

**Minutes of Meeting
Springfield Township Planning Commission
December 17th, 2013**

The Springfield Township Planning Commission (PC) held its semi-monthly meeting on the date noted above. Chairman Bob Gutowski called the meeting to order at 6:58 PM, with the following members present: Amanda Helwig, Mary Holland, George Schaefer, Bob Gutowski, James Mascaro, Steve Schagrin, and David Sands. Robert Dunlop represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC). Absent were: Joseph Devine and Angela Murray and Commissioner Tom Bell.

Minutes: Minutes of the December 3rd, 2013 meeting were read. Motion to approve the minutes was made by S. Schagrin and seconded D. Sands. All were in favor. Abstaining: J. Mascaro.

Commissioner Report: No Report

**The Springfield
1800 Bethlehem Pike**

**Tim Woodrow, P.E.
Brian Halligan**

The Applicant presented plans along with a request for a waiver of Land Development for the property formerly known as the Sorella Rose / Springfield Hotel. Under the terms of the zoning relief granted 12/2/13 the applicant proposes to renovate the existing building to create 5,000 sq. ft. of office space and one apartment on the first floor and twelve apartments on the upper floors. An existing accessory structure would be demolished to make way for reconfiguration of the parking lot with 30 spaces.

The Applicant further stated that they took into consideration commentary from the PC, ZHB, and BOC to incorporate trees onto the site. They also used historical colors for the building with an objective to retain the historical views and style of the property. There will be some synergy with the parking situation where most tenants will use the parking in the evening while the medical offices will utilize the lot during the day. While lighting plans have not been submitted, the applicant relayed they will conform to whatever the township staff and engineer deem necessary to comply. A lighting plan would be submitted before anything would be implemented. The Applicant stressed that they are requesting the waiver because there are no new roads proposed, no regarding, no new sewer or utilities, no improvements in fact in this instance they are removing structures.

Public Comment

William Claffey, 13 Springfield Ave. Asked where the dumpsters would be located. The applicant pointed out the location and the neighbor was satisfied. Mr. Claffey then asked what would happen if the Halligans in the future acquired the neighboring property in order to expand parking, would this trigger a new review. Mr. Claffey's concern is the buffering between his home and the possible expansion of the parking lot. R. Dunlop commented that should the Halligans acquire the property they would be required to seek a waiver of land development Mr. Claffey ended with a comment that he supports the Waiver of Land Development requests and wished the Halligans well in the project.

Joseph Enama, 10 Springfield Ave. Stated he feels that the configuration of ingress and egress demonstrated on the plans is the safest means of traversing the property. It would prevent a backup of vehicles on Springfield Ave. He is encouraged by the applicant taking on the renovations and only asked if there could be some improvement to the lot which currently butts up to Springfield Ave and on street parking. T. Woodrow, the applicant's engineer, felt he could feasibly shift the spaces and grab a foot or two of buffer. The PC would like to see hedges or plantings, not only to allow for storm water penetration but to create a light buffer from headlights parking at night, and also prevent parked vehicles from hitting vehicles parked along Springfield Ave.

PC Comments

J. Mascaro asked for clarification on the sizes of the parking spaces. Applicant relayed 9 x 18. This started a conversation and recommendation that the two parking spaces on either side of the trees be restricted to compact car parking only due to the tight radius.

J. Holland asked if the Handicap Spaces were ADA Compliant. Mr. Woodrow indicated they were and this was the best location they could find for them given the nature of the lot.

M. Holland asked what the time table for the project would be. The Applicant responded that 8 - 10 months is a reasonable time table and that they anticipate putting 1 million dollars into the property. The property will be sprinklered. M. Holland also stated that while she is supportive of the project, she does not feel that it is viable due to the small size of the apartments, the lack of windows, means of egress and ingress of the building.

A. Helwig asked about the exit onto Bethlehem Pike and the access from the neighboring property owner. The Applicant relayed, that they feel the exit on Bethlehem Pike is an easement by prescription with the neighboring property. However, the proper approach would be to finalize a formal easement with Mr. Tony Mascaro for use of this common driveway exit and this is in the works.

Conclusion

After discussion, the Motion was made by G. Schaefer and Seconded by A. Helwig to recommend a Waiver of Land Development for the subject property contingent upon the following:

- 1.) That a lighting plan be submitted prior to implementation and approved by Township Staff.
- 2.) That an easement be established and recorded allowing egress onto Bethlehem Pike
- 3.) That a barrier of some kind; fence or shrubs or flower beds be installed between Springfield Ave and the rear parking lot, to create a light buffer and also to prevent parking lot vehicles from hitting parked vehicles along Springfield Ave.
- 4.) That there be a restriction placed on the two spaces on either sides of the proposed trees to compact vehicle parking only (and only if necessary).

This motion was passed 7-0 with no objections.

New Business

J. Holland reported that the BOC has had discussions about reviewing the zoning ordinances. They are looking for some immediate changes and are determining priorities for the PC to address. Of note, the creation of a Light and Heavy Industrial district out of the current Industrial District.

Motion to adjourn made by M. Holland and seconded by D. Sands. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm. Next Meeting Jan 21st, 2014. Happy Holidays.

Amanda M. Helwig, Secretary