

**Minutes of Meeting
Springfield Township Planning Commission
April 1st, 2014**

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 7:00 pm, with the following members present: Amanda Helwig, Bob Gutowski, George Schaefer, David Sands, Steve Schagrin, Joseph Devine and Angela Murray. Robert Dunlop represented the Township and Brandon Rudd represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC). Absent were James Mascaro, Mary Holland and Commissioner Tom Bell.

Minutes: Minutes of the March 18th, 2014 meeting were read. Motion to approve the minutes with minor amendments was made by B. Gutowski and seconded by S. Schagrin. All were in favor.

Commissioner Report: No Report

New Business

**Movie Tavern
1844 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown**

**Rob Lewis, Esquire
Rick Stewart, AIA**

Mr. Lewis began with a brief recap of the re-development of the site since 2004. Movie Taverns historically are being successfully placed in communities and fill a positive niche role. The replacement of the old Giant with the Movie Tavern does not typically require land development, however they found that the existing building could not be retrofitted properly and it made sense to build a new building in conformity with the materials of the new Giant on the location. The BOC granted a waiver of land development with conditions recommended by the PC, that the applicant return to the PC to address lighting and aesthetics of the building. Signage will be a matter brought before the ZHB. Further, Mr. Lewis explained they had already had a preliminary meeting with Township Manager Don Berger and Rob Dunlop to make sure they were building code compliant. In addition, the majority of the lighting upgrades to the complex have been completed, having retrofitted many of the existing light standards with LED Lights and dropping them as low as they could in the parking lot without compromising their purpose and the safety of consumers.

Moving to the topic of lighting, Mr. Lewis turned the presentation over to Mr. Stewart who shared with the PC the various details of the awnings, signs, logos, and glass appliques. He also explained that the same materials, brick, stucco, and colors will be used as were with the new Giant to help give continuity of the complex. The amount and number of signs will be an issue they will be approaching the ZHB about. The design of the building was purposefully made to step back at the entrance to avoid one long box like structure. The building heights on the end towers all the way to the center tower vary to give definition, not exceed the 50 foot height. A back section of the building is higher than the front section to accommodate an imax type screen, again this will also not exceed the 50 ft high restriction restriction. There are decorative wall sconces on the front of the building. There will be no neon on the building. The Movie Tavern Letters will be internally illuminated. R. Dunlop relayed to the PC that the project has gone under full STEM review. Construction will be 8 to 10 months.

Public Comment & PC Discussion

Bill Claffey, 13 Springfield Ave- Asked what the Hours of operation would be. Mr. Lewis responded that the theater would be open 7 days a week. On occasion there are midnight opening that would necessitate the theater staying open until 2 am. Mr. Claffey asked when the lights go out. Mr. Lewis responded that the lights should go off at closing time. Mr. Claffey asked if there will be any change in the traffic pattern. Mr. Lewis responded not until such time as the McDonalds location can be addressed.

John Mannis, 23 McCloskey Drive- Asked if there will be enough parking to accommodate the entire theater being full. Mr. Lewis stated that this was previously discussed at PC, and that not all theaters will be filled at once, rather staggered times.

Joseph Enama, 10 Springfield Ave- Asked about parking on the rear of the building. Mr. Lewis stated there would be no parking on the rear only on the side nearer to the Giant. Mr. Enama asked how many screens are proposed. Mr. Lewis responded 8, smaller than the Colleeville Movie Tavern.

Samantha Lange, 31 Springfield Ave- Asked about the elevation of the building relative to her home, her concern being lights shining in her windows. Bob Gutowski responded that this was previously addressed at a prior PC meeting and that the applicant had demonstrated that the light packs on the rear of the building will be installed as low as possible and that the rear exits were for emergency use only. She also asked when the sign on Bethlehem Pike would be updated. Mr. Lewis responded that it was just updated a few years ago, and as the Movie Tavern takes its place on the sign, it will likely fill up with the remainder of the businesses.

Matthew McKee, 109 E. Mill Road- Asked how the lighting on the towers will affect the people further away on E. Mill Road. B. Gutowski responded that the applicant demonstrated that the majority of the lighting will be shielded and or facing the front of the building. That said, asked the application to look into cutting the returns on the corners of the towers.

The PC discussed and agreed that the conditions of the design details, signage, and elevations are acceptable with the exception of the recommendation to try to address the return coping on the lighting on the returns of the towers.

Review of Township Zoning Code

R. Dunlop recapped for the PC that upon a review of the existing Zoning Code it appears that the overlay districts are the districts that do not have the verbiage that would limit all parcels within all zoning districts to one principal use on that parcel.

A. Murray stated that she struggled with applying this language across the board especially to Business, Commercial and Industrial Districts. The Township should be promoting Mix Use.

B. Gutowski furthered this by stating that he felt but maintaining flexibility we will create opportunity and economic viability by allowing the township to adapt.

B. Rudd commented that he did not see a clear definition of principle versus primary use in the code and that this should be looked at.

Public Comment

Christine Hesser, 127 Orlemann Ave. Stated she was present representing the neighbors around the Tank Carr property. They just wanted the PC to know they are conscientious now about what the implications of zoning. Suggested the solicitor review environmentally sensitive locations and how they can be used in industrial zoning. R. Dunlop responded that by establishing light and heavy industrial areas this may address some of their concerns.

Torry Vecchione, L:35 Walnut Ave. Asked the PC to be sensitive to the property owners rights who purchased properties for a particular use. Don't detrimentally affect the value of these properties by changing a few words. These properties serve a purpose in the community. A. Helwig commented that she feels the same way he feels, that we need to have comprehensive review of the codes to make sure we are not adversely affecting the property owners value and affect their livelihood and businesses, by making small amendments.

B. Gutowski summed up that the PC is going to take great care in their reviews and that overly restrictive amendments will translate to lost value in the community. Amendments to the Zoning Code shall be deferred until such time as a comprehensive review can take place.

Motion to adjourn made A. Murray and seconded by A. Helwig at 8:44 pm. All were in favor.

Amanda Helwig, Secretary

