

East Rockhill Township
Planning Commission Minutes
March 14, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the East Rockhill Township Planning Commission was held at 7:00pm on March 14, 2024 at the Municipal meeting room at 1622 N. Ridge Road, Perkasie, PA 18944.

Present: Joe Chellew, Planning Commission Chairperson
Anne Fenley, Planning Commission Vice-Chairperson
Richard Kelly, Planning Commission Member
Blake Eisenhart, Planning Commission Member
Aaron Teel, Planning Commission Member
Colin Monahan, Planning Commission Member
Steve Baluh P.E., Township Engineer
Marianne Morano, Township Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairperson Mr. Chellew.

Approval of February 8, 2024 Minutes:

On motion by Mr. Monahan, seconded by Mr. Chellew, to approve the meeting minutes from the February 8, 2024 Planning Commission regular meeting as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

Renew Bible Church, 1600 N. Fifth Street:

The following comments and/or recommendations are made relative to the subject preliminary land development plan, sheets 1 thru 17, dated January 12, 2024, latest revision date February 19, 2024 prepared by Van Mease Engineering, PC.

Mr. Greg Landis, Mr. Scott Mease, P.E., Mr. Tyler Freed, P.E., and Mr. Dave Artman were present.

Applicant proposes to construct an approximately 12,841 SF of building expansion within various additions to the existing complex. The building additions will connect the Heritage Chapel to the Ministry Center/Victory Hall building. Additionally, an addition to the Hillside Building in the rear of the site is proposed. It is noted that the proposed building additions are less than that shown on the previously discussed sketch plan. Parking area expansion, athletic field grading, and other associated site improvements are proposed. The site is 17.5 acres (net) in area and located within the Cultural – Education (C-E) Zoning District. Property is currently served by public sewage disposal via East Rockhill Township facilities and Perkasie Regional Authority (PRA) public water.

1. Applicant recently received variance approval from the Township Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) pursuant to decision dated September 5, 2023. Variances included addition of 172 parking spaces to the existing 335 existing spaces, and an increase in impervious surface to a total of 32.41%. Conditions required by the ZHB are listed on the plan and include land development plan submission, compliance with stormwater/NPDES regulations, shielded and reduced parking area lighting, perpetual maintenance of pervious paving, evergreen buffer along Hawthorne, and extinguishing all but security lighting by 10:30 pm except for special events. Applicant should clarify the proposed reduction in site lighting as presented to the ZHB. Additionally, applicant should enter into a maintenance agreement with the Township to guarantee long term maintenance of the pervious pavement areas. **Will comply.**

2. Existing accessory dwelling at the front of the site is nonconforming with respect to front yard setback. The proposed improvements do not increase the nonconformity. **Comment.**
3. Proposed woodland clearing indicated on the plan is just short of the maximum amount permitted. Site clearing limits are to be clearly marked prior to the start of construction and be maintained during construction, as noted in the construction sequence. Any modification to proposed improvements, or future projects that require additional woodland clearing may require zoning variance approval. (ZO Section 27-1900) **Comment**
4. Buffer yards are proposed along the northern and western site boundaries adjacent to residential properties. Existing woods are proposed to remain within the required 25 feet wide buffer yards. Therefore, no buffer plantings are proposed. This office recommends that all canopy trees proposed along the northern perimeter of the parking areas be replaced with evergreen trees (as proposed in the rear parking area) to enhance buffering provided by existing woods, particularly in winter. A note has been added to the plan requiring that the remaining woods in the buffer yards be evaluated by the Township after clearing and construction has been completed. In any areas where there is no, or insufficient, vegetation remaining the gaps should be supplemented with additional plantings to enhance the buffer. (ZO Section 27-1905) **Will comply.**
5. An existing path is shown on the plan connecting the parking area to the dwelling along Schwenkmill Road owned by the church. At the prior sketch plan review, there were discussions regarding developing an emergency access at this location. Design engineer has indicated that there is no intent to pursue an emergency access in this location. **Not at this time.**
6. Recent site inspection noted an area used for storage of equipment, trailers, and miscellaneous items which is located near the existing propane tanks. A dumpster pad and storage shed has been proposed in the southwest corner of the rear parking area. No other outside storage areas are proposed. **Will comply.**
7. During sketch plan review, the applicant indicated that there are no designated loading doors/dock incorporated in the building project. Any areas where trucks are expected stop to deliver supplies should not obstruct access drives or parking. A Vehicle Turning Diagram has been submitted and shows an accessible path for a forty foot long vehicle around the perimeter of the site parking areas. However, it does not show travel paths to areas adjacent to the building which would be used for loading/unloading. Diagram should be revised to include travel paths to the building. (ZO Section 27-1714 & 1715; SLDO Section 22-523) **Will comply.**
8. Correspondence dated February 27, 2024, has been received from the design engineer requesting waivers of Subdivision Ordinance and Stormwater Management Ordinance requirements (refer enclosed copy). Township should determine if the requests are satisfactory. Waiver requests include: **Planning Commission deferred action on street improvements until the traffic study was reviewed by the Township Traffic Engineer.**
 - A. SLDO Section 22-403.A – Plan scale.
 - B. SLDO Section 22-403.4 – Use of aerial plan for features within 100 feet of site.

- C. SLDO Sections 22-505.16, 512.1, & 513.1 – Street improvements (widening, curb & sidewalk) along north end of site frontage. Improvements were previously installed along the remainder of the site frontage in conjunction with prior site projects. Refer traffic study comment below.
 - D. SLDO Sections 22-515.1.D & 515.4.B – Installation of street trees and basin plantings along right-of-way of N. Fifth Street. Refer additional landscape comments below.
 - E. SLDO Sections 22-516.1.C(2) & (D) and 26-319.3.B & C, and 12 – Use of 15” HDPE storm pipe in-lieu-of minimum 18” RCP. Based on the storm sewer being privately owned and maintained, this office recommends that HDPE pipe material is acceptable except for any pipes in an existing public street.
 - F. SWM Section 26-319.3.D – Request for use of PADOT RC-34 storm inlet hoods for privately owned storm sewer.
 - G. SWM Section 26-319.3.S – Request to permit less than one foot of freeboard in storm inlets.
9. A traffic impact study is required to be submitted for all non-residential land development applications in accordance with Section 22-406 of the Land Development Ordinance. Comments related to street and site access improvements are hereby deferred until receipt of traffic impact study and comments from the Township Traffic Consultant, TPD. The applicant’s traffic engineer, Drive Engineering, submitted a scoping document dated February 28, 2024. PADOT and TPD should be consulted regarding the scope of the study. It was noted that the report from Dive Engineering lists a slightly smaller building expansion floor area. Increase in facility size should be clarified. Complete traffic impact study must be submitted to PADOT in conjunction with the required Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) application for access/improvements to N. Fifth Street. All information submitted to PADOT should also be provided to the Township to ensure coordination with Township requirements. Site access/frontage improvements are subject to modification pursuant to Township and PADOT reviews. Finally, HOP is required be obtained from PADOT by the applicant. (SLDO Section 22-505.2, 505.16, 512, & 513) **Will comply.**
10. Stormwater management is proposed to be addressed by modification of existing stormwater BMPs and construction of a second surface basin. Site drainage is generally divided between discharges to the north and south side of the site frontage. Discharge into PADOT right-of-way requires PADOT review and approval. Drainage and Stormwater Management Report, dated January 12, 2024, prepared by the design engineer was previously submitted. Supplemental Stormwater Calculations, undated, were submitted with the revised plan. **Will comply. Applicant presented: (1) addition of detention basin capacity, current basin capacity 26,950 CF and future basin capacity with addition of 2nd basin 81,698 CF; (2) reduction of 4 acres of free flow storm water from property, pre-development free runoff – 13.5 Acres, post development free runoff- 9.4 Acres; (3) reduce controlled storm water flow from property, current flow off property from basins will be reduced by 10%, basin capacity adds support this, pervious paving areas are not counted in calculations which provides additional reduction, pervious paving focused on north parking area.**

The following comments are made with respect to stormwater management: (Stormwater Management Ordinance (SMO Chapter 26, Part 3))

- A. Report indicates that post development rate of stormwater discharge has been reduced to both the northern and southern discharge points.
 - B. Discharge from basin BMP2 discharges in the vicinity of the adjoining Taylor property line. Discharge will cross the corner of the Taylor property then follow the existing roadside swale to the downslope culvert crossing N. Fifth Street. Improvement to the flow path to the culvert should be considered. Plan should clarify if an easement is necessary over the Taylor Property for the discharge path. Basin BMP 1 is currently directly piped to the existing storm sewer to the south.
 - C. Stormwater basin spillway protection should be clarified on the Erosion Control Plan and spillway detail. At a minimum, permanent erosion control matting should be specified. (SMO Section 26-319.9 & 10)
 - D. Applicant and design engineer stormwater certifications should be executed on the final record and PCSM plans. (SMO Section 26-325.D.22 & 24)
 - E. Specific comments related to stormwater basin and collection system design are included in the accompanying engineering/drafting detail review memorandum issued by this office and should be addressed by the design engineer. Additional comments may be generated upon resolution of the items contained in this correspondence, and traffic/street improvements which may be required upon receipt of traffic impact study and PADOT reviews.
 - F. Stormwater design should be coordinated with NPDES permit requirements.
 - G. A stormwater management operation and maintenance agreement should be executed between Township and applicant/HOA in a manner satisfactory to the Township Solicitor. Agreement should include the right for Township inspection of the facilities. (SMO Section 26-344)
11. The site is connected to East Rockhill sanitary sewer via a private grinder pump system with a force main which extends across N. Fifth Street. Design engineer should submit calculations for estimated sewage flows for the expanded facility to be compared to existing EDUs assigned to the property (water meter records may be used as a basis for estimation). Existing system should be detailed on the preliminary land development plan and should be analyzed for capacity to accommodate the estimated flow. Improvements to the grinder pump, including a duplex system may be required. All sanitary extensions/improvements should be designed and constructed in accordance with East Rockhill Township requirements. If, necessary, additional sewage EDUs should be purchased by the applicant from the Township. Finally, Sewage Facilities Planning Module, or exemption, requires approval by East Rockhill Township, PWTA and PADEP. (SLDO Section 22-407 & 520) **Will comply.**

12. Proposed public water supply is provided by Perkasie Regional Authority (PRA). Verification of approval by PRA for water system design and capacity should be obtained by the applicant. (SLDO Section 22-519) **Will comply.**
13. Plans have been forwarded to the Perkasie Fire Company for Comment related to access and circulation for emergency services. (SLDO Section 22-519.2) **Comment.**
14. The following landscape planting comments should be addressed: **Will comply.**
 - A. Landscape plan includes parking area shading calculations. Calculation indicate that trees included in the proposed parking area provide slightly less shading than required. The plan proposes to add trees to the existing parking area to remain south of the building as an alternate to strictly meet shading requirement in proposed parking areas. Township should determine if the proposed planting scheme is satisfactory. (SLDO Section 22-515.2)
 - B. Calculations are included on the plan for stormwater basin plantings. Proposed plantings in BMP 1 and 2 do not meet the required amount, consistent with the requested waiver. Design engineer should clarify the deficiency in plantings for consideration of the waiver request. (SLDO Section 22-515.1 & 4)
 - C. Design engineer should document if replacement trees are required pursuant to Section 22-515.7 of the Land Development Ordinance. An inventory of existing woodlands to be removed, or a representative sample, should be submitted in support of the determination.
15. Recreation land in the amount of 1,500 sf per 4,000 sf of new building area is required in accordance with Section 22-525.C(2) of the Land Development Ordinance. Township should determine if the existing/proposed recreational facilities on site are adequate to meet this requirement. **Planning Commission stated existing facilities were sufficient.**
16. Preliminary cut and fill calculations should be submitted to evaluate the balance of site grading. Additionally, topsoil stripping and reuse calculations should be provided. Excess soil/topsoil may be used for landscape berms. (SLDO Sections 22-502.4 and 517.1.L) **Will comply.**
17. Verification of Erosion/Sedimentation Control Plan approval and NPDES permit issuance for stormwater discharge during construction should be received in writing from Bucks County Conservation District/PADEP. (SLDO Section 22-518) **Will comply.**
18. A portion of the ultimate right-of-way of N Fifth Street was granted as an easement to the Township in conjunction with a prior project. Plan note offers dedication of the remaining right-of-way area along the frontage of the accessory dwelling. Right-of-way should be accepted for dedication as an easement. (SLDO Section 22-506) **Will comply.**
19. Proposed property monumentation should be installed and be certified in writing by the responsible surveyor. (SLDO Section 22-522) **Will comply.**

20. Development/Financial Security Agreement should be required to be executed between applicant and Silverdale Borough to guarantee installation of “public” improvements including, but not limited to, stormwater management, sanitary sewer, erosion control, landscaping, regulatory signage and street improvements. An Opinion of Cost, prepared by design engineer, should be submitted for review and agreement preparation. (SLDO Section 22-606) **Will comply.**
21. Engineering/drafting detail comments contained in the attached memorandum, dated March 7, 2024, should be addressed on the plan to the satisfaction of the Township. **Will comply.**
22. Additional comments may be generated pursuant to resolution of the above comments.
Comment.

Bucks County Planning Commission review correspondence dated February 20, 2024 was provided to the Commission.

Mr. Monohan asked why there was a need for added parking when Pennridge School District facilities can be used and questioned impervious surface and stormwater. Owner needs to seek School District approval on an annual basis and it is therefore not a long term solution and impervious surface variance was granted by the Zoning Hearing Board and not before the Planning Commission. Stormwater from the site has been substantially reduced.

Mr. Chellew read Mr. Nymans statement since he could not be present. I believe I am physically the closest neighbor to the vast majority of activities taking place at the ReNew Church. During our 45+years there, they have been an excellent neighbor, fully responsive to any, if any, concerns. I fully support all of their programs and efforts and want them to be able continue efficiently within the neighborhood.

Public Comment:

- John Fenley, 1611 N. 5th Street, stated concerns for stormwater that he believes flows to his property located across the street and believes it is from the Church, Pennridge School District, development and basin. He asked how proposed pervious surface does not become impervious surface. Applicant’s engineer provided detail on the proposed stormwater system and agreements would be recorded to maintain the system.

On motion by Mr. Monohan, seconded by Mr. Teel, in favor of the following waivers as requested in Mease Engineering letter dated February 27, 2024 (1) Sec. 22-403.2.A.to allow for the record plan to be at a scale of 1"=60'; (2) Sec. 22-403.4. to allow for the aerial plan to satisfy the requirement for a survey locating features within 100 feet of the tract boundaries; (3) Sec. 22-515.1.D. from planting street trees within the street right-of-way along N. Fifth Street; (4) Sec. 22-515.4.B partial waiver from meeting the stormwater management basin landscaping requirement; (5) Sec. 22-51 6. I.C.(2) (c) & (d). & 26-319.3.B. & C. to permit the use of 15" HDPE pipe for the storm sewer collection system; (6) Sec. 26-319.12. to permit the use of HDPE pipe for the BMP2 MRC rain garden and the BMP3 MRC infiltration bed outlet pipes; (7) Sec. 26-319.3.D. to permit the use of PennDOT specification RC-34 inlet tops for the privately owned storm sewer; and (8) Sec. 26-319.3.S. to permit less than one foot of freeboard in inlets as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

Planning Commission deferred wavier requests related to traffic until Township Traffic Engineer review letter was received.

Perkasie Regional Authority, 730 Three Mile Run Road:

The following comments and/or recommendations are made relative to the subject Construction Drawing, sheets 1 thru 9, dated January 8, 2024; prepared by Andersen Engineering Associates, Inc.

Mr. Nick Fretz, Mr. Brian Benney, P.E., Mr. Dave Watt and Mr. Horn were present.

Mr. Fretz stated the authority was applying for a grant to be proactive for PFOA and PFOS level changes. Wells 5 and 6 feed to well 4 located on the Property which has an existing conservation easement.

Applicant proposes to construct a 1,400 SF building addition at their existing facility located along Three Mile Run Road. The expansion is required to house additional water treatment equipment for operation of the PRA system. The site is 59.5 acres in area and located within the Residential Protection (RP) Zoning District. Use G1, Utilities, is permitted as a Conditional Use within the RP zoning district. Expansion of the G1 use, requires a new conditional use approval.

1. In accordance with Conditional Use regulations of Section 27-2208.b and 2208.c(10) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Township must determine that the proposed use is in accordance with the Township Comprehensive Plan, in the best interest of the municipality, suitable for the property in question, and suitable in terms of access and zoning requirements. Additionally, specific requirements for Use G1 include impact on neighborhood and proposed improvements to abate any nuisance. Applicant should provide additional information related to the operation of the facility such as frequency of operational/maintenance visits to the site, generator operation, and other expected impacts, if any, on adjoining properties. The conditional use hearing before the Board of Supervisors has been scheduled for March 26, 2024. The Planning Commission should issue comments/recommendation on the Conditional Use application for consideration by the Board of Supervisors at the hearing. (ZO Section 27-2208.d) **Staff is on the site daily for a general inspection for a short period of time.**
2. In addition to Conditional Use approval, the applicant is also requesting waiver of formal Land Development plan submission for the facility expansion. (SLDO Section 22-103.2) **Comment.**
3. Installation of buffer planting should be considered to screen the proposed facility from existing dwellings on the opposite side of Three Mile Run Road. (ZO Section 27-1904) **Plantings diagonal front can be considered but for safety reasons the building cannot be completely screened.**
4. A minimum of two off-street parking spaces are required for Use G1. Although specific parking spaces are not delineated on the plan the expanded stone area in front of the building appears large enough to provide required parking for the facility. (ZO Section 27-304.G.G1.c) **Will comply.**

5. Three Mile Run crosses the subject property to the rear of the proposed building. Plan should include location of stream, FEMA 100-year floodplain, and associated riparian buffer. (ZO Section 27-1900.a & j) **Location is 8 feet higher elevation and outside of floodplain.**
6. Proposed stormwater management facility is shown schematically to the rear of the expanded building. If a waiver of Land Development plan submission is recommended for approval, the recommendation should be conditional upon the applicant submitting a stormwater management application to the Township for review and approval in accordance with Township Code Chapter 26, Part 3. **Will comply.**
7. Applicant should clarify if any sanitary sewage disposal facilities are necessary for the proposed building addition. If necessary, appropriate plan details and capacity approvals should be addressed by the applicant. (SLDO Section 22-519 & 520) **Sewage is not needed. Backwash is clean.**
8. Verification of approval should be received in writing from Bucks County Conservation District for proposed erosion control measures to be implemented during earthmoving activities. (SLDO Section 22-518) **Will comply.**
9. Applicant should clarify if any proposed exterior lighting is intended to be installed on the building addition. Any proposed lighting should be noted to be full cutoff type fixtures, and appropriate notes and details should be provided on the plans. (SLDO Section 22-526 and ZO Section 27-1805) **Will comply.**
10. Recreation land in the amount of 1,500 sf per 4,000 sf of new building area (or part thereof), or payment of a fee in-lieu-of land dedication is required in accordance with Section 22-525.C(2) of the Land Development Ordinance; unless land dedication or fee in-lieu-of is waived by the Township. **Conservation easement and walking trail exist on the 59 acre lot. A waiver request should be submitted in writing.**
11. Pending resolution of Conditional Use approval and grant of waivers, as noted above, Development/Financial Security Agreement and/or a stormwater management Operation & Maintenance Agreement may be required to be executed between applicant and Township to guarantee installation of required improvements including, but not limited to, stormwater management, erosion control, landscaping, etc. If required, an Opinion of Cost, prepared by a licensed professional engineer should be submitted to the Township for review. (SLDO Section 606, SWM 26-345 & 346) **Will comply.**
12. The following engineering/drafting detail review comments should be addressed on the plan: **Will comply.**
 - A. The land development application indicates the site area as 59.5 acres while the plan lists 57.6 acres in the zoning tables and 59.5 acres in the title block. Site acreage should be clarified for consistency.

- B. The resource protection district (RP) should be labeled in the location map on the cover sheet.
- C. For reference and clarity, a small scale plan of the entire property with the proposed improvement area identified should be included on the plan. This plan may also be used to identify stream, floodplain, and riparian buffer location if it can not be adequately shown on the enlarged plans of the construction area.
- D. Street maintenance plan notification, Item H, from Appendix B of the Land Development Ordinance should be included on the plan.

The color of the building was discussed with no formal action taken.

On motion by Mr. Eisenhart, seconded by Ms. Fenley, to recommend waiver of land development and waiver of recreation land for a 1,400 square feet building addition at 730 Three Mile Run Road contingent on compliance with Wynn Associates March 8, 2024 correspondence. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

On motion by Mr. Monohan, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to recommend granting Conditional Use application contingent on buffer plantings by the street as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

Public Comment:

There was none.

Adjournment: **On motion** by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Teel, the meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marianne Hart Morano
Township Manager