

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 8, 2019

CALL TO ORDER:

The Norristown Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Monica Reynolds, in the absence of Matt Edmond, Chairperson, in the Municipal Council Conference Room on the above date at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Matt Edmond	Excused Absence
Akbar Hossain	Present
Monica Reynolds	Present
Rochelle Harris-Boggs	Excused Absence
Willie Anderson	Present
Xaras Collins	Excused Absence
Rashaad Bates	Present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Hossain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bates, to accept the Minutes of the November 14, 2018 Planning Commission meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

REPORTS:

Ms. Helsel provided information to the Board about the Planning Class at the County. She noted it was for members of the Planning Commission and advised them they could notify her if they are interested in attending.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Re-Organization

Mr. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bates, to table item 1. "Re-Organization" until the next Planning Commission meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

2. **(18-3) Minor Land Development: 50 West Brown Street**

For Property Located at:	50 West Brown Street, Norristown, PA 19401
Property Owner:	50 West Brown Associates, LLC, 1822 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130

Ms. Helsel noted that a letter was received from the applicant postponing their attendance at the Planning Meeting until February 12, 2019 due to a schedule conflict.

3. **(18-4) Minor Land Development: 1661 Harding Boulevard**

For Property Located at:	1661 Harding Boulevard, Norristown, PA 19401
Property Owner:	Municipality of Norristown, 235 E. Airy Street, Norristown, PA 19401

Martin Eustace of Eustace Engineering and AI Zone, Executive Director and CEO of Elmwood Park Zoo, provided a presentation regarding the Minor Land Development for 1661 Harding Boulevard.

Mr. Eustace presented details about the the property including the acreage, elevation, parking lots, ballfields and the management and evaluation of the state of the wooded area.

He noted that the parking they are proposing would be built in 3 phases and there would be an enhancement with the stormwater management. He also proposed an elevated boardwalk and 3 ADA spaces.

He explained that Phase 1 would include swails to control and collect water, a detention basin and rain garden with piping to be discharged into the creek.

He added that Phase 2 would be the connection with the 42-space parking area and also a connection with Johnson Highway to the ballfields.

He continued with Phase 3 which would connect the upper parking lot to the main drive. He noted this would all be heavily landscaped.

Mr. Eustace also mentioned that they plan to set aside enough land for a trail to connect to the Schuylkill Valley Trail and they are working with the State, County and Municipal Trail Specialists in this regard.

Mr. Eustace stated they are asking for a Preliminary/Final Plan Approval for all 3 phases.

Ted Dmytryk, Municipal Engineer, asked to go through the Pennoni letter dated January 4, 2019 regarding the non-compliance items. Ms. Helsel noted she does not have the County comment letter, which is a guidance document.

Mr. Eustace mentioned the 3 Variances that were granted by the Zoning Hearing Board on July 24, 2018: permit greater than 10 percent impervious coverage; permit retaining walls over 6 feet in height; permit stormwater basins (including berms and outfall facilities) within the Floodplain Conservation District.

Mr. Dmytryk reviewed the requested Waivers in the Pennoni letter of January 4, 2019 which include reducing the grades of the proposed driveways to be less than 10% to satisfy the concerns from the Fire Chief; the recommendation that the applicant consider replacing as many trees as possible on the site and to consider the outstanding number of trees not being replaced on the site, to be replaced at other areas within the Municipality and the recommendation that the applicant make every effort to the maximum extent possible to include as many planting islands to reduce the heat island effect due to the proposed parking lot paving areas.

Mr. Dmytryk covered some of the “will comply” items by the applicant such as submit plans to East Norriton Township for their review, which the applicant has done and there is a “partial will comply” for the Lighting Plan due to lighting angles.

There was some discussion regarding possible future landscaping after construction begins such as additional trees and also options for the fee in lieu of.

Ms. Reynolds made a motion, seconded by Mr. Anderson, to recommend granting the waivers requested by the applicant as set forth in the January 4, 2019 Pennoni letter contingent upon the applicant resolving and addressing the comments contained in said letter subject to the satisfaction of the municipal engineer and including a waiver of the drainage application fees and specifically with respect to waiver #13 that the applicant complete the landscaping to the satisfaction of the municipal engineer who shall be permitted to review and approve such plan during construction and which shall be funded through an agreed upon fee in lieu arrangement to be held in escrow for plantings and landscaping within the leasehold area and with respect to waiver #8 in which the applicant shall satisfy the concerns of the Fire Chief as set forth in the letter. Motion passed 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Hossain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Anderson, to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann Santangelo
Secretary, Norritown Planning Commission