

**Upper Merion Township Planning Commission
Regularly Scheduled Meeting for January 26, 2022**

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled meeting on January 26, 2022, in-person in the Board Room, located in the Township Building, and via Zoom. The meeting information was fully advertised and a meeting agenda placed on the township website. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN ATTENDANCE:

ABSENT:

Matt Popek, Chair
Mark McKee, Vice-Chair
Martin Trumpler, Secretary
Jaquelin Camp
Kenneth Brown
William Jenaway, Board Liaison
Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager
Patrick Foley, on behalf of Leanna Colubriale, Township Engineer (Remington & Vernick)
Ashton Jones, Township Planner

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Minutes for the prior meeting on January 12 had previously been distributed. There were two minor edits, regarding the meeting location and Township building name. Additionally, Minutes from the December 12 had been previously revised. Ms. Camp made a motion to adopt the December and January Minutes as discussed and revised with Mr. McKee seconding. The motion carried 5-0.

250 Hansen Access Road - Vimco

24,000 sf Manufacturing building, parking and stormwater

Land Development application for standalone 24,000 sf. facility on a site which already contains an existing facility. The applicant's engineer, Glen Kelczewski, provided a brief summary of project and operations indicating that new building will be a wire mesh manufacturing facility. Currently Vimco has about 42 employees, and the new facility will add about six new employees with an additional six shifting from the existing facility at 300 Hansen Access Road (12 total employees). Stormwater will be via an underground storm tank module and discharge pipe onto off site PECO property. Currently in negotiations to obtain a drainage easement with PECO. Seeking waivers regarding landscaping so not to provide for the entire site (only for area of concern), trees along Hansen Access Road, which the trail project would be replacing (trees recently cut down due to Chester Valley Trail installation and road realignment,), etc. The applicant had a workshop meeting with the Board of Supervisors in September regarding parking counts and it was determined that this is an unspecified use category, only requiring 60 parking spaces. At this meeting the Board of Supervisors also determined that stormwater redevelopment requirements, which would have required 20% impervious removal, would not apply.

Mr. McKee asked questions regarding building ownership and tenant vs. Vimco site layout. Richard McCormick, a Vimco representative, stated that recently the manufacturing business and property were sold.

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Currently wire mesh is manufactured at the 300 building, but the new owner wants to move it all on site to this location.

Mr. Trumpler made a statement about the customer service entrance at the 300 building, and confirming that was a different building. Mr. McCormick stated that the 250 address was only used for wholesale distribution, no small pickup or delivery, only the occasional tractor trailer.

Mr. McCormick further stated that prior to trail construction, 12 large Bartlett pear trees were cut down and it was his understanding that the trail committee was to put back, in kind, what was removed. Replanting would be sometime this spring, if trail is finished. Mr. McCormick restated that 6 employees would be moved to this location from the 300 building (6-8 people in new building).

Mr. McKee asked if current site access is through the 300 building. Mr. McCormick stated no, and explained traffic flow and access, indicating that the proposed new internal drive aisle would be exit only.

Mr. Popek asked about loading docks/loading generally at new building, and Mr. McCormick stated that the new building is straight manufacturing with overhead doors (no loading docks). Material would be taken between buildings via forklift.

Mr. McKee asked about driveway widths, and Mr. Kelczewski indicated that the eastern access was about 30 ft. and the new proposed northbound one-way offshoot would be 20 ft. Mr. McCormick added that all driveways had truck templates done and entrance radii were changed by the trail project. Mr. Kelczewski added that he was surprised about comments in the traffic engineer review letter indicating a need for truck templates, when it was recently done. Mr. Popek stated that it is possible the engineer was not aware that this was recently looked at by the trail project.

Mr. McKee asked if the widening of road was part of trail project and Mr. Popek indicated yes due to squeezing the trail between the Turnpike and Hansen Access Road. Mr. McCormick stated that there was no need for contractors or retail users to be on site.

Mr. Kelczewski indicated that the existing electrical substation would be relocated slightly and downsized. It is larger than necessary and the current use does not require such a large facility. Mr. McCormick went into more detail regarding the reduced need.

Mr. McKee asked about eastern access indicating that trucks would come onto the site on right drive aisle, loop around and exit the new one-way access (20 ft.).

Mr. Brown asked about truck loading at existing facility and tractor trailers backing up. Mr. McCormick indicated that most make a U-turn or back up and then go out the other access driveway.

Mr. Popek asked about stormwater and the proposed PECO easement. Mr. Kelczewski responded that it would make sense to have easement for existing and proposed facilities. Mr. McKee asked about drainage, and Mr. Kelczewski indicated that drainage flows into culvert, under railroad and ultimately east.

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Mr. McCormick stated that he has never seen the current retention basin more than ¼ full in all his years owning the property. Mr. Kelczewski responded that is the main reason why they are not proposing changes to the existing facility.

Mr. Popek asked about the requested waiver to doing a traffic study, and notes that while there does not appear to be much of an increase in employees, he wonders about increased truck traffic. Mr. McCormick stated that traffic will be the same as is current, with some activity being shifted to the new building. There was then a discussion between Mr. McCormick and Mr. McKee regarding access at the 300 building.

Mr. Kelczewski brought up the traffic engineer letter and the requested need for possible sidewalk on southside of Hanson Access Road. Applicant requests a waiver due to the industrial use, there being low pedestrian traffic and the planned trail on the northside of the road. Additionally, Mr. Kelczewski believes a traffic analysis of the Henderson Road intersection is not necessary due to minimal employee additions.

Mr. Foley indicates that disturbance is over an acre so they will need to go to DEP for a NPDES permit.

Mr. Kelczewski discussed the need for minutes from the Board of Supervisors workshop meeting, and it was discussed that the township will provide meeting minutes to the applicant.

Ms. Camp indicated that, in this instance, sidewalk waivers make sense. Mr. Trumpler followed that comment up with a comment regarding the design of any pedestrian crossings from trail to facility.

Mr. Jenaway indicated that the applicant should be prepared at an eventual Board of Supervisors meeting to discuss impervious coverage/stormwater, tree replacement/need for trees on site or somewhere else. Furthermore, on a separate issue, Mr. Jenaway indicated that the building's alarm system needs upgrading as it is a repetitive problem and the next incident may be subject to fines. Mr. McCormick responded again regarding the trail project replacing trees. Mr. Popek indicated that he might be able to find the landscape plan from the county. Mr. McCormick responded that if the trail project does not plant trees, they will. Mr. McKee suggested that if trees can't go in, they can be relocated to another location in the township. Mr. Kelczewski reiterated that they are really asking for a landscaping waiver regarding the existing site, not the proposed area.

Mr. Popek asked Mr. Jenaway about his concerns regarding impervious coverage, and Mr. Jenaway responded that they should just be prepared to discuss if it comes up at the full Board meeting.

Mr. Jones added that there is some concern about lighting spillover on to adjacent property, the need for an application time extension, and discrepancies regarding the application and traffic impact fees. These items will be discussed directly with the applicant throughout the duration of the process.

Mr. Popek summarized the applicant's requested variances: existing landscaping, street trees, preliminary/final plan, items within 200 ft., traffic study, storm sewer profiles, and sidewalks. Mr. Kelczewski interjected indicating that while their team had no issue with requests by traffic engineer regarding sight

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distance confirmation there was a concern regarding the intersection analysis at Henderson. Traffic impact fee would help alleviate that issue.

Mr. Popek indicated that the county review letter was not yet received and that the applicant was still working on DEP issues. Process usually includes two meetings with planning commission but if not much needs to change on a plan between the first and second meeting, sometimes a project does not need to come back for the second meeting.

Ms. Camp, indicated there was no need to come back, while Mr. Trumpler indicated a mild preference that they do come back but was okay with consensus decision.

Mr. McKee moved to recommend the plan for approval as presented and grant all waivers, with Ms. Camp seconding and all in favor.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no other business to discuss, Mr. Brown moved to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Trumpler seconding and all in favor at 7.51 PM

Respectfully Submitted:

Martin Trumpler, Secretary