

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
JANUARY 28, 2014**

Meeting commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 7:40 p.m.

Members present: Binney, Goulet, Perry, Rittler, Vergantino

Members absent: Shero

Also present: Erin McCloskey (Bergmann & Associates), representing Auto Zone; John Koopman, Esquire (Begley, Carlin & Mandio), J.W. Dalton (Pexco) and Vincent Fioravanti (Fioravanti, Inc.), representing Pexco; Joseph Jones, P.E. (T & M Associates); Tom Bennett, Chief Code Enforcement and Zoning Officer; and Diane Beri, Recording Secretary

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Chairman – Brian Binney

Vice-Chairman – Rick Rittler

Secretary – Loretta Perry

Day and Time of Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. (new time)

Member Goulet will be taking over the Biles Island Committee from Jeff Boraski.

Member Binney is currently on the Open Space Committee.

Community Economic Development Committee meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Member yet to be determined.

Item #1: Auto Zone Store No. 4627, 482 W. Trenton Avenue, Morrisville, PA 19067; TMP #13-034-144; Zoned: NC; Preliminary land development to construct a 6,816 square foot auto parts store

Erin McCloskey presents the application. The site is currently occupied by the former JB's Bar and Restaurant on West Trenton Avenue. The site consists of an empty building, mostly parking area and some vegetation around the perimeter. It is approximately 93 percent impervious with continuous access across the front so cars can enter and exit the lot. There is currently no stormwater management on the site.

The project itself entails demolition of the existing site with a complete raze and rebuild for the construction of a 6,816 square foot Auto Zone prototype. Auto Zone is a retail auto parts chain with no repairs or servicing done at the location. There is no outside storage of any products. They do accept spent batteries and oil from their customers, but they are all contained inside the store in enclosed containers and are transported offsite by a third party called Safety Clean. The landscaping proposed is in accordance with the code, and if it's not, it will be. There will be some significant additional vegetation to what exists there currently, in addition to an expansion of the buffer area at the north side of the property between the back of the store and the residential property to the north.

In the proposed plan, the site will be 37 percent impervious compared to the 93 percent impervious currently at the site. We are working with the Township engineer to get into compliance with the Township's stormwater management requirements.

Auto Zone received a variance from the Falls Township Zoning Hearing Board that would allow a major chain store use in the NC zoning district.

Typically, we would be requesting a recommendation for preliminary/final approval to the Board of Supervisors. However, based on T&M's lengthy review letter, that is not a reasonable request at this time.

T&M's Review Letter dated January 22, 2014

191-37(B) -- requires 15' of open space between the curblines of the parking area and the outside wall of the building as well as parking spaces at least 12 feet from the property line. The sidewalks are adjacent to the building and do not provide that 15 foot separation and the parking area along the eastern property line is 10-1/2 feet as opposed to the required 12 feet.

Member Binney states that he understands the waiver request for the 15 feet of open space from the parking in front of the store, but it appears you can easily make that 12 feet along the property line.

Ms. McCloskey stated that the original plans did have it, but when they began to look at the truck access to the site, it provided a little bit more room for circulation. The loading door for Auto Zone is the northeast corner of the store as well as the dumpsters back in that area requiring a little wider access to allow for better circulation. We can certainly take a look at moving that curbline.

191-34(D) and 191-48(E) go hand-in-hand. 191-34(D) pertains to the sight distance triangle in keeping the proposed street trees out of the sight distance triangle. 191-48(E) deals with the ten-foot wide planting easement along the frontage and showing the proposed street trees in that ten foot easement. The issue we are running into here is that the sight distance triangle overlaps with that planting easement. We are likely going to need a waiver from either one or both of those sections.

Member Binney asks if they would consider planting the street trees somewhere else on the property.

Ms. McCloskey states yes, the plans show the trees elsewhere on the property.

Mr. Jones states that he has no problem with this. They will comply items and the 10 foot planting strip will fall out because you are going to plant the trees elsewhere.

Ms. McCloskey agrees.

191-78(C)(2) – requires certain information be shown on the plans within 200 feet of the property. Requesting a partial waiver. There is pertinent information on the plans within 50 feet of the property.

Mr. Binney states that this is a waiver we see all the time and we typically grant a partial waiver to the extent the information is necessary to the Township engineer to review the application and the installation of utilities, so if you provide that, it is fine.

Ms. McCloskey states with the next set of plans, we would request a waiver from the stormwater management ordinance and the infiltration requirements. We did have infiltration testing done within the past month which did not yield very favorable results. There will likely be some waiver requests associated with that.

The section of the ordinance that requires landscape islands at the end of the parking rows, we do provide for islands at the end of the parking rows; however, the width of those islands has to be nine or ten feet.

Mr. Binney asks Mr. Jones if Ms. McCloskey is referring to the bullnose in the front.

Mr. Jones states that yes it does, and after reviewing it with Jim Sullivan, we've determined that section of the ordinance wouldn't apply to this case. We think they are going to need that space for truck training.

Member Binney states that when he looked at Auto Zone's turning template, it shows that a tractor trailer would need to use every space in the parking lot to get where it must go. Common sense would dictate that the truck driver is not going to do that – he's going to sit out on West Trenton Avenue until all the cars are out of the way or he's going to back in off West Trenton Avenue and cause a big problem. This is a big issue and could be a major problem. Out of 38 spaces, the truck will have contact with 20 spaces.

Ms. McCloskey states this is a question we get frequently as typically Auto Zone is dealing with a one or two acre site. Auto Zone owns and operates all their own trucks so they do have control over the delivery schedule. Most deliveries are done either before the store opens in the morning or towards the end of the day when those spaces are not utilized. We are going to take a look to see what we can do with the parking area to try and minimize that impact. We do understand that there is concern about traffic issues on West Trenton Avenue.

Member Binney states that things could change in the future where Auto Zone doesn't control its own delivery trucks or if Auto Zone moves out and another store moves in there, and they don't have that control over their driver. West Trenton Avenue is a very busy road and I do not want to see anything further impede the traffic situation.

Ms. McCloskey states that she understands and they are going to take a closer look at it to see if there is something to make the situation better.

Member Binney states that his general feeling is that with all the comments in T&M's review letter and the turning situation, I think this matter should be tabled and come back another time when we have a lot less to discuss.

Member Rittler agrees and states that some issues have yet to be decided, like stormwater management issues.

Member Rittler makes a motion to table the Auto Zone application until the plans are revised and reviewed by T&M.

Member Goulet seconds the motion.

All in favor 5-0.

Matter is tabled until plans are revised and reviewed.

Item #2: Pexco, 16 Progress Drive, Morrisville, PA 19067; TMP #13-047-166-004 and 005; Zoned HI; Preliminary and final land development for building addition of 17,400 square feet, two new loading docks and expanded paved area

John Koopman, Esquire, presents the application. We are seeking a recommendation of preliminary and final approval for an addition to an existing manufacturing building currently in operation by Pexco. Pexco is the successor to Trilight Plastics. Trilight built the current facility in 1999 and it has been operating from there since then. The existing building is approximately 45,000 square feet. We are seeking to put an addition on the rear of the building (17,400 square feet).

J.W. Dalton, the Sr. Operations Manager, explains that Pexco takes plastic in one form and converts it in another shape based on customer specifications. We service the lighting market and the custom market (anything from refrigeration components to survey tubes, tube guards, etc.). Currently we have eight

excursion lines in the facility. We have approximately 45,000 square feet -- approximately 20,000 manufacturing, approximately 20,000 warehouse and the balance is office space. We also have our own tool and dye making capabilities within the site. We operate 24 hours, five days a week. We have 54 employees – 29 for the first shift including the office, approximately 13-14 for the second shift, and approximately 13-14 for the third shift.

Atty. Koopman asks Mr. Dalton to explain what is proposed for the addition.

Mr. Dalton states that the addition will house four excursion lines, improve the layout and have a formal dye development center to better organize that operation, a dye storage area and warehouse storage and some additional office space. It will also have 2 new loading docks with additional paving.

Vincent Fioravanti, P.E., begins his presentation. This is a 60 foot deep addition that spans across the back of the existing facility, about 290 feet in width, 17,400 square feet for the building addition. The building addition and coverage is still well below the allowable building and maximum impervious coverage. In terms of other paving and site improvements that are necessary to facilitate the addition, the stormwater from the roof drain is proposed to be conveyed to the existing west basin and stormwater from the new paved area is a 30 foot wide strip of paving that will service the two new loading docks. Essentially, the loading areas are in the same locations, the loading docks are next to each other and there is a 30 foot wide strip of paving. The new paved area from the loading dock will drain by gravity to the east basin. The basins in their current configuration were remodeled with the additional impervious and there will still be zero discharge from the site.

We were the engineers on the original project. The soils here are excellent in terms of stormwater management. There is no discharge from the site.

In terms of parking, the employee count is unchanged, the parking around here is sixty which is still adequate.

In working with the staff, T&M and the Falls Township Fire Marshal, it was determined that a fire lane wrap around the building. The code requires that the building be not more than a 150 feet from an approved fire lane. The original plans did not allow for the fire lane. What we are proposing is a geo-pave or a grass pave fire lane 20 foot wide, 10 feet off the building, in a loop configuration so that the fire apparatus would not have to back up if they did have to get behind the building. We will confer with the Township engineer on exactly what to use to pave the fire lane. It will look like grass but will be able to support a fire truck without sinking into the ground.

The fire lane configuration looping around the back of the building has been approved by the Fire Marshal.

Member Binney asks about the places on the plans where it says “previously approved addition” and “previously approved trailer park” and asks for further information. Are they being considered with this application? Are they planning on being built?

Atty. Koopman says that back in 1999 there was an additional parking area approved in case it was ever needed, and it is not needed at this point because the employee count is not changing.

Mr. Fioravanti states that is correct that in addition to the additional parking, there was an approved future office expansion right in the corner of the building, approximately 2,000 square feet. Along the same lines, there was an approved storage trailer area for additional trailers.

Atty. Koopman states that in T&M’s review letter, it was suggested that those areas be marked.

Member Binney states that his understanding of the MPC indicates that you lose your approval after five years if it is not built.

Atty. Koopman states that if we come back to build those, we will be back before the Planning Commission to seek approval.

T&M's Review Letter dated January 22, 2014

187-13(B)(1) -- Requesting a waiver to allow a minimum storm sewer pipe size of 15 inches.

187-13(B)(2) -- Requesting a waiver to allow PVC storm sewer pipe.

Member Binney asks if these waivers apply only to the runoff from the roof drains and the smaller area for the trench drain in the loading dock area.

Mr. Fioravanti states that is correct.

Mr. Jones states that he has no objection, but indicated they had discussed the possibility of revising the material to SLCPP if we can get a larger size.

Mr. Fioravanti states that is correct, from a 6 inch to a 10 inch.

Mr. Jones states then you would actually be complying with 187-13(B)(2), but requesting a waiver for 187-13(B)(1).

After some discussion, waivers will be requested for both sections.

Member Binney asks if this project covers two parcels and asks if the property line goes through the middle of the building.

Atty. Koopman states that he believes the parcels have already been consolidated according to the tax maps. The original 1999 land development plan which was recorded says that the two lots were to be consolidated. If they have not, they will consolidate them.

Member Rittler makes a motion to make a recommendation to approve preliminary and final land development for Pexco, 16 Progress Drive, TMP #13-047-166-004 and #13-047-166-005, based on the T&M review letter dated January 22, 2014, and the Fire Marshal's review letter dated January 7, 2014, with waivers approved for 187-13(B)(1) and 187-13(B)(2).

Member Goulet seconds the motion.

All in favor 5-0.

APPROVED FOR PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT

Item #3: Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve November 2013 minutes.

All in favor 5-0

Meeting adjourned 7:40 p.m.