

Bern Township Planning Commission Meeting of May 14, 2024

Present: Planning Commission: James Dailey, James Rumbaugh, James Colflesh, Michael Werley and Steve Tricarico.

Also attending: Mr. Keith Mooney, Solicitor; Mr. Kent Morey, Spotts, Stevens & McCoy.

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

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Tricarico made a motion to approve the March 12, 2024, meeting minutes with the corrections; Mr. Werley seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Beverly Miller from Stinson Drive voiced her concerns on the Penske Truck Collision and Repair Center Plan with regards to depreciation of home values, light/air pollution, increased traffic and safety for residents walking the roadways.

Beth Burkovich from West Leesport Road requested to be able to ask questions as Penske presented. Ms. Burkovich also passed out pictures from all twenty-one Penske Truck Collision and Repair Centers across the United States.

Ralph Porr from West Leesport Road voiced his concerns.

Atty. Mooney asked that the opinions and questions be tabled until Penske presented since Tower Health was first on the agenda.

Subdivision and Land Development Plans

Tower Health Building Addition

Mr. Adam Crunk from Crunk Engineering was present representing the plan, which proposes construction of a two-story building addition on the south side of the property and a covered canopy to the Medical Office Building. The May 10, 2024, SSM review letter was discussed. Mr. Morey mentioned that he would discuss comments 2 and 3 with Mr. Crunk to be sure that nothing was missing. Mr. Tricarico asked for clarification on comment 1. Mr. Morey stated that the photometrics needs to be extended and he is confident they will meet the requirements. Mr. Crunk stated they will revise. Atty. Mooney mentioned comment 10 and explained that waiver requests need to be made prior to the Planning Commission recommending approval of the plan to the Board. Mr. Tricarico asked for clarification on comment 1. Mr. Morey stated that the comment will be removed. Mr. Crunk presented a written waiver request to not perform a traffic study given the limited number of trips identified in their traffic demand letter. Mr. Tricarico made a motion to recommend approval of the waiver request. Mr. Werley seconded. All. Favor. Motion carried. Mr. Werley made a motion to recommend approval of the Tower

Health Building Addition Final Plan subject to the satisfaction of the provisions in the May 10, 2024, SSM review letter; Mr. Colflesh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Penske Truck Collision and Repair Center

Aristedes Otero and David McCloskey, engineers from Wilkinson-Apex, and Jason Herr from Penske were in attendance representing the plan. Mr. Otero provided an overview of the project. The May 13, 2024, SSM review letter was discussed. Mr. Morey added four additional comments verbally to the review letter.

Mr. Morey's additional comments are as follows...

90. The subdivision plan should be recorded prior to Preliminary Plan approval.

91. The existing conditions plan shall be updated to reflect the boundary lines of the approved subdivision plan.

92. Faller Lane is a public road, not private as listed on the plans.

93. Survey notes on page 2. Note 8 refers to Montgomery County not Berks County.

Mr. Tricarico asked if the Board approved the subdivision plan. Mr. Morey stated yes and that he was currently reviewing the plan to verify the conditions have been met.

Mr. Otero expressed concerns on comment 8 pertaining to trucks and curbing.

Mr. Otero asked if comment 29.d. pertaining to a Hydrologic Impact Study, Section 154-30.l(2)(f) was necessary. Mr. Morey said he should submit a reason stating why Mr. Otero does not feel it is necessary. Mr. Tricarico mentioned his concerns with flooding issues in the area and the possibility of underground springs. There was discussion on the infiltration testing and the retention pond. Mr. Morey stated that DEP is requiring them to go through the Manage Release Concept. Mr. Otero stated they could investigate boring testing. He also explained that since there are no wells they will request a waiver from the Hydrological Impact Study. Mr. Morey advised him to provide him with information and he will let Mr. Otero know if he can request a waiver.

Beverly Miller asked what happens if the landscaping is not put in as required. Atty. Mooney explained that a letter of credit is required for Municipal Improvements and the Township would utilize that money to put in the landscaping. Mrs. Miller also expressed her concerns about deteriorating home values.

Mr. Dailey stated that the Township is not insensitive to the residents and that their concerns are valued, but if the use is allowed the Township cannot prevent the development.

Marlene Minnich from West Leesport Road spoke about traffic concerns and safety.

Beth Burkovich asked how the use fits the Industrial Use that the land is zoned. Atty. Mooney read the definition. Discussion was held regarding the ordinance stating that operations must take place in a enclosed building. Ms. Burkovich also expressed her concerns about taxpayer money funding the creation on a road that only Penske would benefit from. She also spoke about air and noise pollution and increased truck traffic occurring 24 hours a day. Mr. Dailey stated that if the bays were kept open it would then become a police issue.

Mr. Colflesh spoke about noise abatement. He wants Penske to address it and have their operations strictly enforce it.

Mr. Rumbaugh asked what percentages of box trucks and tractor trailers are utilizing these types of facilities. A Penske representative stated it is a blend of cargo vans all the way up to tractor trailers. It is a mix of small, medium, and large vehicles.

Discussion took place on air filtration and back-up alarms as well as restricting hours.

Mrs. Minnich asked if the zoning could be changed. Atty. Mooney stated that it was required to have zoning for industrial uses in the Township and another area would have to be provided for it. Atty. Mooney also stated that this proposed development is one of the least intensive uses for the site. Ms. Burkovich inquired about an overlay district. Atty. Mooney stated that this would open the land up for even more uses.

Mr. Dailey told the residents that they should keep attending the meetings so that Penske is aware of their concerns.

Mr. Tricarico thanked Ms. Burkovich for being a concerned citizen.

Adjournment

Mr. Colflesh made a motion to adjourn at 8:53 PM; Mr. Werley seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.