

Springfield Township
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes June 16, 2020

Call to Order: Chairperson Baker called the June 16, 2020 Business Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. via Video/phone conference. He stated that the meeting is a video/phone conference call and all attendees needed to introduce themselves before speaking. The public will be given an opportunity to speak under public comment and after each item. Please keep screens off or the IT administrator would turn them off for you. Voting on motions will be conducted as roll call votes.

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

Dean Baker

Ruth Ann Hines

Dave Hopper

George Mansour

Jason Pliska

Terry Rusnell (Joined the meeting at 7:18 pm)

Kevin Sclesky

Commissioners Absent

Consultants Present

Doug Lewan, Carlisle Wortman, Associates

Mike Smith, Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick, Inc.

Staff Present

Collin W. Walls, Supervisor

Erin Mattice, Planning Administrator

Laura Moreau, Clerk

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Hines moved to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Commissioner Hopper. Roll Call Vote: Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Sclesky. Voted no: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion Carried.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda:

1. Minutes of the April 21, 2020 Regular Planning Commission meeting

Commissioner Hopper moved to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2020 Regular Planning Commission meeting as amended, changing, page 5, third paragraph, from “he doesn’t see a traffic pattern” to “he does see a traffic pattern” and on page 2, change “he would like to use the shared access are” to “he would like to use the

shared access area”. Supported by Commissioner Hines. Roll Call Vote: Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Sclesky. Voted no: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion Carried.

Public Hearing:

None

New Business:

1. Ordinance Amendments – Section 40-145 Administrative Approval of Special Land Use and Section 40-136 Site Plan Approval

Supervisor Walls corrected his memo to say “it would go back to the full site plan use process” to “it would not go back to the full site plan use process”. In the current ordinance, any site plan that received special land use, if they have a problem and need an amendment, they are required to get a full amendment to the special land use requiring them to go back to the very beginning. This amendment is meant to put in place the same kind of committee process to review minor changes rather than go all the way back to Planning Commission, Public Hearing and Township Board meetings.

Chairperson Baker summarized the ordinance amendment to Section 40-136.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that Supervisor Walls’ memo dated March 6, 2020 was helpful. He agrees with an administrative review for these amendments rather than subject anyone to the full process for something minor.

Commissioner Pliska asked who was on the site plan committee.

Chairperson Baker replied that the site plan committee is made up of the Township Supervisor, the Planning Commission Chairperson and the Board representative to the Planning Commission. If the Planning Commission Chairperson cannot be present, the Vice-Chairperson will sit on the Committee. If the Supervisor cannot attend, the Township Clerk can attend in his spot.

Commissioner Hopper stated that on the first page, under Section 1, “Am amendment” should be changed to “An amendment”. He commented that he supports this change and is also supportive of the committee.

Commissioners and Supervisor Walls discussed whether to schedule a Public Hearing during a Zoom meeting or to wait until the meeting is held face-to-face. Commissioners agreed to conduct Public Hearing at first available date.

Commissioner Hopper moved to set for Public Hearing Ordinance amendments in Section 40-145 Administrative Approval of Special Land Use and Section 40-136 Site Plan Approval as received and edited this evening for the next available Planning Commission meeting. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Roll Call

Vote: Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Rusnell, Sclesky. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

2. Ordinance Amendment – Section 40-275 – Amendment to subsection 40-275 (12) Group Child Care Homes

Chairperson Baker acknowledged a memo from Supervisor Walls and a letter of correspondence from Donna Rambeau, Little Angels Daycare, 8710 Shore Drive, regarding this topic.

Supervisor Walls stated that the State changed their requirements and now requires the Township to sign off on a zoning permit for Group Child Care Homes and this created this issue. He summarized his memo provided to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that to require a person that is trying to operate a small business to go through all the steps required for a regular Special Land Use is overkill and not necessary. He is in support of this amendment.

Commissioner Hopper asked where they would move current subsection “g.”.

Commissioner Hines provided clarification regarding re-lettering of former subsection g. to subsection h. She asked if this review and approval would be by the subcommittee.

Supervisor Walls answered no; it would still require Special Land Use. It simplifies what is necessary, for example, they do not have to hire an engineer to do a detailed site plan. It minimizes the requirements of what needs to be presented for Special Land Use. A Public Hearing is still required.

Mr. Lewan commented that the amendment was written by Greg Need, Township Attorney.

Commissioner Hines moved to set for Public Hearing Ordinance amendment to subsection 40-275 (12) Group Child Care Homes, to add a new subsection g. and renumber current g. as h. and have a Public Hearing at the next available Planning Commission meeting. Supported by Commissioner Hopper. Roll Call Vote: Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Rusnell, Sclesky. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Old Business:

1. Ordinance Amendment – Dixie Highway Overlay District – Section 40-596 – Review and Discussion

Mr. Lewan summarized his memo dated June 5, 2020. He explained proposed Dixie Highway Overlay District amendments dated February 28, 2020 and the District Enhancement List dated February 7, 2020.

Commissioner Sclesky commented that the statement on page four, “except drive in restaurants” needs to be removed.

Mr. Lewan concurred.

Commissioners discussed drive-in versus drive-thru restaurants.

Mr. Lewan commented that he would delete the language, “except drive-ins”.

Commissioners discussed the different types of restaurants and their corresponding definitions.

Mr. Lewan concluded that he would check the definitions and make sure it was consistent.

Chairperson Baker asked about the definition for truck stop because right now it is listed as a permitted use in the proposed language.

Mr. Lewan read the definition for truck stop.

Commissioners discussed allowing a truck stop in the Dixie Highway Corridor. Commissioners agreed that it should be removed from the list of possible uses. They also determined that a truck stop is a Special Land Use in C-2 zoning currently and that would not change.

Mr. Lewan confirmed the definitions for restaurants, and he explained.

Commissioner Hines suggested that they included all the types of restaurants that are listed in the definitions.

Mr. Lewan agreed that they should either use the blanket term “restaurant” or they would have to list out all types of restaurants.

Commissioner Hines asked about the Special Land Use outlined on page 7. If any of the four conditions exist, then it shall require Special Land Use approval.

Mr. Lewan agreed, and a Public Hearing would be required.

Commissioners agreed that the proposed edits are minor, and it should be heard for a Public Hearing at the next meeting.

Commissioner Sclesky moved to set at the next convenient meeting a Public Hearing for ordinance amendments to Dixie Highway Overlay District, Section 40-596 with the proposed edits discussed during tonight’s meeting to be reflected in the amendment presented for Public Hearing. Supported by Commissioner Hines.

Chairperson Baker stated that there is an additional edit on page two, in item 3, section b.1. He suggested instead of “Davisburg” it should say “Davisburg Road”.

Commissioner Sclesky and Commissioner Hines agreed. Roll Call Vote: Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Rusnell, Sclesky. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

2. Sign Ordinance Amendments – Discussion

Mr. Lewan summarized his memo dated May 27, 2020.

Chairperson Baker asked if any of the Commissioners had any clarifying comments.

Commissioner Hopper stated that the logo recognition was regarding flags. For example, if GM had a flag, would it count.

Mr. Lewan replied he did not know but he would investigate it.

Commissioner Sclesky asked if the Springfield Township Square sign was a size that is acceptable now. He would like a visual of what is 112 square feet.

Mr. Lewan stated that he is not proposing changes to the ground sign. The comment about getting rid of the ground sign to get an increase in building signage came up at the joint PC/TB meeting. The ground sign doesn’t change; the building signage changed.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that as you drive by Springfield Town Square you can identify the Kroger logo and the Subway logo.

Mr. Lewan stated that he was talking about the three-tenant building that was supposed to be constructed in front of Kroger.

Supervisor Walls stated that Mr. Lewan is using the setback from edge of road. He asked Mr. Lewan to define the edge of the road. The ordinance currently uses the edge of the road right-of-way.

Mr. Lewan agreed that using the edge of the road right-of-way is probably a good idea. He stated that he could adjust the amount if they want to go from the edge of right-of-way.

Commissioner Hines confirmed the setback distances provided.

Supervisor Walls stated that when they interpret the ordinance, do they use the flat numbers, or do they use the percentage?

Mr. Lewan replied that it is a fixed scale. If the applicant is 80-99, the applicant would get 80. If the applicant is 100-149, the applicant would get 100. He stated that they could figure out how to graduate it or he could make the increments smaller. He suggested that they insert the language, “no more than” to make it clear.

Commissioner Hopper asked how big a 160 square foot sign is.

Mr. Lewan stated that he would have to provide some samples of the sizing. He explained the square footage amounts given in the chart. He explained that the amount of square footage needs to be distributed amongst multiple tenants for shopping centers.

Commissioner Sclesky commented that he would like to see samples to verify that far enough from the road meets the expectation of the size.

Mr. Lewan commented that this is a discussion point. He has it ending at 260 but they could end it at 200 square feet.

Commissioner Sclesky added that he would like visual examples.

Chairperson Baker concurred. Some relevant examples would help.

Mr. Lewan commented that the Township has a sign inventory.

Supervisor Collin concurred.

Mr. Lewan stated that he would start with that inventory to provide sizes of signs for the Commission.

Commissioners agreed with the need to provide sign size examples.

Mr. Lewan commented that the building sign increase is the only proposed language change. He asked the Commissioners what they thought about this item.

Commissioner Pliska asked how Mr. Lewan came to the amount of ½ building signage represented in the chart.

Mr. Lewan replied that the percentage could be higher or lower, he started with 50% for projecting signs. These types of signs do have some issues including safety. The Commission could change it to ground or projecting signs.

Commissioner Pliska commented that he wonders how often the projecting signs could be a concern.

Mr. Lewan suggested that he would leave the projecting signs in and the Commission could discuss it next time.

Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Lewan continued the discussion by explaining the ground sign information and business center signs contained in his memo. The business center sign is allowed at 112 square feet.

Commissioner Hopper stated that he does not like the 15 feet height, but he does like the 112 square feet. He suggested 12.5 feet which would be 25% on top of the C-2 amount.

Mr. Lewan agreed.

Commissioners discussed the 15 feet height.

Supervisor Walls asked Mr. Lewan to send him the support document for the 15 feet and the 112 square feet.

Mr. Lewan answered that he would.

Mr. Lewan continued his summation of his memo by explaining the number and location of ground signs and business center signs allowed currently and in the proposed language.

Commissioners discussed business center signs. Commissioners agreed with Option 3 with 300 feet between.

Commissioner Hines asked if they were still allowed a maximum of 112 square feet.

Mr. Lewan stated the current ordinance says if you have two business center signs, you must divide up those signs by that maximum number.

Mr. Lewan answered that an applicant could have a maximum square footage of 112 square feet so if they have two signs, they must divide 112 square feet between the two signs.

Commissioners discussed the square footage of a business center sign.

Mr. Lewan reiterated that the total amount of square footage should be split between the two, but the total square footage would have to equal 112 square feet.

Supervisor Walls suggested that the Planning Commission could be allowed to grant a waiver under some circumstances and besides that, there really is only one property that is large enough.

Chairperson Baker suggested that they allow Mr. Lewan to bring language back showing different versions of option 3 and to clarify what type of authorization that they could extend to the developer who comes before the Commission. Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Lewan continued his summary of the memo provided.

Commissioners agreed in keeping the signage architectural features in keeping with the Dixie Highway Design Guidelines.

Mr. Lewan stated that there was some discussion about rewriting the purpose and intent section and he provided some sample language from the MI Sign Book. If there are no objections, he will put the new rewrite in the ordinance language provided at next meeting.

Commissioners agreed.

Public Comment:

Mr. Sean Miller introduced himself to the Planning Commission. He is currently running for Township Clerk.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Hines moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m. Supported by Commissioner Hopper. Roll Call Vote: Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Rusnell, Sclesky. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Erin A. Mattice, Recording Secretary