

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
May 10, 2017

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for their regularly-scheduled meeting on May 10, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia, PA.

Present: Matthew Popek, Chair; Mark McKee, Vice-Chair; Vivian Peikin, Secretary; Todd Brown, Member; Dr. William Jenaway, Liaison to the Board of Supervisors.
Robert Loeper, Township Planner; Kyle Brown, Associate Township Planner;
Maudy Hedlund, Recording Secretary.

Absent: Jaque Camp, Member.

Matt Popek opened the meeting with a pledge of allegiance to the flag, followed by self-introductions and a motion to approve the Minutes of April 12, 2017.

Meeting Minutes: April 12, 2017

Vivian Peikin made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 12, 2017. Mark McKee seconded. Todd Brown, who did not attend the April 12 meeting, abstained. A 3-0 vote, in favor, carried.

Plan:

DP 2017-03: Johnson Development Associates, Inc. (58-00-10042-00-7),

S. Henderson and Shoemaker Roads, 4-story, 120,000 SF Self-Storage building, 3.34-acres, LI - Limited Industrial. Plan expiration: May 31, 2017.

Present: Bailey C. Gaffney, Development Manager, Self-Storage Division, Johnson Development Associates, Inc. Summit, NJ -7901.
Matthew M. Chartrand, P.E., Bohler Engineering, Center Valley, PA.
Bruce Seidman, BDS Commercial, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.

From Mr. Loeper's overview:

Installing a sidewalk:

The applicant and staff met with PADOT to address issues involved with installing a sidewalk on the Henderson Road frontage. The sidewalk location is complicated by the presence of a guiderail and raised sanitary manhole. The applicant's suggestion to install a sidewalk on the

southern portion of the site that connects with the sidewalk on Shoemaker Road met with approval.

Easement:

A secure commitment for an easement with access off Shoemaker was obtained for this property which has no legal frontage on Shoemaker Road.

Comments from members:

A member questioned whether use of the easement applied to the sidewalk. Mr. Chartrand replied that the applicant is speaking with the Gambone organization about it. There is room within the easement for a sidewalk.

A member commented that someone is moving dirt on the lot northeast of this lot. Mr. Chartrand offered to review a copy of the survey.

From Mr. Chartrand's presentation:

Stormwater management system:

The applicant has met with the Conservation District and has filed for a NPDES permit. The Conservation District is on board with the manner in which stormwater is discharged.

Roof water will be discharged into a raingarden for more filtration and thereafter held in an outlet control structure prior to being released into the ground by two deep injection wells.

The remainder of the site, which consists of the parking area, will drain down into a small detention basin that discharges into an existing culvert.

Number of storage units:

The applicant estimates that the users of the 900 units will consist of 30 percent residential storage, 30 percent businesses, and a 30 percent mix of military/student. Some renters are expected to lease multiple storage units.

Trip generation:

Trip generating numbers are extremely low.

Parking:

The parking lot provides twenty-two parking spaces. Twenty-nine additional spaces have been placed in reserve. The intent is to keep parking oriented to that central bank so people can get to their units from either side.

In response to members' concerns about adequate parking spaces, Ms. Gaffney stated that their facilities, which are located up and down the East coast and serve a large variety of suburban/urban target markets, provide 7 to 10 parking spaces for the same number of storage units. Their clients generally come once a month.

Engineering challenges:

Existing soils that encumber the site will be used to form very large berms around the back or hauled off-site. Material will be required to be hauled off-site.

The building:

Due to engineering challenges the 38 to 40-foot high building will be located close to the applicant's property line. Two of its sides will face Henderson Road and most of its back will be buried into the side of a slope. The area between this building's property line and the neighboring drive aisle will consist mostly of a swale for rainwater.

Motion:

Matt Popek asked if members were prepared to entertain a motion. Mark McKee recommended approval of the storage facility on Shoemaker Road. He thanked the applicant for explaining the detailed stormwater management plan and for working in the alignment of the sidewalk to connect Shoemaker and Henderson and asked them to keep an eye on their parking needs. Todd Brown seconded. A 4-0 vote, in favor, carried.

Plan:

DP 2017-06: GSK Building 40, 893 Schuylkill River Road, 100,363 sq. ft. expansion for office, research & development and manufacturing. 46.1 acres, HI Heavy Industrial. Plan expiration: June 20, 2017.

Present: Christopher Poterjoy, P.E., Pennoni, West Chester, PA.
Jamie Crawford, Sr. Technology Mgr., GSK, King of Prussia, PA.

From Mr. Loeper's overview of the plan:

The restructuring and revitalization of the GSK campus will allow for increased production of product at the site of manufacturing. A plan that will focus on the subdivision and sale of the western campus will be reviewed at a future meeting. Issues regarding what's ultimately going to happen will come into play when that portion of the site gets repurposed from its current "Office" and "R&D" to what appears to be primarily "Office."

From Mr. Poterjoy's presentation:

Review letters:

Review letters, which contained no real issues, were received from the Township Engineer and Remington Vernick. The Montgomery County Planning Commission, which was very much in favor of this project and supported the plan, had zero comments.

NPDES Permit:

The applicant applied to the Montgomery Conservation District for a NPDES permit.

Traffic study:

The Traffic Study for the new building will be submitted this week along with revisions to the plan. The main intersection at Swedeland and River Roads, Gate 3 and Gate 2, a little further west along Swedeland Rd, were studied.

Outcome:

Zero change was observed at the intersection of Swedeland and River Road. Zero change at the intersection of Gate 2. At Gate 3 there is going to be a slight increase in left-hand turn movements to head north on River Road. It doesn't change the level of service of that driveway. A signal study does not warrant a signal there. There is no increase in traffic based on the anticipated growth of the site and the area in general. Based on the outcome of the study, the only recommendation the applicant's traffic engineer offered was to monitor the area once the development is done.

Number of employees for the office and manufacturing division:

Over a two-year timeframe 20 relocated employees and 130 new hires would be assigned to daytime or evening shifts in the new building.

In response to a member's concerns about shifts simultaneously entering and leaving the site at 5:00 p.m., Mr. Poterjoy explained that one of the reasons for opening up circulation within the campus was to assist traffic exiting the site.

Motion:

Matt Popek asked if members were prepared to make a motion.

Todd Brown motioned to recommend approval by the Board of Supervisors of the plan for GSK's Building 40. Vivian Peikin seconded. A 4-0 vote, in favor, carried.

Other Business:

Mr. Loeper announced that the upcoming joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors was moved up half an hour. He requested sending any suggestions to Matt Popek. Mr. Loeper distributed a listing of last year in review and informed members of the invitation to attend the DVRPC's Workshop on the Septa Station Area Plans. The meeting will be held in the Township building.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Sincerely yours,

VIVIAN PEIKIN, SECRETARY