feet.

Mr. Jansen stated that PennDOT was not consulted and that there are no additional setback requirements other than those listed within the Springfield Township Zoning Ordinance.

A question was raised concerning the width of the on-site sidewalks and if the proposed 8-foot-wide sidewalks could be reduced in size to reduce the increase in impervious coverage on the site.

Mr. Schaefer asked what effect the 8-foot-wide sidewalk will have on the existing trees.

Mr. Jensen explained that the sidewalks are a “surface” improvement that does not impact the tree’s root system, but the sidewalks are within the dripline of the existing trees. In addition, he stated that the sidewalks could be reduced to 6 feet in width.

Mr. Mascaro asked what changes have been made to the plan since the applicant presented the Sketch Plan of these proposed alterations and additions.

Mr. Jensen stated that revisions have been made to the traffic loop, an additional stormwater basin has been added and the emergency access lane made of ground stabilization block added to the RT. 309 side of the building.

Ms. Helwig asked if the School District has developed a timeline for this project.

Mr. Jensen stated that the projected start for this project is in the summer of 2025.

Mr. Quill asked what the cost of these improvements are projected to be.

Mr. Jensen stated that construction costs are projected to be 25.8 million dollars and an additional 7 million dollars in soft cost.

Mr. Mascaro asked what contingency funding has been built into these projections and what is that amount.

Mr. Jensen stated that 2 million dollars has been built into the soft cost for this project.

Ms. Duffy, 1206 Bergan Road asked what could be done to control the overflow parking from weekend events held at the Middle School that impact Bergan Road. She stated that on weekends, there is parking on both sides of the street, and she doubts a fire truck could get through.

Mr. Penecale asked if the School District issued permits for the use of School District facilities & fields. That answer was yes. He asked if a condition could be added to the permits that would prohibit parking on Bergan Road. The School District was non-committal on the issue.

Ms. Helwig asked if either Mr. Narcowich or Ms. Petruska had any additional comments.

Ms. Petruska reminded the applicant of their responsibility to enter into a stormwater management maintenance agreement for the underground facilities and the need for the planting of the street trees.

A motion was made to recommend approval of the plan as submitted with the condition that the sidewalk be reduced to 6 feet in width and that 6 additional trees be planted along the Paper Mill Road frontage.

The motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 7 in favor and 0 in opposition.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted  
Mark A. Penecale  
Director of Planning & Zoning