

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
NOVEMBER 22, 2022**

Meeting commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 7:22 p.m.

Members present: Brian Binney, Colin Henderson, Mary Leszczuk

Members absent: John Haney, Robert McTague

Also Present:

Representing:

Falls Township: Mark Coan, AIA, IEI Architects

For the Township: Joseph Jones, Township Engineer, P.E., and Diane Beri, Recording Secretary

Item #1: Falls Township Municipal Building Renovations, 188 Lincoln Highway, Fairless Hills, PA 19030; TMP # 13-005-003; Zoned: IN. Owner: Falls Township. Waiver of Land Development – building additions and site improvements

Mark Coan presents the application and states we are going to be retaining most of the structure and adding some additions. It presented some challenges in determining the front of the building. The signalized intersection will remain the same. On the west, the curb cutout for the police side of the building which is currently blocked off will be re-opened so that in emergency situations the police can leave the site quickly. This entrance will be a controlled gated access so only police and others can access it. The main drive will still be the main entrance to the complex. There is a public access drive developed at the south point of the site which is also providing another emergency egress point. This access drive connects to Lincoln Circle.

The parking generally will remain the way it is now. The police will remain in their location in the building; Public Works is remaining in their location inside the building. It is the rest of the administration departments, code enforcement, finance, parks and recreations which will be relocated within the building.

The main existing drive off Lincoln Highway will connect to the new public access drive to the south of the site. Everything to the right of the main drive will be the municipal complex. To the left, we are looking at developing a park-like setting where there is a stormwater basin. The intent is to have the entire parcel developed. We are exceeding the parking requirements.

The public will be directed down the main boulevard from Lincoln Highway to the right towards the building. The parking in the front of the plan will be for police and employee parking with a circular area for civic things like the American flag, Township flag, etc. The police entrance is near the circular area in the front of the building facing Lincoln Highway. The employee entrance will be in this location as well. The public entrance will be near the doors currently being used by code enforcement. The entire portion will be reworked to create a new entrance for the public.

Based on discussions with staff and accessing their future needs, we needed to expand the building over what is currently there. The building will be a little over 60,000 square feet. The existing building is about 52,000 sq. ft. The difference is made up in the additions noted on the plan. Two 2-story additions and two 1-story additions.

Another site feature is a wall to contain and protect the police area. Immediately south to the wall is the Public Works staging and service areas and parking.

We will work to develop the landscape a bit more possibly adding rain gardens.

Member Binney asks if the police are getting closer to the residents on the west.

Mr. Jones responds we held the existing pavement line so we would leave it up to the zoning officer if the introduction of the wall might trigger a variances because it's in the buffer yard, but it's an existing condition.

Member Binney asks if we are replacing the elevator?

Mr. Coan says yes. The entire building is being gutted. The structure is being retained, we are selectively removing portions of it to make the new architecture work. The masonry envelope is in sound shape. We want to introduce more light, more windows into the building. But the structure has good bones.

Member Binney asks if we are increasing the impervious coverage, or our maximum building height. The chart on the plans do not indicate these on the plans.

Mr. Jones says the impervious is under the threshold for a variance, we checked that, but we will populate the table. In terms of the building height, we were not sure but there is going to be a thorough zoning review. We inadvertently identified a variance we did not need and that's the wall and the setback. 209-34.E for fences and walls will apply and it doesn't preclude it from being in the front yard. So that variance is off the table. The impervious will be compliant.

Ms. Leszczuk asks if the wall is the reason for the waiver request for land development.

Mr. Jones says that is incorrect. The waiver of land development is a process by which a project can move through land development without the need for financial security through a developer's agreement after it's approved. It is a smaller part of the subdivision land development ordinance.

Discussion occurs about the green areas, impervious coverage. We intend to seek an NPDES permit since the disturbance will be over an acre. Stormwater management will be reviewed by the Conservation District through the NPDES permitting.

Member Binney asks if there is a rendering of the site.

Mr. Coan says we are working with the supervisors on the design.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks if they are going to go down to the steel.

Mr. Coan says yes. It will look like an new building when finished (roof, exterior, etc.)

No public comment.

Member Binney makes a motion to recommend approval of Waiver of Land Development for Falls Township Municipal Building renovations, 188 Lincoln Highway, Fairless Hills, PA 19030.

Member Leszczuk seconds the motion.

All in favor 2-1 (Henderson dissenting) APPROVED FOR WAIVER OF LAND DEVELOPMENT

Item #2: Approval of Minutes

Minutes of October 25, 2022 approved.

7:22 p.m Meeting ends.