

**Tinicum Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2016**

Damon Aherne called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. In attendance were Vincent Dotti, Peter Bickford, Tom Casola and Laure Duval. John Cole and Trevor McNeill were absent. In the audience were James Gentile, North Star Construction Management, Inc., Acting Township Manager Sabath, Supervisors Rosamilia and Blanchard, Joel Harrison and Chris Shivo.

Subdivisions & Land Development:

North Star Construction Management requests a waiver of the land development process for a building addition at 7532 Easton Road, TMP #44-011-010.

Gentile presented North Star's proposal to add a 156sf cooler to the side of the gas station, it would not increase impervious and would represent 2% of the entire site. He said they were looking for a waiver of the land development process. The existing convenience store is 1209sf and with the new cooler it would be 1365sf. There would be an additional door as an emergency exit installed as required by code.

There was much discussion regarding the interpretation of allowable uses. The PC discussed whether the convenience store part of the existing use, and the extension of the convenience store as proposed, constituted a second non-permitted use on the site, a retail use, or whether a convenience store was in fact a "usual and customary" part of the pre-existing non-conforming service station use.

Dotti said that it was a continuation of a nonconformity (that was usual and customary) that was not expanded but modernized. Aherne cited the BOS Meeting Minutes from March 3rd, 1987 and the O'Brien Zoning Office letter of October 19th, 2000 requesting that the owner obtain a variance from Section 600.2, indicated that it was not an allowable use in the PI district and a permit was never issued for the convenience store

Casola said that since the role of the gas station has evolved into more of a convenience store (as a destination point) with an increase in traffic to and from the site- the site was not set up for such an increase of traffic. Chief Sabath said that it would be helpful if traffic could be routed in a controlled and safe manner entering and exiting the site.

There was agreement that if it is an acceptable expansion, then a plan for laying out parking areas and appropriate markings would be necessary to help control the circulation of foot traffic into and out of the store as well as the flow of vehicles navigating around the site and into and out of the site. Currently, there are no defined openings on to 611 and Bedminster Road. Dotti suggested that North Star obtain a professional services agreement with the Township Engineer to review a plan for parking and circulation.

Additionally, the PC noted, as pointed out in the email sent by T. McNeill, that the proposed addition intrudes in the front setback, which was not cited by the ZO or indicated on the plans. It was noted that the front yard set back of 100ft in the PI district would mean that they would need a variance and this should be sent to the ZO for

recommendations. Gentile said that they were working off a site plan from the old owner and would supply more complete plans showing setback.

The PC also discussed confirming the existence of proper and adequate septic on the site. Dotti suggested that an accurate plat that can be filed with PennDOT showing the parking, circulation and entrances and exits to the site.

Motion by Dotti to send the application back to the ZO for her opinion on the variance and Overlays, to recommend full site plan showing circulation and parking plan with a PSA for the Engineer to review. Motion was not seconded.

Motion by Duval, seconded by Bickford have the Township Solicitor check the legality of the application and recommend how to proceed as well as look at the right of way issues. Voted upon and passed.

The PC also recommends this matter be tabled while the application is sent to the ZO for her opinion on the variances, that North Star supply an accurate site plan showing circulation, parking, entrances and exits, obtain a PSA with the Township Engineer and have the ZO check for the various Overlay's that may apply. The site plan should include information about sewage treatment and location of the septic system.

DelVal Fire Company requests advice on how to proceed with their plan to make additions to the fire station at 75 Headquarters Road, Erwinna, TMP #44-015-066-002.

The PC recommends that the Fire Company proceed by completing a waiver of land development application and schedule another meeting with the PC.

Board of Supervisors Discussion:

- PC has spent more time reviewing individual zoning applications rather than working on subdivisions and development—dealing with different concerns now
- What is the best way to expand the PC 8 or 9 members?
- Standing sub-committees that work with the main PC that have the flexibility to work on clearly defined projects with the guidance of a seasoned PC member
- Sub-committee members should have the same voting privileges – alternates not allowed by the MPC
- Training takes years to prepare a fully qualified PC member
- Possibility that some members were retiring from the PC- adds to the importance of cultivating new members in a timely manner
- Need to overhaul the Zoning Ordinance Book- enormous amount of work on the front end- will eliminate work & confusion in the future
- Use the model of the groundwater ordinance – where a professional planner was utilized for the technical writing –then reviewed by the various Township entities to complete projects such as the Ordinance Book
- Requirement that the new members attend PC work sessions

- How to organize and catalogue decades of documents for ease of research and retrieval?
- How to incorporate the new members most effectively?
- There is interest from the residents to participate in sub-committees
- How to make the PC more efficient- time management is a critical component to PC efficacy
- Need to structure the PC meetings to be more streamlined & more efficiently utilize the time it takes to review the application

Adjournment:

The next regular meeting is scheduled on May 24th at 7:30pm. A work session is scheduled on May 10th at 7:30pm.