

East Rockhill Township  
**Planning Commission Minutes**  
February 13, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the East Rockhill Township Planning Commission was held at 7:00pm on February 13, 2025 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  
Dave Nyman, Planning Commission Secretary  
Richard Kelly, Planning Commission Member  
Blake Eisenhart, Planning Commission Member  
Steve Baluh P.E., Township Engineer  
Marianne Morano, Township Manager

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

**Reorganization:**

Mrs. Morano acted as Temporary Chairperson.

**On motion** by Mr. Eisenhart, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to appoint Joe Chellew as Chairperson. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

Mrs. Morano turned the meeting over to Mr. Chellew.

**On motion** by Mr. Eisenhart, seconded by Mr. Nyman, to appoint Anne Fenley as Vice-Chairperson. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**On motion** by Mr. Eisenhart, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to appoint David Nyman as Secretary. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**Approval of October 10, 2024 Minutes:**

**On motion** by Mr. Eisenhart, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to approve the meeting minutes from the October 10, 2024 Planning Commission regular meeting as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**Renew Bible Church, 1600 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street:**

The following comments and/or recommendations are made relative to the subject preliminary land development plan, sheets 1 thru 20, dated January 12, 2024, latest revision date December 10, 2024 prepared by Mease Engineering, PC.

Applicant proposes to construct an approximately 12,692 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. An addition to the Hillside Building in the rear of the site is also proposed. 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.

Mr. Greg Landis, Mr. Scott Mease P.E., Mr. Brett Ely were present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Landis stated the revised emergency exit onto Fifth Street will be an entrance for Church events and exit for emergencies pending approval by the Township and PennDOT and the impervious surface has been reduced by 786 SF.

1. Applicant previously received variance approvals from the Township Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) as indicated in decision dated September 5, 2023. Variances included addition of 172 parking spaces to the existing 335 existing spaces, and an increase of maximum 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 enter into a maintenance agreement with the Township to guarantee long term maintenance of the pervious pavement areas. **Noted and agree.**
2. 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 a ZHB application for consideration of zoning variance approval. (ZO Section 27- 1900) **Noted and agree.**
3. Buffer yards are delineated 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. As previously requested, all canopy trees proposed along the northern perimeter of the parking areas have been replaced with evergreen trees to enhance buffering provided by existing woods, particularly in winter. A note is also included on 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, buffer yards should be supplemented with additional plantings to enhance screening. (ZO Section 27-1905) **Noted and agree. There is a plan change showing a proposed emergency entrance from Fifth Street to the Southeast corner of the property.**
4. Plan sheets 19 and 20 include options for development of an emergency access to either Schwenkmill Rd or Pennridge School District Transportation Center. It is the understanding of this office that approval for construction easement has not granted by the School District as of this time. Comment regarding emergency access should be received from the Township Traffic Consultant. Notwithstanding location of an emergency access, the intended limit of use should be clarified to assist in determining traffic impact of the emergency access. Upon resolution, final design plans must be prepared for review. **A revised plan was received**

**February 4, 2025 showing a proposed emergency entrance from Fifth Street to Southeast corner of the property. Township traffic engineer review letter dated February 11, 2025 has been received.**

5. The applicant previously indicated that there are no designated loading doors/dock incorporated in the building project. A revised Vehicle Turning Diagram has been submitted to include accessible path for a forty-foot-long vehicle around the perimeter of the site parking areas and paths to doors which will be used for deliveries. (ZO Section 27-1714 & 1715; SLDO Section 22-523) **Noted and agree.**
6. Correspondence dated February 27, 2024, was previously received from the design engineer requesting waivers of Subdivision Ordinance and Stormwater Management Ordinance requirements. Waiver requests include:
  - 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.

At the March 14, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting, all requested waivers were recommended for approval, except road improvements (Item C) which was deferred subject to final PADOT and Township traffic review. **Noted and agree.**

7. Traffic impact study dated December 2024, prepared by Drive Engineering was included with the submission. A left turn lane is being added on Fifth Street at the site entrance. Complete PADOT highway occupancy permit plans must be prepared. All information submitted to PADOT should also be provided to the Township to ensure coordination with Township

requirements. Traffic Study and street improvement comments should be received from the Township Traffic Consultant. Site access/frontage improvements are subject to modification pursuant to final review by Township and PADOT. Finally, Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) is required be obtained from PADOT by the applicant. (SLDO Section 22-505.2, 505.16, 512, & 513) **Noted and agree.**

8. 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. 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. **Noted and agree.**
  - 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. **Noted and agree.**
  - c. Applicant and design engineer stormwater certifications should be executed on the final record and PCSM plans. (SMO Section 26-325.D.22 & 24) **Noted and agree.**
  - d. 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. **Noted and agree.**
  - e. Stormwater design should be coordinated with NPDES permit requirements. **Noted and agree.**
  - f. 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) **Noted and agree.**
9. 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) **Noted and agree.**

10. Proposed public water supply is provided by Perkasio Regional Authority (PRA). Verification of approval by PRA for water system design and capacity should be obtained by the applicant. (SLDO Section 22-519) **Noted and agree.**
11. Plans have been forwarded to the Perkasio Fire Company for Comment related to access and circulation for emergency services. (SLDO Section 22-519.2) **Revised plans with a Fifth Street exit need review by the Perkasio Fire Company.**
12. The following landscape planting comments should be addressed:
  - 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 meeting shading requirement in proposed parking areas. Planning commission previously indicated concurrence with proposed planting scheme. (SLDO Section 22-515.2) **Noted and agree.**
  - 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. The deficiency totals 3 canopy trees, 10 evergreen trees, and 29 shrubs. Township should determine if additional plantings are required on site. (SLDO Section 22-515.1 & 4) **Noted and agree.**
  - 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. **Noted and agree.**
13. 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. Planning commission previously recommended that the existing/proposed recreational facilities on site be considered adequate to meet this requirement. **Noted and agree. Building has been reduced by 786 SF.**

14. 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) **Noted and agree.**
15. 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) **Noted and agree.**
16. 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) **Noted and agree.**
17. Proposed property monumentation should be installed and be certified in writing by the responsible surveyor. (SLDO Section 22-522) **Noted and agree.**
18. Development/Financial Security Agreement should be required to be executed between applicant and East Rockhill Township 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) **Noted and agree.**
19. 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. **Noted and agree.**
20. Additional comments may be generated pursuant to resolution of the above comments. **Noted and agree.**

Consensus of the Commission was in favor of the emergency access to Fifth Street. It was noted Wynn Associates letter needed a date correction from January 6, 2024 to January 6, 2025.

Public Comment:

- George Hawthorne, 690 W. Schwenkmill Road, stated a proposal to correct traffic which was to make Fifth Street four lanes and go to three services with a two hour delay in between.

There was a brief recess due to a power outage. The meeting re-convened under emergency exit lights and flashlights.

**On motion** by Mr. Nyman, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to recommend waiver of sidewalk requirement. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**On motion** by Mr. Nyman, seconded by Mrs. Fenley, to recommend waiver of stormwater basin landscape tree requirement contingent on the Township Engineer confirming trees cannot be relocated. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**On motion** by Mr. Eisenhart, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to recommend preliminary land development approval conditioned on PennDOT approval and compliance with Wynn Associates January 6, 2025 (as corrected) correspondence as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**Christ Community Bible Church, 1830 Ridge Road:**

The following comments and/or recommendations are made relative to the request for waiver of formal Land Development Plan submission correspondence dated January 7, 2025, and associated exhibits submitted by the applicant for the subject site. The proposed project includes enclosure of the existing covered drop-off/entry to create a lobby with indoor wheelchair lift, and renovation of space at the rear of the sanctuary to create a handicapped accessible rest room and sound control/AV room. Proposed improvements will not increase the overall footprint of the building, and will not increase occupancy of the building.

The site is 9 acres in area with a use of C1, Place of Worship, and is located in the RR zoning district. The following comments are made with respect to the submitted information.

Mr. Joe Phillips P.E. and Mr. Chuck Ozeck were present on behalf of the applicant. The applicant was agreeable to review without power and emergency exit lighting.

1. A complete site plan was not included with the submission. Applicant should clarify if the total impervious area of the site will be modified by parking area modifications, sidewalks, or other exterior improvements proposed. Any net increase in impervious surface area may require design and installation of stormwater management facilities to control increased stormwater runoff from additional impervious surface area. (Township Code Chapter 26, Part 3) **Mr. Phillips provided a plan with clarifications. Impervious surface area totals are not changing.**
2. If earth disturbance is anticipated in conjunction with construction of improvements, erosion control measures must be proposed on a site plan in accordance with Bucks County Conservation District regulations. **Will comply.**
3. Applicant should clarify if any proposed exterior lighting is intended to be installed with the building renovation. Any proposed lighting should be noted to be full cutoff type fixtures, and appropriate notes and details should be provided on building permit plans. (ZO Section 27-1805) **Will comply.**

There was no public comment.

**On motion** by Mr. Nyman, seconded by Mr. Eisenhart, to recommend waiver of land development as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**Planning Commission Annual Report:**

**On motion** by Mr. Nyman, seconded by Mr. Kelly acknowledged receipt of the 2024 annual report as presented. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

**Public Comment:**

There was none.

**Adjournment:** **On motion** by Mrs. Fenley, seconded by Mr. Kelly, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Marianne Hart-Morano*

Marianne Hart Morano  
Township Manager