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

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 4, 2021

Meeting brought to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag at 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday November 4, 2021 by Chairman Brian Horwith

Attendance:

Chairman Brian Horwith
Vice Chairman Bruce Stettler
Secretary Leonard Nuss
Attorney Lisa Young
Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz
Township Manager Chris Garges
Township Zoning Officer Jeff Mouer
Richard Semmel
Robert Korp
Jeff Johnson
Rod Lowe
Planning Secretary Jane Kelly
Judy Goldstein; Gilmore & Associates

1. Ordinance 2021-4 - Review & Comment

a. Judy Goldstein reviewed the proposed Ordinance.
b. The proposed Ordinance modifies the existing descriptions for warehouses, creating two groups, under 25,000sqft and over 25,000sqft, stipulating the zoning areas where each can be located, and outlining requirements, including set-backs, buffers, road access, etc.
c. **Planning Commission member Rod Lowe** questioned why we even allow warehouses in our Township? **Township Solicitor Lisa Young** replied the short answer is that State Law requires we must provide for all uses somewhere in the township.
d. **Planning Commission member Robert** Korp cited several discussion points: Since the adoption of the 2002 Zoning Ordinance and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, market changes have increased the size of warehouses and the distances operators are willing to travel to major highways. Large-scale warehouses are inconsistent with portions of the district purposes stated in §301.D of the Zoning Ordinance: The Commercial District is to provide for a wide range of needed commercial uses in locations that are less likely to involve conflicts with existing residences and that have excellent access to major highways. The 'C' District is further intended to avoid very large commercial developments that are likely to attract high amounts of new traffic from outside of the Township. The Light Industrial/Business District is to maintain an attractive physical environment with a campus-like setting that will aid in attracting new businesses. The Mineral Extraction/Industrial District is to control the operations of uses to prevent nuisances and to protect the public health and safety. The 'ME/I' District is further intended to protect nearby uses and the environment from undesirable impacts. The regulations proposed by the proposed ordinance are already in use in other communities in the Lehigh Valley. Limiting large-scale warehouses to areas with direct access to a major arterial would support efficient transportation while limiting the impact on local roads and residences. Requiring traffic studies, route mapping, and directional signage, and increasing setbacks and buffers from adjoining properties would greatly inform the municipal and public review process and reduce conflicts for incompatible uses.
e. Many of the Planning Commission members feels the buffer needs to be more substantial.
f. **Township Supervisor Dennis Klusaritz** questioned if we currently have a noise and light Ordinance? Also, in meeting the size requirements, and if having sufficient land size, can someone put up 2 buildings on one lot? Dennis also suggested more trees for barriers. Dennis also suggested a buffer between schools and warehouses.
g. **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** questioned Judy Goldstein if this new Ordinance is stricter than the current Ordinance, Judy replied yes.
h. **Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson** questioned if multiple buildings could be built on a parcel to make a small industrial park? Judy stated yes, if it complies with zoning. Jeff also questioned if a farmer buys commercial property is he limited? Judy stated the farmer would be under the Agricultural Act.
i. **James Osmun, 3623 Green Hill Dr, 18078**, can more categories be made for over 25,000sqft? Judy replied over 25,000sqft are limited to LI/B.
j. **Karen Osmun, 3623 Green Hill Dr, 18078**, questioned the buffer factor with trees, that does not keep down the noise and also the traffic study for subdivisions, how is that completed? **Township Manager Chris** Garges replied traffic studies related to residential developments are required when specified number of lots are created by a proposed development.
k. **Chris Younger, 4952 High Ridge Circle, 18078**, had many concerns, the name and terminology for warehouses, trucking terminals should be revisited, arterial street list- is there a map available? Traffic study and radius turning, when is this completed?
l. **Dean Miller, 3616 Green Hill Drive, 18078**, stated most warehouses 25,000sqft or smaller are normally a daytime operation, but a place the size of UNFI go all night- 24hrs a day.

Richard Semmel motioned to send a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for Ordinance 2021-4 as written, second by Leonard Nuss, Jeff Johnson abstained, all others agreed, motion carried.

- **Any other items that may be discussed at the discretion of the Planning Commission**

Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson questioned the hold up on the construction of the intersection at Rt 309 and Pennsylvania**, Township Manager Chris Garges** replied PennDot**.**

Rod Lowe motioned to adjourn, Jeff Johnson seconded, all others agreed
Meeting Adjourned: 8:50pm
Jane K. Kelly
Planning/Recording Secretary
North Whitehall Township