

TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

January 15, 2025

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jonathan L. Bolton, Chairman
Robin Ruhmel, Vice Chairman
Paul Geissinger, Secretary
Kyle Bartosh, Member
Lane Donatelli, Member
Jason Szewczak, Member - Absent
Casey Zelena, Member

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Lee A. Rackus, Bureau Chief of Planning,
Zoning & Development
Frank Clark, Keystone Consulting Engineers
Jack Gross, Esq., Township Solicitor

Meeting called to order at approximately 7:30 pm.

Chairman Bolton read the Fair Housing Statement as required.

A) SUBMISSION REVIEW

1) 2055-24A – SUBDIVISION PLAN OF 5173 WASHINGTON AVENUE

5173 Washington Avenue
Minor Subdivision
Zoning District: R-5A
Original Submission Date: 12/16/24
90-Day Expiration Date: 3/15/25

Robert Piligian, Bascom & Sieger and Richard Thatcher, property owner, representing the applicant.

Chairman Bolton confirmed the applicant received comment letters from Ms. Rackus dated 1/14/25 and KCE dated 1/15/25.

Mr. Piligian briefly reviewed the minor subdivision plan, which will create 1 new lot. Zoning Hearing Board approvals were received. Applicant also reviewed the comment letters. Will comply with comments, can move sidewalk back as requested by KCE and place street trees in planter strip. They will be doing Planning Module and have contacted CWSA & NBMA regarding same.

Mr. Piligian reviewed the requested Sidewalk Waiver along New York Avenue, they will install sidewalks on Washington Avenue.

Ms. Ruhmel confirmed that sidewalks would be installed along Washington Street for the new lot as well as the existing lot. Mr. Piligian stated they will also install handicap ramps at both corners.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion recommend preliminary approval based on conditions in the comment letters.

Motion by Ms. Ruhmel, second by Mr. Geissinger. Vote taken 5-0 with 1 abstention for preliminary approval.

Mr. Piligian asked about the requested waivers.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion recommend approval of all waivers from Bascom & Sieger's letter dated 12/12/24.

Motion by Ms. Ruhmel, second by Mr. Geissinger. Vote taken 6-0 to approve waivers,

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion recommend final approval based on conditions in the comment letters & all waivers requested.

Motion by Mr. Zelena, second by Mr. Geissinger. Vote taken 6-0 for final approval.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to recommend Sidewalk deferral request along New York Avenue from Bascom & Sieger's letter dated 12/12/24.

Motion by Mr. Geissinger with the recommendation that the existing sidewalk be fixed to be level with the curb, second by Ms. Ruhmel. Vote taken 5-1 to approve, with Commissioner Zelena voting Nay.

2) 2021-23A – MACARTHUR COMMONS REDEVELOPMENT 2

2601 & 2631 MacArthur Road
Land Development
Zoning District: C-2
Original Submission: 12/23/24
90-Day Expiration Date: 3/23/25

Joseph Zator, Esq., Todd Dratch, Abrams Realty & Development and Tom Weinkowski, Landcore, representing the applicant.

Chairman Bolton confirmed the applicant received comment letters from Ms. Rackus dated 1/15/25 and KCE dated 1/15/25.

Atty. Zator reviewed the project and its original approval in 2023. The plan has since been modified and they are looking for approval on reconfiguring the original plan. He stated they will comply with all comments in the letters.

Ms. Rackus expressed concern to Mr. Dratch re: the size of the car wash parking lot and the recent gathering of large groups or overnight parking of tractor trailers on similar parking lots.

Mr. Dratch said they noticed such activity at other shopping center's they own and feel that the addition of the car wash will be a deterrent to more people gathering. Mr. Kevin Dietrich, owner of Sparkle Carwash stated that at other carwashes he owns, there is an attendant when open, and they have installed gates to close off lot after hours to prevent access to the parking areas when necessary. Hours of operation would be 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. This facility will have attendants. Mr. Dietrich, Sparkle Carwash, will own the parcel, and would be open to adding the gates if it becomes necessary.

Mr. Geissinger had some questions about the entrance & parking set-up. Mr. Dietrich stated that the set-up is to avoid a back-up at the carwash. There will be plenty of vacuums, and

garbage cans at every vacuum station for the towels they provide. There will also be no Armor All, detailing or waxing services, which would lead to longer wait times and traffic back-up.

Mr. Zelena confirmed that they will comply with the Fire Department's request for a hydrant.

Mr. Bartosh asked about the illumination plans for the carwash.

Mr. Dietrich stated that the lights will be brighter during business hours and will be dimmed when closed, but will not shut off completely, for security reasons.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion recommend preliminary approval based on conditions in the comment letters.

Motion by Mr. Zelena, second by Ms. Ruhmel. Vote taken 6-0 for preliminary approval.

Chairman Bolton entertained a motion recommend final approval based on conditions in the comment letters & all waivers requested.

Motion by Ms. Ruhmel, second by Mr. Bartosh. Vote taken 6-0 for final approval.

B) DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Index #2052-24A - Warehouse/Distribution Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Ms. Rackus stated the purpose of this discussion is to avoid leaving the interpretation of these facilities up to the applicant/developer when going in front of a Board or Commission. She reviewed the Ordinance and the Township's definition of a Distribution Facility and a Warehouse.

Atty. Gross clarified some issues with the definitions and suggested that this be recommended by the Planning Commission for the Board of Commissioner's Workshop Agenda.

The Planning Commission reviewed some suggested changes and discussed verbiage.

Atty. Gross recommended a motion to the Planning Commission, to recommend the Board of Commissioner's consider this proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Motion by Mr. Geissinger, second by Mr. Bolton. Vote taken 6-0 to recommend.

C) OTHER:

Approval of December 2024 Meeting Minutes.

Vote taken, minutes approved.

C) ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 p.m.