

TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
March

March 15, 2023

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**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Robert Piligian, Chairman  
Jonathan L. Bolton, Vice Chairman  
Paul Geissinger, Secretary  
Robin Ruhmel, Member  
Ann Freyman, Member  
Jason Szewczak, Member  
Andre Dasent, Alternate - Absent  
Sean Ziller, Alternate

**TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL**

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

Meeting called to order at approximately 7:30 pm.

- A) Mr. Piligian read the Fair Housing Statement as required.

**SUBMISSION REVIEW:**

**1) INDEX #2019-23A – AMERICAN PROMOTIONAL EVENTS EAST, DBA TNT FIREWORKS**

2180 MacArthur Road  
Special Exception  
Zoning District C-2  
Original Submission: 2/6/23  
90 Day Expiration: N/A

Debbie Ivins representing the applicant.

Mr. Piligian confirmed that the applicant received comment letters from KCE dated 3/14/23 and Ms. Rackus dated 3/14/23.

Ms. Ivins reviewed the Special Exception request, noting there are no changes from last year's set-up. Hours would be approximately 9:00 am to 9:30 pm, 7-days a week from 6/15/23 to 7/5/23.

Mr. Piligian confirmed that there would be security, fire extinguishers and a portable toilet on site and that the size of the tent would be the same as the previous year.

Mr. Piligian entertained a motion to approve the special exception conditioned on comments from KCE and Ms. Rackus, and the items noted above.

Motion by Ms. Freyman to approve, second by Mr. Bolton.

Vote taken 7-0 to approve.

**2) INDEX #1998-22 – COPLAY QUARRY, LLC - PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

5101 Beekmantown Road

Major Subdivision/Land Development

Zoning District OS-2

Original Submission Date: 2/23/22; Revised Submission Date: 1/25/2023

90 Day Expiration: 12/27/2022; Extension exp. 4/28/23

No new plans submitted.

Alec Nahas, Bohler Engineering; George Broseman representing the applicant.

Comment letters were received from Ms. Rackus dated 3/14/23 and Mr. Clark, KCE dated 3/14/23.

Mr. Nahas outlined the planned subdivision. He confirmed that the seller's prior subdivision is now recorded and they will comply with all items noted in the comment letters.

Mr. Piligian asked if they are prepared to address their waiver requests from the letter dated September 26, 2022.

Mr. Nahas stated they are not requesting waivers at this time for lot consolidation or land development.

Ms. Rackus questioned the April 28, 2023 expiration of their plan, indicating she doesn't believe it will be through the township process by that time. Mr. Broseman confirmed that they will request an extension.

Mr. Piligian entertained a motion to recommend preliminary approval conditioned on compliance with the comments received from KCE and Ms. Rackus.

Motion to recommend by Mr. Bolton, second by Mr. Szewczak.

Vote taken 7-0 to approve.

Mr. Piligian entertained a motion to recommend final approval with conditions noted above.

Motion to recommend by Mr. Ziller, second by Mr. Bolton.

Vote taken 7-0 to approve.

**B) DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1) Curb & Sidewalk recommendations by the Planning Commission (PC) for land development and subdivision plans

Mr. Piligian asked the Planning Commission members if they want to formulate a letter to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) asking them to amend Chapter 21 and/or Chapter 22 so that the Planning Commission can make recommendations regarding new and planned subdivisions.

Ms. Freyman commented that she's comfortable being able to make recommendations, as long as it doesn't become a legal issue.

Ms. Ruhmel agreed that the Planning Commission should be able to look at development in their entirety and make recommendation to the board when appropriate.

Mr. Geissinger questioned if there would be clarification as to whether the PC would make a 'comment' or 'recommendation' to the BOC and questioned the ambiguity of where sidewalks are and are not required. Mr. Geissinger also wanted to allow removal of walks.

Mr. Ziller stated that being able to make recommendations to the BOC would be beneficial and allow for some clarity.

Mr. Szewczak is also in favor of the letter requesting the ability to provide input to the BOC. Also, taking a look at what other municipalities are doing for their curb and sidewalk ordinances.

Mr. Piligian stated that in the case of another municipality, they are now 'calling in' previous Curb & Sidewalk Deferrals and asking them to install sidewalks.

Mr. Bolton echoed other commissioner's comments. He would like the ability to make recommendations to the BOC because of the PC's knowledge and experience.

Ms. Rackus stated that there should have been a Township wide review of sidewalks and a plan based on the Township's special amenities and needs. Noting that it is not always equitable, and we don't want sidewalks and paving everywhere, but there needs to be some guidance.

Atty. Gross and Ms. Rackus will draft a letter to the BOC for the PC to review at the next meeting.

2) SALDO amendment regarding plan size for submissions

Mr. Piligian confirmed that the Planning Commission members do not need to receive full size monthly packets with plans. He suggested reduced plan size and if they want to see the Storm Water reports, they will have to make a trip to the Township to review those plans. Mr. Piligian would still like to see the full-size reports as the Chariman, but that would not be necessary for all PC members.

Atty. Gross said it would be a good time to update the ordinance and amend the current specific plan submission requirements, and the noted application should also indicate the size

of electronic files required going forward. He will create a letter requesting the BOC review the SALDO.

However, plans should not be sent electronically to personal email accounts. It was mentioned that it would be nice if the Planning Commission received township emails, which would allow for secure transmission of files.

Ms. Rackus stated the BOC just received Township emails recently and she has been requesting Township emails for the PC and Zoning Board for the past few years. Also, if the PC goes to electronic files, there needs to be a whole policy in place re: the submissions and how they are being made available. These plans belong to, and are copyrighted by, the developer and are not allowed to be copied. She noted these files are large and we would also need input from our computer techs to see if it would be possible to send these files.

Atty. Gross will draft a letter re: requesting policy changes for Planning Commission submissions, which will be reviewed at the next PC meeting.

**C) OTHER:**

Approval of February 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve February 2023 Meeting Minutes by Mr. Bolton, second by Mr. Szewczak.

**D) ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20 pm.