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

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 22, 2022

Meeting brought to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag at 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday, November 22, 2022 by Chairman Brian Horwith

Attendance:

Supervisor Al Geosits	Chairman Brian Horwith
Township Manager Randy Cope	Vice Chairman Robert Korp
Township Zoning Officer Jeff Mouer	Secretary Leonard Nuss
Township Engineer Steve Gitch	Jeff Johnson
Township Solicitor Tom Dinkelacker	Richard Semmel
Township Planning Administrator Jane Kelly	Richard Fuller
Stacy Yoder; Gilmore & Associates-ZOOM	Rod Lowe

Minutes of the October 25, 2022 meeting were approved. Motion made by Jeff Johnson, seconded by Richard Semmel, all others agreed.

1. Continued Discussion of Draft Comprehensive Plan

- **Stacy Yoder; Gilmore & Associates** presented the Draft Comprehensive Plan, revised based on comments from the October Planning Commission meeting.
- The AFFH grant information referenced in a few areas was removed in the revised version.
- There were no further questions from the Planning Commission, nor the public

Richard Semmel motioned to send of the Draft Comprehensive Plan version 2 without the AFFH grant a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors, Jeff Johnson second the motion, all others agreed.

2. **Hunsicker Funeral Home Special Exception –** NWT-22-027, 2 principal uses on a commercial property- additional businesses, Parcels 5468 6583 0766 & 5468 6565 7629, 3438 Route 309 & 3524 Route 309, C Zone. The Special Exception was presented by property owner Kevin Hunsicker and Attorney Catherine Durso.

a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated November 17, 2022.
b. The proposed two principal uses would be Hunsicker Funeral Home and Allentown Funeral and Cremation Services (AFCS).
c. A violation was received regarding the shared uses before the special exception was submitted.
d. An application for the shared use must also be applied to the state. The Applicant states approval to run the two companies in the same structure has been approved by the commonwealth
e. The two funeral businesses will have two separate offices within the building, but they will share several other rooms.
f. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the current amount of parking and how much parking would be needed for shared businesses, and if the amount of parking would change. The Applicant contends there is sufficient existing parking on the primary parcel to meet the needs of the 2 principal uses. There was further discussion that any use beyond the two principal uses, or any additional uses on the property will potentially affect the property meeting/not meeting the ordinances
g. Per the Applicant, the original 2009 approval for use as a funeral home was based on the Applicant planning for 200 seats, however the Applicant now contends that only 100 are required.
h. **Township Solicitor Tom Dinkelacker** suggested a condition can be added to the approval at the Zoning Hearing Board regarding the amount of seats and parking.
i. There are possible plans for a future crematorium to be built which would decreasing parking by 4 spaces.
j. **Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson** stated it seemed like a good idea to have two companies doing one service in this large building.
k. **Planning Commission member Richard Semmel** questioned what other location does AFCS hold funerals? And how many per month are held at your locations? Mr. Hunsicker stated AFCS does not hold funerals are other locations, and anywhere from 1-15 funerals per month.
l. **Eugene Wolfgang, 3426 Faye Dr, Orefield, 18069,** stated he has been to many funerals where all the seats are full and there is a long line, the parking lot is full. He also sated there should be flashing lights to alert people of a funeral for crossing Shankweiler Road.
m. **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** stated the 2009 approval, based on 200 seats, should remain the guiding directive and that any unmet conditions from prior approvals should be met in order to be granted this special exception.
n. **Township Solicitor Tom Dinkelacker** questioned what the conditions were from the 2009 variance and need to be reviewed.

Robert Korp stated he had no recommendation to offer for this special exception. No other Planning Commission members offered any motion. The application will go to the Zoning Hearing Board with no recommendation from the Planning Commission.

3. **Hunsicker Funeral Home Special Exception-** NWT-22-028, 2 or more principal uses- apartments, Parcels 5468 6583 0766 & 5468 6565 7629, 3438 Route 309 & 3524 Route 309, C Zone. The Special Exception was presented by property owner Kevin Hunsicker and Attorney Catherine Durso.

a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated November 17, 2022.
b. **Township Zoning Officer Jeff Mouer** stated the enforcement was started to bring the 2nd business into the structure and the tenant was already renting the 3rd floor unit.
c. **Planning Commission member Jeff Johnson** questioned the variance received in 2009, even if you were given a variance for parking for 200 chairs but only use 100 chairs shouldn't you still have to have the same amount of parking as the variance required in 2009? Atty. Durso disagreed, and there was a lengthy discussed on this matter.
d. **Planning Commission Vice Chairman Robert Korp** stated the Zoning Ordinance needs to be followed and no recommendation can be made on this matter.
e. **Planning Commission member Richard Semmel** questioned if there was any intent for the parking lot across Shankweiler Road? Mr. Hunsicker stated no.

Robert Korp motioned to send a no recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board, there was no second, the motion died.

Jeff Johnson motioned to send a favorable recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board for the rental apartment for a maximum of 4 people or whatever the law allows, Al Geosits second the mention, vote was taken, there were 4-yes, 3-no, vote carries.

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

Township Supervisor Al Geosits wanted to discuss options for Cardinal Street during the new Tuskes development. He suggested a cul de sac at the end of the homes or vacating the street rather than improving the street to save the Township money. There was a lengthy discussion on this matter and the majority of the Planning Commission was not in favor of anything other than improving Cardinal Street; for utilities, farmers and residents.

Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith adjourned the meeting at 9:45PM.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:45PM
Jane K. Kelly
Planning/Recording Secretary
North Whitehall Township