

**FORKS TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

06-27-2023

Amended

The Forks Township Planning Commission (PC) Workshop Meeting was held at the Forks Township Municipal Building, 1606 Sullivan Trail, Easton, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, June 27, 2023. The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Heck followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

PC Members Present:

Ian Heck, Chairman
Eric Konecke, Vice Chairman
Matt Menkowski, Secretary
Anthony Klapatch
Hunter Keim, Alternate

Members Absent:

Kevin Jiorle
Matt Sprung
Jeremy McIntosh, Alternate
Robert Rusnak

PUBLIC COMMENT - none

MINUTES

The minutes of the March 23, 2023, Planning Commission work session were discussed. The minutes will be tabled until the meeting of July 13, 2023.

REPORTS – None.

CORRESPONDENCE - none

NEW BUSINESS

Transportation Plan Update – Meco Road Improvements

The members discussed a plan that has been created by member Anthony Klapatch for improvements to Meco Road. They would use what is referred to as a “road diet” for Meco Rd to add directional protected bike lanes, reduced motor vehicle travel lane width, and parking on 1 side of the street to help alleviate speeding vehicular traffic as well as enhance access to our recreational trail system for pedestrians and cyclists. The members discussed adding this to the joint work session of the two boards when they meet in August.

OLD BUSINESS

Text Amendment/Condition Use suggestions for gas stations in the TC District –

The members discussed a memo provided by Zoning Officer, Shawn McGlynn which provided some bullet points for discussion as to possible conditions to be placed upon a property if the use of gas stations were

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added to permitted uses in the Town Center District. Steve Weiner, developer, was asked to join the members as they discussed the following items -

- Limiting the number of pumps – it was decided that the property itself would limit the number of pumps and this would not be something they would recommend as a condition.
- Excluding tractor trailers – there was a lot of discussion on how this could be done. The property would need delivery of supplies and gas so tractor trailers will need access to the property. They discussed not selling diesel which might discourage tractor trailers but many larger pickup trucks use diesel. The members would like to see something done to limit tractor trailers from this site.
- Protection for adjoining lots – there is residential use in the area as well as a recreation path. The members stated that there must be mandatory berms, buffers and/or walls between the gas station and the adjoining properties.
- Hours of operation – the 24-hour operation of a convenience store/gas station was discussed at length. It was decided to recommend that the hours be limited to 5am to 11pm in the TC District
- Lot size and location – the board discussed that a possible condition could be that the lot must be a minimum of 1.5 acres and must be located at a four-way signaled intersection on an arterial street, such as Sullivan Trail.
- The board agreed that if this use (gas stations) is to be allowed in the TC District, car wash, car repair and sale of automobile uses must not be permitted.
- Parking was discussed. The parking should be dictated by the size of the project and the property.
- Signage – the members agreed the signage should follow the standards set forth currently for the TC District


The discussion will be passed on to the board of supervisors for them to consider as they discuss this issue at a future meeting.

The Township Manager advised that copies of the draft text amendment ordinance which is scheduled for a hearing before the Board of Supervisors on Thursday, August 3, 2023, are being provided to the members for their review. L. Pereira, Township Solicitor, stated that as required for an ordinance change, the Planning Commission must receive the draft ordinance in advance of the meeting where it will be discussed. The Planning Commission is being asked to review and provide a recommendation to the governing body. This will be on the July 25, 2023, agenda for discussion and recommendation.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Having no further business, Chairman Heck adjourned the meeting 8:34 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,


Donna M. Asure


Matthew Menkowski
Planning Commission Secretary