

**NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
3256 LEVANS ROAD, COPLAY, PA 18037**

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2012

Meeting brought to order at 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday, April 24, 2012 by Chairman Richard Celmer.

Attendance:

Chairman Richard Celmer
Vice Chairman Brian Horwith
Secretary Bruce Stettler
Attorney Lisa Young
Township Engineer Steve Gitch
Supervisor Jerry Joseph

William George
Leonard Nuss
Joanne Guth
Jeff Johnson
Planning Administrator Jane Kelly

Minutes of the March 27, 2012 meeting were approved as presented.

Treichler Commons Commerce LLC, Special Exception, Project # NWT 12-011, Continuation of pre-existing nonconformity – Former manufacturing facility with truck traffic, indoor and outdoor storage, outdoor vehicle parking and substantial employment on the premises, same building footprints and both pervious and impervious surfaces, 5477 Mauser Street, VR Zone, 5581 3457 4974. Attorney Joel Weiner and Property Owner Terry Vandling presented the plan.

- a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated April 18, 2012.
- b. Zoning Officer's review is contained in his letter dated April 13, 2012.
- c. Sewage Enforcement Officer's review is contained in his letter dated April 20, 2012.
- d. The property was formerly owned by Eichler Wood Products and produced wood pallets.
- e. Eichler Wood Products ran 2 production shifts and was fully employed.
- f. Treichler Commons Commerce has proposed to change one non-conforming use to various other non-conforming uses.
- g. The non-conforming use was a single pallet manufacturing use and is now proposed to be commercial, storage and residential uses.
- h. When Mr. Vandling purchased the property there were 3 bathrooms and showers in the north building and 6 bathrooms and showers in the south building.
- i. Mr. Vandling has proposed 5 bathrooms in the south building and 3 bathrooms in the north building.
- j. Mr. Vandling stated he had the septic tanks pumped out when he purchased the property and he has not had any problems since.
- k. The Planning Commission members questioned where the drain fields are located on the property and their conditions?
- l. **Planning Commission Chairman Rich Celmer** suggested submitting a plan showing all the site bathrooms and septic systems information to the Township SEO for review before the Zoning Hearing Board Meeting.
- m. **Planning Commission member Leonard Nuss** questioned how the Planning Commission would know there is proper drainage for all the changes made to this property.
- n. Mr. Vandling stated he has pictures of the before and after all the site changes that were made.
- o. Mr. Vandling stated a trench drain and storm inlet were on the site prior to him purchasing it.
- p. Mr. Vandling also stated the paved parking lot off Mauser Street and the paved driveway on the southeastern side of the property, which encroaches on the adjoining property, were pre-existing non-conformities.
- q. Mr. Vandling stated the only area, which has been expanded, is the front porch facing Mauser Street.
- r. A Traffic Study has not been done for this property.

Planning Commission has recommended the following conditions:

- 1. Developer shall address to the satisfaction of the General Planning Engineer the comments and recommendations set forth in his letter dated April 18, 2012.
- 2. Developer shall address the Zoning Officer's comments as set forth in his review letter dated April 13, 2012.

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3. Developer shall address the Sewage Enforcement Officer's comments as set forth in his review letter dated April 20, 2012 and provide him with a Facilities Site Plan.
4. **Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson** stated in his opinion the mix of uses on this property is not a good idea. He also stated there is no place for a secondary septic system. Also suggested Knox Boxes for every unit with the Fire Department being made aware what is in each unit.
5. **Planning Commission member Leonard Nuss** stated he is in agreement with Mr. Johnson and he also questioned if every tenant has a lease? Mr. Nuss also feels it is very dangerous for the tenants living in the apartments, not knowing what is being stored in the storage units and he is also concerned with the septic system. Mr. Vandling stated each tenant has a lease. Mr. Nuss also stated both buildings would need to be brought up to code.
6. **Planning Commission member Bill George** stated he is in agreement with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Nuss.
7. **Planning Commission Vice Chairman Brian Horwith** stated in his opinion the mixed uses, residents with industrial, is not a good combination. Mr. Horwith is not pleased with the mix of non-conformities on the property. He also suggested limiting the other four uses in the south building.
8. **Supervisor Jerry Joseph** questioned the apartments, were they there when the property was purchased and how many were there? Supervisor Joseph also suggested each unit should be considered as a separate special exception, also the junk cars should be cleaned-up and the special exception should have been applied for before the project began. Mr. Vandling stated 2 apartments were there, but 1 was moved and another was created, for a total of 3 apartments currently
9. **Planning Commission member Joanne Guth** questioned how long the apartments have been occupied and what separates them, also when was the landscaping completed? Ms. Guth suggested several sections of the North Whitehall Township Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed and applied to the conditions for this plan. Mr. Vandling stated the apartments and landscaping have been there 2 years. A 10" block wall separates the apartments walls.
10. **Planning Commission member Bruce Stettler** questioned the back building and what separates the units? Mr. Vandling stated a partial wood wall. Mr. Stettler stated a fire suppression system would be needed for these units. He also stated he would not have a problem with the mixed uses if there was a sprinkler system.
11. **Planning Commission Chairman Rich Celmer** was concerned with the proposed landscaping on the site. Mr. Celmer suggested screening to block the view from the Mobile Home Park. Mr. Celmer also suggested moving the parking closer to the buildings; clean up the junk cars, clarify the outdoor storage, and make the property as presentable as possible.

Comments from the Floor:

Ricky Haring, 5011, Steeple Chase, Schnecksville, questioned the water, if the property is hooked up to public water, how much is it using? Also the septic system should not be parked on. Mr. Vandling stated he could provide the water bills for a calculation of how much water is used.

Supervisor Jerry Joseph made a motion to send a favorable recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board with the following conditions; all buildings are brought up to the current building and fire codes, each use is considered for a separate special exception, if any use changes significantly that use must be approved for a new special exception, a Knox Box is placed at every unit, no unlicensed vehicles stored outside on the property, clarify the outside storage, install proper landscape screening and/or fencing, no diesel idling, also the following Zoning Ordinance sections should be 402.8, 402.19, 402.37, 402.60, and 803.D as per the second sentence in 401.B. Bruce Stettler seconded the motion, all agreed.

Jeff Johnson motioned to adjourn, Leonard Nuss seconded, all others agreed

Meeting Adjourned: 10:20 pm.

Jane K. Kelly

Recording Secretary

Planning Administrator

North Whitehall Township