

TOBYHANNA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
JUNE 2, 2022

The June 2022 Regular Business Meeting of the Tobyhanna Township Planning Commission (“Commission”) was held on June 2, 2022, via the platform GoToMeeting as well as in person at the Government Center Building due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Present are Marlin “Sam” Keiper, Michelle Bisbing, Rachel Schickling, Al Kerrick. Also, present, Township Engineer, Bob McHale and Township Solicitor Harry Coleman, Esquire. Edwin Miller and Zoning Officer Lourdes Aponte are not present.

1. Sam Keiper calls the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. A quorum is present.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.
3. Old Business
 - a. Dunne Manning – No one present.
4. New Business:
 - a. Back Road Studios, LLC – Sketch plan – Travis Martin from LIVIC Civil LLC and David Lasry of Back Road Studios are here to present.

Mr. Martin stated that he made the submission along with the sketch in early May for the property located at 823-839 PA Route 940, Pocono Lake, PA. The proposed plan is to provide a warehouse type structure for the storage of art.

Mr. Martin stated that the parking they are proposing meets the requirements for this specific use and the count on plan accommodates that need. They are proposing a pervious paving material that can be planted with grass but is structurally sound to handle traffic and turning maneuvers for emergency vehicles. They have applied for and gotten approval from PennDOT for the driveway on Route 940. They will be proceeding with land development once their plans are final.

Mr. Martin stated that the site had previously been approved for a 200 gallon per day septic system and they found that to be adequate to satisfy the requirements of the bathroom and small kitchenette that would be proposed in this plan.

Mr. Keiper asks if they are going to keep it as 2 lots. Mr. Martin stated that the applicant is under contract for both lots and the plan is to not have to do a lot consolidation and to potentially develop the western lot as well. The system they currently have is for the eastern lot. Mr. McHale states there is a restaurant on the western lot. Mr. Martin states that the system on that lot has failed testing multiple times. A discussion was held.

Mr. Keiper states that the driveway will have to have an easement to cross that lot. Mr. Martin stated that there will be a shared easement to accommodate that.

Mr. Keiper asked if the parking area on the plan is going to be planted with grass. Mr. Martin stated that the material they are proposing to use is called a Tru Grid Paving System. It is a mesh recycled product with a proper draining base underneath to accommodate the necessary vehicle traffic. A discussion was held.

Ms. Schickling asked if this is going to be open to the public as an art studio or just for art storage. Mr. Lasry states that they plan on using a portion of the building as a private art studio and the other portion to store materials. It will not be open to the public. Mr. Keiper state that this might have a bearing on their parking. A discussion was held.

Mr. Keiper states that this is designated as a land development plan, and they can move forward.

- b. Wee Wons Daycare & Preschool – Special Exception – Jeff Worthington, Esquire counsel for applicant; Noah & Jennifer Smith – applicants and Michael Baxter owner of property are here to present.

Mr. Worthington states that their request is to operate a daycare. Mr. & Mrs. Smith currently operate Wee Wons Daycare on Route 423 and are looking to expand to a second location. The property they are looking at is 3 miles north of here at Winchell Plaza. The property is in the commercial district and both parcels together are 1.04 acres. The property is zoned commercial like the existing Wee Wons location. Under the zoning ordinance the use is characterized broadly as a private or public educational institution and that is what requires a special exception. Mr. Keiper states that he spent time with the zoning officer trying to figure out how daycares have gotten approval in the past because of the confusion within the ordinance. A discussion was held.

Mr. Worthington states that there is going to be no adjustment to the footprint. It will not have any negative effect on the neighboring property values.

Mr. McHale asks about the status of the Highway Occupancy Permit and if one exists. Mr. Baxter states that there has never been one. A discussion was held.

Ms. Schickling asks if there is going to be a specific age group. Mrs. Smith states that it is going to be infants through 6th grade. They have 70 families on a waiting list.

Mr. Keiper makes a motion that they recommend this move forward with the applicants meeting with the zoning officer to clarify any issues that need to be provided in the plan. The zoning officer has the authority to move it forward to the Zoning Hearing Board. Ms. Schickling seconds. All in favor. 4-0

- c. 109 Realty, LLC – Land Development for Self-Storage Facility – Geoff Dean of Keystone Consulting Engineers and Dan Schaffer of 109 Realty LLC are here to present.

Mr. Dean states that the land development application is going to be tabled until next month's meeting. He stated that he can give a brief overview of the project. Mr. Dean states that the property is located 4 miles east of here on Route 940. It is known as 940 Plaza or 940 Court. There are 2 separate parcels, and they will be joining those parcels.

They are not proposing any changes to the retail building. Mr. Dean stated that they are looking to add a self-storage facility to the rear of the property. Mr. Dean stated that the parcels combined are just under 3 ½ acres. They have a proposed stormwater basin along the southern property line to handle the requirements for stormwater management.

Mr. Dean stated that they just received the comments from Mr. McHale, and they will be providing a formal response before the next meeting.

Mr. Keiper asked about the driveway going to the property. A discussion was held.

Mr. Keiper asked if they are putting an office in front of the building. Mr. Schaffer stated that it hasn't been decided yet, but it will not be in the strip mall. A discussion was held.

Mr. Keiper stated that a photo of the unit would be beneficial to bring to the next meeting to show what the units are going to look like. Ms. Bisbing asked if it was going to be gated with electronic access. Mr. Schaffer stated that it will be.

Mr. McHale stated that they should reach out to the septic enforcement officer. Mr. Dean stated that they would see if there were any additional permits required. A discussion was held.

Mr. Kerrick makes a motion to table until the applicant's satisfactory response to Mr. McHale's letter. Ms. Schickling seconds. All in favor. 4-0.

5. Review of Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance: Mr. Keiper asks that we table it. Ms. Schickling asks if we can table the second meeting through the summer. A discussion was held. Ms. Schickling makes a motion to table the second meeting through the summer and reconvene in September and for the sub-committee to be able to route emails with ideas and suggestions along the way. Ms. Bisbing seconds. All in favor. 4-0.

6. Open Discussion: Ms. Bisbing asks about the status of the Short-Term Rental Ordinance and if it is coming back to the Planning Commission. A discussion was held.

Ms. Schickling asks Mr. McHale about the traffic study in Kidder Township. A discussion was held.

7. Public Comment: None

Mr. Keiper entertained a motion for adjournment. Mr. Kerrick motions to adjourn, Ms. Schickling seconds. Vote carries 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Minutes recorded by Bethanne Eisler