

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 25, 2025**

Meeting commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 p.m.

Members present: Colin Henderson, David Coyne (alt), Paul Hartzell (alt)

Members absent: John Haney, Daniel Everett, Mary Leszczuk

Also Present Representing:

Burns & Burns: Michael Meginniss, Esq (Begley, Carlin & Mandio) and Paul Burns (Burns & Burns

Laundry Properties: Michael Meginniss, Esq (Begley, Carlin & Mandio), John Richardson, P.E. (Dumack Engineering), Dan Marrazzo (owner of Laundry Properties

Levittown Lanes: Michael Meginniss, Esq (Begley, Carlin & Mandio), Kristin Holmes, P.E. (Holmes Cunningham), Allan Episcopo (property owner)

Sill Corner: John VanLuvanee, Esq (Eastburn & Gray), Mark Havers, P.E. (Pickering Courts), and Joy Sill (property owner)

For the Township: Douglas Waite, P.E.(Jones Engineering Associates), Lauren Gallagher, Esq. (Clarke Gallagher Barbiero Amuso & Glassman Law) and Diane Beri (Recording Secretary)

Acting Chairman Henderson states that Item #3 Earle Co., 14 N. Steel Road, Morrisville has requested a continuance.

Item #1: Burns & Burns, LLC, 100 Central Avenue, Fairless Hills; TMP #13-005-097; Zoned: HC. Owner: Burns & Burns LLC. Conditional Use – seeking approval to be able to service vehicles, including mechanical, cleaning and paint accessory to Paul Burns Automotive operations. No site improvements are proposed.

Michael Meginniss, Esquire, explains the location of the property, and states the larger building is about 2,800 sq. ft. and was used for mechanical repair. One of the buildings also owned by Burns on the adjoining parcel is utilized in the past as a body shop. This conditional use application would allow Burns Automotive to use this existing structure (2,800 sq. ft.) accessory to the Burns Automotive use in the Township to service his vehicles. No site work is proposed. There will be no large 18 wheelers coming into the site – it would be used for Burns Automotive customers. The customer would drop off the vehicle at a different Burns location, then transported by Burns employees to this site. We are estimating approximately three employees at this location. All the work would occur within the structure. The hours would be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, closed on weekends.

Paul Burns continues and states this location will be a re-con center for our commercial operation. There will be 3 to 8 vehicles at a given time. There are only three garages so we will be limited to how many vehicles we can service. There will some mechanical work, cleaning and some light paint work will be conducted. There will be some utility trucks. The property is fenced and secured each night.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks its only commercial vehicles (yes) and if they are planning on repainting tractor trailers or something similar (no).

No public comment.

Member Hartzel makes a motion to recommend approval for Conditional Use for Burns & Burns LLC, 100 Central Avenue, Fairless Hills, PA 19030, to be able to service vehicles, including mechanical, cleaning and paint accessory to Paul Burns Automotive operations with compliance to the Jones Engineering Associates' review letter of March 18, 2025.

Member Coyne seconds the motion.

All in favor 3-0. Motion carries. CONDITIONAL USE APPROVED

Item #2: Laundry Properties, 316-320 W. Trenton Avenue, Morrisville, PA 19067; TMP #13-035-030 / #13-035-031; Zoned: NC. Owner: Laundry Properties. Preliminary / Final Land Development – Remove 3 of the 4 existing buildings, renovate the existing building, and construct 2 retail / residential buildings and self-storage facility with associated parking

Michael Meginniss, Esquire, states we are proposing to redevelop and consolidate both parcels which together total a little over one and a half acres. The current structures on the parcels are in a state of disrepair. There are two principal structures, one on each parcel, with two accessory structures totaling 4 current structures. Buildings on the left will be demolished and the accessory building on the right will also be demolished. The development will include a small self storage facility to the rear of the property, a retail use and an expansion of the residential use. Zoning variance were granted on April 9, 2024. The residential use will be four one-bedroom apartments in the remaining building, there will be two small retail uses, and the storage units to the rear.

John Richardson, P.E. continues and shows the three mixed use buildings. The storage units will be approximately 88 units. In front of the storage buildings, they will be retail on the first floor (1,000 to 1,200 sq. ft. each), and second floor will be two apartments per building. He shows a rendering of the site. The site has access currently to W. Trenton Road. We would formalize the driveway for safety enhancements. There will be an underground stone drywell for stormwater management controls in the front and rear of the property. Both systems will eventually discharge into the stormwater controls on W. Trenton Road. There will be gates along the self storage portion so only people renting units will be allowed access.

Atty. Meginniss states the storage will be closed from midnight to 5:00 a.m.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks how many employees for the storage units.

Dan Marrazzo states only one.

Member Hartzell asks if storage of vehicles outside will be permitted.

Mr. Marrazzo says no, it will be just people pulling up to access their unit. There will be no storing of RVs, trucks or trailers.

Member Coyne asks about flooding issues in the rear.

Mr. Marrazzo says you might see standing water after a heavy rain.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks about the house.

Mr. Marrazzo says the house will remain as a single family dwelling.

Public Comment

Jennifer Metzger, a Falls Township resident, asks about traffic, security and fencing. She has questions about the hours of operation, the security person on site. She also wants to know the height (tallest building will be less than 25 ft. tall).

Both Mr. Marrazzo and Mr. Richardson respond to the questions.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks about the lighting onsite and if it will bother the residences nearby.

Discussion occurs on this point – they will comply with lighting requirements per the ordinances.

Member Hartzell makes a motion to recommend approval for Preliminary and Final Land Development for Laundry Properties, 316-320 W. Trenton Avenue, Morrisville, PA 19067, TMP #13-035-030 and #13-035-031 based on Jones Engineering Associates' review letter dated March 19, 2025 with waivers requested for Section 191-8(B), 191-52.1(B)(4)(B)[2] and 191-78(C)(2) and Remington Vernick's review letter dated February 21, 2025.

Member Coyne seconds the motion.

All in favor 3-0. Motion carries. PRELIMINARY / FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT APPROVED.

Item #4: Levittown Lanes – 8815 New Falls Road, Levittown; TMP #13-019-167, #13-019-168-001, #13-019-169; Zoned: NC / NCR. Owner: Allen and Mary Ella Episcopo. Preliminary land development – redevelopment of 3 parcels for a multi-family apartment building and associated improvements

Michael Meginniss, Esquire, shows a rendering of the project. The properties combined total less than one and half acres. Levittown Lanes was formerly at these locations. The properties are split zoned – NCR and NC zoning districts which bisects the properties. We are proposing to construct a 24 unit, market rate apartment complex. There is a significant reduction in impervious surface coverage. There will also be improvements of the stormwater flow off of the site. We are designing the apartment complex to be high end. The owners received zoning variances for the use. At that hearing, there Mr. Episcopo testified that they would have loved to continue to operate Levittown Lanes forever. It is not possible due in large part because of financing. Compared to the use of Levittown Lanes as a bowling alley, pizza shop with a bar, the apartment use has a less of a negative impact to the surrounding residential community than the bowling alley. Should the project be approved by the Township, we will deed restrict the parcel on Orchard Lane to be used as a parking lot in tandem with the apartment use. We will also restrict the deed so that the Orchard Lane parcel cannot be subleased, nor can it be utilized in the future for offsite parking. That parcel will only be utilized for parking for renters at this site. There are 70 parking spaces (which is a lot for apartment use). We are working with the Traffic Engineer to ensure the pedestrian crossings are safe.

Allen Episcopo, owner of the property, states he has been in business since 1962, gets along with the community, and was building something for our family. Unfortunately, the fire destroyed Levittown Lanes. We would like to keep a business for our family. The apartment use is new to us, but we are committed to putting up a nice development.

Kristin Holmes, P.E. states the project will be a three story apartment building with a small parking lot to the rear of the building with direct access to the apartment building. Across the street (Orchard Drive), there will be a larger parking lot for additional parking. There are 70 spaces which is the zoning requirement – almost three spaces per unit. We are reducing the impervious surface by about 32% and adding green plantings along the perimeter, street trees and parking lot. We have received the review letters and have some waivers we want to request.

Jones Engineering Associates’ review letter dated March 19, 2025

All items are a will comply, except for the following waiver requests:

- 191-36(D) Requires 12 ft. separation between driveways and property lines and curbing (non-conforming now)
- 191-37(B) Requires 12 ft separation between driveways and property lines and curbing (non-conforming now)
- 191-37(F) Zero setback to the ultimate right-of-way for parking facilities (non-conforming now)
- 191-37(G)(2) Partial waiver – shade trees in curbed raised planting beds (shrubs instead)
- 191-37(G)(4) Partial waiver – plantings (8 shade trees instead of 10)
- 191-39(G) &
- 191-61(A) Sidewalks along both sides of the street (pedestrian path instead)
- 191-44 (D) slopes 5 ft. from property lines
- 191-48(B) Partial waiver – street trees
- 191-62(A) Curbing along Orchard Drive
- 191-78(C)(2) subject to the Township Engineer’s review

Acting Chairman Henderson asks if there is a reason there is a waiver request for sidewalks and the use of a pedestrian path instead of a sidewalk on the parking lot side.

Ms. Holmes based on the alignment and orientation of the parking spaces, and with the recommendation of the Traffic Engineer, they recommended a striped pedestrian walkway. She provides further detail.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks about lighting (they will comply with all ordinances).

Public Comment

Jennifer Metzger, Falls Township resident, asks some questions about the plan, the height of the building and expresses her strong objection to the height (48 ft), is the HVAC systems going on the roof, can the 70 parking spaces be reduced to allow more trees.

No further public comment.

No further Board comment.

Member Hartzel makes a motion to recommend approval for Preliminary and Final Land development for Allen and Mary Ella Episcopo for the Levittown Lane redevelopment for TMP #13-019-167, #13-019-168-001, #13-019-169 for a multi-family development based on Jones Engineering Associates' letter of March 19, 2025 with waivers requested for the 191-36(D), 191-37(B), 191-37(F), 191-37(G)(2) Partial waiver, 191-37(G)(4) Partial waiver, 191-39(G) & 191-61(A), 191-44 (D), 191-48(B) Partial waiver, 191-62(A) and 191-78(C)(2), and Remington Vernick's review letter dated February 4, 2025 and the Fire Marshal's comments.

Member Coyne seconds the motion.

All in favor 3-0. APPROVED FOR PRELIMINARY / FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT

Item #5: Sill Corner, 1035-1056 Trenton Road, Fairless Hills, PA, TMP #13-020-149 through 153; Zoned: NC / LR, Proposed Overlay –Sketch Plan – Mixed use development, consisting of two offices and 54 townhomes

John VanLuvanee, Esquire, presents the application, and would like to discuss the Ordinance submitted with the Sketch Plan for a proposed overlay for the five parcels included in this application. The parcels are all owned by Joy Sill Hopkins and her family. There is her insurance business on one of the parcels on the corner. Along Trenton Road are single family detached houses which are zoned Neighborhood Commercial. There is an irregular shaped parcel along Tyburn Road that is zoned Low Density Residential (currently vacant). The original plan was for 120 apartments back in 2019. In January of 2023, the project was beginning to move forward. This is Sketch Plan number 38. Matt Takita said the Board of Supervisors would be willing to consider an overlay district to accommodate the mixed use. In November of 2024, we submitted informally to the Township a plan with 94 apartments, and, in the alternative, presented a plan for 54 townhomes. The plan tonight is the alternative plan from the November 2024 informal submission.

Before formally submitting for the overlay, the applicant thought it best to get some feedback on the overlay and the redevelopment of the parcels. In addition, we would like the Planning Commission's feedback on the townhome concept. We need to put the ordinance in play before we go through any extensive land development plans and/or studies.

Atty. VanLuvanee shows some renderings of the complete development.

Joy Sill-Hopkins says they have been on the corner of Trenton Road and Tyburn Road since 1963. We hope the townhouses would receive your support as the family has always wanted to redevelop these parcels.

Member Coyne says one of his concerns is drainage at the property – one of the parcels is wooded and vacant.

Ms. Sill-Hopkins says there would be full underground stormwater management as well as some above ground stormwater management controls.

Acting Chairman Henderson asks about flooding in the back currently.

Ms. Sill-Hopkins says no flooding in the back, but occasionally some pooling of water.

Acting Chairman Henderson says he has a problem with no back yards. I think perhaps you can put less in there.

Member Hartzell says each townhome would have their own garage. Would there be parking in front of the townhome as well?

Ms. Sill-Hopkins says originally it was going to be a two car garage, but instead we have a one car garage bay with two driveways (double wide driveways) which will be adequate for any sized vehicle. There is also one guest space built into

the sketch for each townhome. We comply with staying with three parking spaces per townhouse as well as keeping the number of units under the 15 townhouse per acre requirement.

Public Comment

Jennifer Metzger, Falls Township resident, expresses concern about traffic, security, having a garage under a home. Are they 55 plus townhomes (no). There will be more kids in the school system, water problems, drainage issues, building height (the overlay proposed 45 ft.), no green spaces, will there be fencing, fire emergency responses, heavy traffic on Tyburn Road

Atty. VanLuvanee explains some of zoning issues associated with NC and LR would be addressed with the ordinance allowing an overlay district. Discussion occurs in this regard.

Bill Brown, a multi-family developer, comments on building height, believe it will be significant improvement on property tax, and endorses the development.

Frank Bray, Falls Township resident, expresses concern about traffic on Tyburn Road and Trenton Road, and thinks this will be a disaster, expresses concern about building height of three stories (should be two stories).

Watermelon Man is my a/k/a name, lives across the street from the high school, expresses concern about security, and traffic, flooding, needs walkability for the dogs and kids.

Acting Chairman Henderson says there are no sidewalks on these plans.

Ms. Sill-Hopkins says it's a work in progress.

Member Hartzell asks this is just a sketch plan, not an ordinance overlay, is that correct?

Atty. VanLuvanee says it is a sketch plan based on the overlay ordinance draft, so that they can illustrate what that ordinance means or look like. This is done in accordance with the requirements of the draft ordinance that will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors. We were encouraged to come up with a sketch plan to depict the overlay ordinance.

No further public comment.

No further Board comment.

Acting Chairman Henderson as no recommendation is necessary on a sketch plan submission, he thanks the applicant for the submission.

Item #6: Approval of Minutes

Minutes for February 25, 2025.

Approved 3-0.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 p.m.