

**Upper Merion Township Planning Commission
Regularly Scheduled Meeting for April 13, 2022**

The Upper Merion Township Planning Commission met for its regularly scheduled meeting on April 13, 2022, in-person in the Henderson Room, located in the Township Building, and via Zoom. The meeting information was fully advertised and a meeting agenda placed on the township website. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Matt Popek, Chair
Mark McKee, Vice-Chair
Martin Trumpler, Secretary
Jaquelin Camp
William Jenaway, Board Liaison
Leanna Colubriale, Township Engineer (Remington & Vernick)
Ashton Jones, Township Planner

ABSENT:

Kenneth Brown

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Minutes for the March 23 meeting had previously been distributed. Ms. Camp made a motion to adopt the Minutes from March 23 with Mr. McKee seconding. The motion carried 4-0.

450 West Beidler Road
13-Lot Subdivision

Mr. Jones gave a brief project overview regarding the subdivision of property which has been to the commission multiple times. Specific revisions include stormwater and parking changes.

The applicant's attorney, Jamie Jun, provided a project overview describing changes regarding parking layout (3 parking spaces have been removed in order to improve for a vehicle turnaround) and stormwater (due to soil testing which required a redesign of the detention basin). Mr. Trumpler asked about a relocation of the emergency access and trash pickup and the applicant's engineer, H. Joon Pak, indicated that relocation of that access was not physically possible due to slopes and site grading, and that trash would be picked up by smaller vehicles allowing for individual trash pickup. Ms. Camp expressed concerns with future trash pickup and the HOA's ability to select a trash hauler. Mr. McKee indicated that trash pickup should be indicated in the HOA documents.

Ms. Jun indicated that they have received new review letters from various parties and the comments are generally consistent with past letters, with the exception of the traffic engineer. Ms. Jun indicated that the traffic engineer is indicating the need for a waiver as related to the township requirement of a 32 ft. cartway (ultimately under PennDOT jurisdiction). This was followed by a discussion regarding 1) access and future PennDOT changes that could result in site access issues and 2) steep slopes/density calculations.

Mr. Popek asked about surplus parking and the location of extra parking. Ms. Jun indicated that this would be an issue with any development and that this project is in fact providing a surplus. This was followed by a continued discussion between planning commission members and the applicant's team related to parking on individual lots/easements/HOA association.

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Jimmy Shaughnessy asked about overhead wires limiting access to the site, reasons for establishing an HOA, dust/debris during construction and eminent domain. Mr. Pak indicated that access should not be an issue and that there is plenty of overhead clearance. Ms. Jun indicated that the HOA will need to maintain both stormwater facilities and common site facilities and thus is necessary; that construction sites require fencing, stormwater controls, and applications to county conservation. Ms. Camp described eminent domain as the ability to take land for a public project.

Mr. Jenaway discussed fire access issues and indicated that any fire truck activity would likely take up the entirety of the site. He further indicated that he wants to know what PennDOT and traffic safety think about the site's access/circulation. Additionally, Mr. Jenaway indicated that he believes the steep slopes are not manmade, that this project will likely create future HOA issues and that the site is being over built.

This was followed up by a discussion regarding onsite parking, ownership of parking spaces, lot configuration, and what is common area under HOA control. Ms. Camp summarized her sentiment to indicate that there is too much being put on the lot, even if the proposed project meets the technical requirements. Mr. Jenaway added that the initial plan he saw was for 10 units (two separate buildings), Mr. Popek indicated that while it meets code, as proposed, he has reservations about the plan. Mr. Trumpler added additional comments indicating that he agrees with the general sentiment. Mr. McKee reiterated the same comments expressed by the other planning commission members.

Ms. Camp moved to indicate that the plan should be revised and reviewed so that the project that gets to the board is a more workable plan with Mr. Trumpler seconding. There was a 4-0 vote. Mr. Jenaway added that the board has not been granting waivers, so the applicant should be prepared to support any waivers.

320 West Dekalb Pike – Republic Bank
2,800 sf. bank pad site

Cliff Clay gave a site overview, indicating changes from the last plan submission. Mr. Clay indicated that the fire lane will stay where previously indicated; that drive aisle access from the north (multi-point intersection) has been eliminated through the inclusion of a median; that the drive aisle has been lengthened, thus allowing for additional queuing, a stop bar on the side access road and a wider turning radius into the bank site. It was indicated that Mr. Trumpler was not at the previous meeting, and Mr. Clay provided additional details regarding site changes.

This was followed by a discussion of the current conditions of the entrance drive width, striping and the number of access lanes. Mr. Clay indicated that the striping could be decreased at the entrance to provide dual lane access and acknowledged that, as designed, bank customers will need to look left in order to exit drive-thru exit.

Mr. Trumpler asked about eliminating the western access completely. This was followed by a discussion regarding site circulation, drive thru and bypass lane design. Mr. Clay asked if the group was OK with the western access. Mr. Popek brought up putting in a stop condition for the entrance drive, and Mr. Clay indicated that could be a possibility, assuming PennDOT agrees. Ms. Camp reiterated that the bank site's proposed western entrance/exit is in a bad location and conflicts with everything around it. Mr. Popek asked if the bank would consider an entrance only. Mr. Clay indicated that this has been brought up to the bank but that no decision has been made regarding the zoning. Ms. Camp seconded that removing said western exit

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would improve safety. Mr. Clay indicated that if this was to move forward, a “do not enter” sign would need to be added and the stop bar on the main drive aisle could likely be eliminated.

Mr. McKee indicated that the bank’s blank wall was located towards the mattress store, but that it would not be an issue if the blank wall faced internal to the shopping center. Mr. Clay indicated that they flipped the building but still ended up having the same sort of issues.

Mr. Jenaway indicated that it was his opinion that the project was short the acreage needed to fully make the plan work properly. Mr. Clay indicated that the existing tenant has a lease that dictates that the limits of the proposed bank cannot be expanded. Mr. Clay further indicated that the bank considered a disconnected/remote drive-thru but that also presented many of the same issues/constraints. Mr. Jenaway reiterated that alternative options should be explored regarding obtaining additional site area and suggested that the bank be prepared to discuss alternative building layouts. Mr. Popek indicated that while a drive thru facing the street frontage may be an alternative, it was his understanding that this would also be viewed as less than ideal from a township prospective. Mr. Clay indicated that the design of the bank is part of its branding and it is likely that the bank will not want a drive-thru in the front.

Mr. Jones indicated that the proposed northern parking aisle barrier creates some additional parking conflicts and should be revised to improve circulation.

No formal action was taken and the applicant was invited to return with the next plan iteration.

ADJOURNMENT:

There was additional discussion regarding agenda item 3: Malvern Anderson Conditional Use. The applicant did not appear before the planning commission as scheduled and no formal action was taken. Mr. Jenaway confirmed that it was on the Board of Supervisors agenda for the next night, but that it might be continued due to not appearing before the Planning Commission.

Mr. Trumpler moved to adjourn the meeting with Mr. McKee seconding and all in favor at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Martin Trumpler, Secretary