



Borough of Pottstown

*Borough Hall, 100 East High Street
Pottstown, Pennsylvania 19464-9525*

POTTSTOWN BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION

Pottstown Borough Hall Council Chamber Room
100 E. High St Pottstown, PA 19464
Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 7:00 pm

Present Members: Jim Derr; Chair
Dan Weand, Thomas Hylton, Rich Bouher

Absent Members: Brian Hydier

Additional Present: Matthew Hovey, Assistant Borough Solicitor
Danelle Baer, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Bob Flinchbaugh, Cedarville Engineering Group
Winter Stokes, Zoning/Planning Administrator

Meeting called to order by Mr. Derr at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion to accept the April 2022 minutes with minor revisions was made by Mr. Weand, seconded by Mr. Bouher. All in favor.

144 W High Street – Montgomery County College

Mark Davis and Scott McMackin were present to represent the college. Mr. Davis said the College has requested for the Borough to vacate Manatawny Street between 16 High Street and 144 W. High Street. Mr. Weand confirmed that Council voted to approve this request. Mr. Davis said with this approval the project can move forward. Mr. McMackin provided a recap of the project: converting existing parking area to green space, replacement of the retaining wall at the creek, proposed pergola, drive isle, and access into the site. Mr. Hovey noted that the parcels will then be consolidated. Mr. Davis agreed. Waiver requests were briefly discussed. Ms. Baer inquired about on-site ADA parking. Mr. Flinchbaugh also noted that because this parcel is in a flood plain conservation district, he would like the plan to show cross sections to demonstrate that more material is being taken out than is presently there. Mr. Davis said they will comply, and they will also provide the number of existing parking spaces on the south campus to satisfy Cedarville's comments.

A motion was made by Mr. Weand and seconded by Mr. Hylton to recommend preliminary/final approval of the land development plan for 144 W. High Street conditioned upon the Applicant complying with the Cedarville Engineering review letter dated April 19, 2022, and the Montgomery County Planning Commission's review letter to the satisfaction of the Borough's Engineer, consolidating of the two existing lots and the to-be-vacated right-of-way, and ensuring that the campus remains in compliance with all applicable ADA access and parking standards. All in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Bouher and seconded by Mr. Weand to recommend the granting of the waivers contained the Applicant's Waiver Letter dated March 11, 2022, revised June 15, 2022. All in favor.

204 Shoemaker Road – Tri-County Business Campus Expansion

Andrew Monastra; Monastra & Grater LLC and Anand Bhatt; Arna Engineering presented this project. Bob Gueli, owner of the property, was also in attendance. Mr. Monastra introduced the project and turned the

presentation over to Mr. Bhatt. Mr. Bhatt noted that in 2008 a 5,000 sq. ft. restaurant pad site had been approved by the Planning Commission but was never developed.

The current proposal is to build a 4,000 sq. ft. restaurant for Panera Bread with drive thru (6 vehicle stacking) and rapid pick-up lanes. A stormwater basin will be provided. Arna's Waiver letter dated May 6, 2022/Revised June 15, 2022, was discussed to include the withdrawal of waiver item #3. They wish to present a tree survey, presenting a total tree count to ensure compliance. A landscape plan will be submitted. Mr. Derr inquired about the rear access. Mr. Bhatt said the parcel behind is owned by the same entity and the parcels are contiguous. Mr. Flinchbaugh suggested that for any trees not provided they pay a fee-in-lieu of in place of a waiver approval. Mr. Bhatt agreed.

Mr. Monastra advised that Zoning relief will be required for signage and for more having more than one principal building. That application has not yet been filed. Mr. Monastra requested the Planning Commissions support of that application once filed. Mr. Hylton requested that the applicant provide photos of other Panera sites signs for the Planning Commission to first review.

Mr. Derr asked if they will have any sustainability features, for example semi permeable paving or energy controls. Mr. Bhatt said likely on the interior. Exterior impervious coverage is only increasing by about 3,400 sq. ft. The building will have a fire sprinkler system. Mr. Weand said a roundabout is planned and asked if they would consider providing a voluntary contribution. Mr. Gueli said yes and noted that it may be a traffic light instead of a roundabout. A light is preferred but will require PennDOT approval.

Ms. Baer asked if they considered installing a walkway from the corner of Shoemaker and Robinson to the building. Mr. Bhatt said they do not want to encourage folks to walk from the far end of the parking lot so instead they created a crosswalk closer to the front door of the building from the parking lot [nearest the building]. Mr. Flinchbaugh agreed that ADA access is in a better location as Mr. Bhatt described. Per Ms. Baer's suggestion, Mr. Bhatt agreed to realign and mark a crosswalk at the top of the site by the new entrance. Truck turning at the trash area was discussed. Mr. Bhatt noted a 50 ft truck can access it. Ms. Baer also asked that the crosswalk between drive thru lanes be widened to allow for a resting area. Mr. Bhatt agreed.

A motion was made by Mr. Weand, seconded by Mr. Bouher to approve preliminary/final plan approval conditioned upon the applicant complying with the Cedarville Engineering letter dated June 13, 2022, the Montgomery County Planning Commission's letter dated June 10, 2022, and the HRG letter dated June 10, 2022. Mr. Hylton expressed a desire to review the results of the tree survey and the impact on the landscaping plan prior to acting on the application. The Commission discussed with the Mr. Gueli the timing for the project and whether delaying action until the landscaping plan is revised would impact Panera's commitment to the development. Mr. Gueli advised that if certain deadlines in the lease are not met Panera is permitted to walk away from the project. Mr. Gueli did not believe that a month's delay would cause any issues. The Commission then asked Mr. Hovey whether they could legally provide any type of partial approval for the project but preserve the right to review the landscaping plan, as Mr. Hylton requested. Mr. Hovey advised that, under the circumstances, the Commission can bifurcate its recommendation on the plan and waivers and then proposed an amended motion.

Mr. Weand amended his motion accordingly, seconded by Mr. Bouher. Mr. Weand motioned, with the exception of the landscaping plan, to recommend preliminary/final approval of the land development plan conditioned upon the Applicant complying with the Cedarville Engineering letter dated June 13, 2022, the Montgomery County Planning Commission letter dated June 10, 2022, and the HRG letter dated June 10, 2022, to the satisfaction of the Borough's Engineer. All in favor.

The Applicant then withdrew Waiver 3. A motion was made by Mr. Bouher and seconded by Mr. Weand to recommend the granting of waivers 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8; and deferring waivers 4 and 5 due to the landscaping plan. All in favor.

The expectation is that the Applicant will return to the July Planning Commission meeting to present the results of the tree survey and a revised landscaping plan for further review and potential action, along with Waivers 4 and 5.

Public Comments: None

Blight: Mr. Hovey said there was a bus tour today. 3 properties have been initiated: 109 N. Hanover St., 308 ½ Union Alley, and 261 W. Beech St.

Pottstown Regional Planning (PMRPC): Ms. Baer reported that two proposed developments are listed for review:

1. In Douglass Twp. on Rt 100: A new medical facility with a 3-story, 60,000 sq. ft. medical office building and a 1 story, 22,000 sq. ft hospital.
2. In Lower Pottsgrove along E. High St: Valley Forge Properties "Sanatoga Market Place" which will have 2 warehouse/distribution buildings totaling about 133,000 sq. ft.

Keim Street Bridge: No update.

New business: No new business.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.