

Bern Township Planning Commission Meeting of January 14, 2025

Present: Planning Commission: James Dailey, Michael Werley, Steve Tricarico, Beth Burkovich, Jeff Piccioni.

Also attending: Mr. Keith Mooney, Solicitor; Mr. Kent Morey, Spotts, Stevens & McCoy; Mr. Aristides Otero, Wilkinson/Apex Engineering Inc.; Karen Krater, John Hoffert Surveying; Nick Perilli, McCarthy Engineering; Kenneth Richman, Cross Roads Beverage Group; Nick Perelli and Aaron, 97 Pen Bern Road Sketch Plan.

Mr. James Dailey called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Reorganization

Floor opened for nominations for Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. James Daily was nominated by Steve Tricarico, seconded by Michael Werley. Mr. Daily was nominated as Chairman. Steve Tricarico nominated Michael Werley for Vice Chairman seconded by Jeff Piccioni. Mr. Werley was nominated as Vice Chairman. Steve Tricarico nominated James Colflesh for Secretary, seconded by Beth Burkovich. James Colflesh nominated as Secretary. All motions carried.

Acceptance of Minutes

The November 2024 minutes are on hold right now and there was no meeting in December.

Public Comment

Beverly Miller commented on new warehouse. She has concerns about the area being residential. She is concerned about the traffic and houses along West Leesport Road facing the warehouse.

Ralph Poor commented on the quality of life in the Township. He does not feel that the Township is looking out for the residents. He is also concerned about the truck traffic ruining the quality of life.

John McCanney was wondering about the traffic impact of these developments. There are currently no Traffic Impact Studies available. There is one being worked on for Penske. The other developments are not far enough along in the approval process. They are required as part of a Preliminary Plan. Discussion was held on various roads and how traffic will be handled.

Alice Hinkel asked for confirmation of how this area is zoned. No specific area was in question. She also asked about the responsible growth of the Township and is open to growth that is responsible in accordance with the ordinances. Steve Tricarico indicated by showing the zoning map and the areas in discussion are in the light industrial zone or general industrial use.

Steve Garrey has concerns about traffic. He is also concerned about the noise of the tractor trailers.

Brian Potts (Township Manager) also addressed putting something in residential mail boxes. He noted that it is a federal offense.

Subdivision and Land Development Plans

Hitching Post

Chris and Helen, the new owners of Hitching Post, submitted plans for enclosing the patio. The patio was approved to be enclosed when it was Red Rock Grill. A waiver is needed for land development. They are asking if they can continue to work on the inside of the restaurant while the waiver for the outside is being approved. If the building is more than 180 sq ft they need to submit a land development plan. The Board of Supervisors suggested that the PC make a recommendation to approve the waiver. Motion made by Steve Tricarico to grant a waiver of the land development plan in order to enclose the existing patio. Seconded by Jeff Piccioni. Motion carried.

Penske Truck Collision & Light Industrial

SSM's January 10th letter supplements the December 6th letter. January 10th letter has minor items that can be taken care of. The cross sections address items in the December 6th letter.

Aristides Otero represented Penske. He submitted an exhibit package supplemental to the full land development package. A question was asked on the height of the trees shown on the cross sections. Aristides noted that they are not mature trees but also are not new plantings.

Zoning comments of the December 6th letter were discussed but more specifically the planting plan. Kent Morey recommended that they go to the Board of Supervisors for approval. A question was asked on fencing. 6 foot fencing should be provided. Motion to recommend planting by Michael Werley to go to the Board of Supervisors. Seconded by Steve Tricarico. Motion carried.

Item 17 – Utility Impact Study – The client is aware of this item. The estimated time of service to the area is 2027. Kent Morey recommends a note be placed on the plans indicating this.

Bern Township Municipal Sewer Authority – They are in the process of checking on if their needs will be met.

Storm Water – SSM has a clear understanding of this after discussions with the engineer. Waiting for a formal submission addressing these comments on the plans.

Steve Garrey questioned if there is an environmental assessment to protect the area from runoff? There are State requirements that they will need to get through.

Bethany Romanian Church

Karen Krater of John Hoffert Surveying. SSM's January 9th review letter received. This project was originally the Wodenshire Pool. The project is in the Suburban Residential Zone. The church use was issued a special exception in June 2003. They would like to put an addition on of 20,500 square feet. The existing parking lot at the southern portion of the site is more than ample parking for the church. Additional parking is going to be constructed closer to the church with handicapped parking. The parking lot is an existing non-conformity.

We are suggesting you restripe the existing 141 spaces and end up with 104? Would this meet the other requirement of widths, aisles, etc. If the church is willing to accept their own non-conforming conventional efforts, why would the Township care. If Planning Commission is acceptable to you showing a restriped plan that shows you can do it, we would be OK.

Other comments are storm water which are technical.

The alternate parking plan requirement needs to be addressed before Preliminary Plan approval.

Stinson Drive Partners Sketch Plan

Nick Perilli of McCarthy Engineering representing Cross Roads Beverage. Kenneth Richmond of Cross Roads Beverage Group was in attendance as well. Looking to open a distribution center to store and distribute bottled water.

Kent Morey indicated that there are a few zoning issues.

1. The encroachment of the parking spaces into the setback although they are identified as future parking spaces.
2. Number of parking spaces – 54 space are shown but you need 204 spaces according to zoning.

The area is zoned Industrial.

The warehouse is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The number of trucks per hour is 4.

There is no landscaping shown on the plan. Recommend addressing the landscaping especially along West Leesport Road to provide a buffer from the residents across the street.

General Comments – Showing improvements to West Leesport Road in regards to grading which also effects landscaping. Showing correct boundary information. Access driveways to follow lane to the south. How are they aligned to your driveway. The western truck driveway follow the lane coming out on a curve is not ideal. Electricity will not be available until at least 2027.

Tom Pernetto – What is the access to and access out to get to Route 183? Faller Lane is going to be extended. Concern is about going by the WAWA. A Traffic Study will be required.

Tara Rightenstine – Will the facility be lit at night? There is an ordinance that restricts light coming from the property into adjacent residential houses.

Question was asked that the Township is pretty firm on construction for the parking. Yes.

97 Penn Bern Road Sketch Plan

Nick Perilli representing Aaron Berube the property owner. He buys used utility lift vehicles and refurbishes them and sells them. Looking to build facility. Building is just for storage of parts and vehicles.

The property is Land Locked. The plan did not show anything about a right-of-way. SSM requested that in Items 1 and 2.

Recommend a zoning variance be requested by LTL.

Solicitor

No Comment

Adjournment

Beth Burkovich made a motion to adjourn at approximately 9:30 PM; Mr. **Tricarico** seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.