

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2025

Meeting brought to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and a moment of silence at 7:00 p.m., on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, by Chairman Brian Horwith

Attendance:

Supervisor Al Geosits	Chairman Brian Horwith
Township Manager Randy Cope	Vice Chairman Robert Korp
Township Director of Operations Jeff Mouer	Secretary Richard Semmel
Township Engineer Steve Gitch	John Barto
Township Solicitor Tom Dinkelacker	Richard Fuller
Township Planning Administrator Jane Kelly	Kathy Crawford
Special Project Engineer Judy Gilmore	Sean Ziller

- Planning Commission Chairman Brian recognized Richard Semmel for received an award as a Certified Citizen Planner, **Congratulations Richard!**
- The Township issued a proclamation honoring Bruce Stettler for his years of service to North Whitehall Township Planning Commission, **Thank you Bruce, the commission will miss you!**

1. **Nexus 78- Land Development**, Lot Line Consolidation and Land Development, NWT-22-013, Preliminary/Final, Parcel 5468 9340 0322, 5478 0205 7486, 5478 0231 5657 & 5468 9231 0028, 2945 & 3121 Route 309, 4425& 4363 Orefield Road, LI/B Zone, 72.459 Acres. The plan was presented by Attorney Kate Durso; Fitzpatrick, Lentz & Bubba PC, Engineer Fidel Gonzales; Langan Engineering, John Pollock & Barry Henry; Trammel Crow and Ben Guthrie; Traffic Planning & Design.
 - a. Keystone Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated January 22, 2025.
 - b. Keystone Traffic Engineers have reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated January 23, 2025.
 - c. Gilmore & Associate's review is contained in his letter dated January 23, 2025.
 - d. North Whitehall Township Emergency Services reviewed the plan and offered their comments and recommendations in a letter dated January 22, 2025.
 - e. The proposed plans will consolidate multiple parcels into one parcel. There is a small portion in South Whitehall Township along Orefield Road.
 - f. The developer stated the changes to the plan have all been internal on the parcel since the last meeting; adding walking paths, a screen wall and pull-off area.
 - g. The developer stated they need outside agency approvals, such as LCCD, LVPC (ACT 167), LCA (water line extension), PennDot-HOP and DEP-Planning Module.
 - h. **Traffic Engineer Ben Guthrie** stated the design for the driveway connection to Route 309 has been redesigned multiple times and submitted to PennDot for HOP approval, most recently in 9/2024.
 - i. The developer agrees the thin slivers of land between the PennDot ROW and the parcel being consolidated, this thin slivers would need to be incorporated into the new parcel if the Township does not accept the additional ROW.
 - j. **Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith** questioned who was the owner of this project? **Attorney Kate Durso** stated Trammel Crow is the owner and there will be tenants renting the building.
 - k. The long-term maintenance of the storm drainage was questioned? The developer stated on site will be the developer's responsibility and, in the ROW, will be PennDOT's responsibility.
 - l. **Township Supervisor Al Geosits** questioned where the water line was extension was coming from? **Engineer Fidel Gonzales** stated from Levans Road.
 - m. **Planning Commission member John Barto** questioned how do you design a septic system without knowing who or how many people will be suing it? The developer stated the same as you decide on the parking spaces you use a formula and estimate the numbers.
 - n. The Lanta review letter suggested moving the Lanta bus stop north on Route 309 possibly to the pathway. Lanta stated the bus stop was possibly going to be moved during the betterment project anyway.
 - o. A suggestion was made to add bike racks to the plan.
 - p. Currently there is room for 14 trucks to be in que on the property rather than along Route 309.
 - q. **Planning Commission member Richard Fuller** questioned the hours of operation; will they be a 24/7 operations? The developer stated most don't work overnight.

NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Lehigh Carbon Community College, 4525 Education Park Drive, Schnecksville, PA 18078
Lisa Jane Scheller Community Services Center Building 7 –Room 203 (Parking Lot F)

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- r. The emergency access is proposed to be off Route 309 but it was suggested to use the Orefield Road Exit Only access also as an emergency entrance only.
- s. **Planning Commission member Sean Ziller** questioned if the Lanta bus stop moving north was a sure thing. Sean also questioned how many parking spaces there were and ADA parking spaces. **Traffic Engineer Ben Guthrie** stated Lanta would be moving the bus stop, not the developer, as for the parking spaces and the ADA spaces, currently the plan has 290 spaces and 10 ADA spaces. **Engineer Fidel Gonzales** stated the plan will meet the Township requirements for parking.
- t. Many Planning Commission members were concerned with the left turn lanes at Orefield Road and Route 309, also concerns exiting along Route 309 and turning left going south? There are many traffic concerns with or without the betterment project.
- u. **Township Solicitor Tom Dinkelacker** questioned what would prevent a truck from exiting onto Route 309 and turning left going south?
- v. **Planning Commission Secretary Richard Semmel** suggested the developer should reach out to the local Senator along with Township staff regarding a Traffic signal at the entrance along Route 309. The Senator might be able help with PennDOT.

Comments from the Residents:

- **Sam Claudio, Orefield**, stated his property is surrounded on 3 sides by the proposed development, he would like to know if something would be done to help block the noise from his property like it is being done to the business across the turnpike? He is also concerned about the hours of operation, the noise and the additional traffic on Orefield Road.
- **Kelly Sullivan, Schnecksville**, questioned if all the parcels being consolidated are in the same zoning district? Are the currently non-conforming, and she has many traffic concerns.
- **John Harrington, Slatington**, stated he has many traffic concerns, he is concerned trucks will be leaving the Orefield Rd access and turning right, he believes the betterment project will only make the intersection go from a "F" to a "D".
- **Tim Tomko, Schnecksville**, stated he also has traffic concerns, noise pollution concerns and wants to know if this will be a 24 hours operation.
- **Jennifer Krumrine, Schnecksville**, is concerned with the noise levels, diesel pollution and safety concerns with Orefield Middle School being right down the street.
- **Wendy Tracey, Schnecksville**, has traffic concerns and questioned if a study was done regarding emergency services.
- **Jean Hoppes, Schnecksville**, has many traffic concerns.
- **Luke Jaendl, Orefield**, suggested the developer might add other uses on the front area of property to get the traffic signal

Robert Korp motioned to table the plan, Brian Horwith second the motion, all agreed, motion carried.

Planning Commission Chairman Brian Horwith adjourned the meeting at 9:37pm.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:37pm.
Jane K. Kelly
Planning/Recording Secretary
North Whitehall Township