

PALMER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

PUBLIC MEETING - TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2017 - 7:00 PM

PALMER TOWNSHIP LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM - 1 WELLER PLACE, PALMER, PA

The July meeting of the Palmer Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, July 11, 2017 at 7:00 pm with the following in attendance: Robert Blanchfield (Chairman), Robert Lammi, Robert Walker, Andrew Rossi, Thomas Grube, and Richard Wilkins. Also in attendance were Planning Director Cynthia Carman Kramer, solicitor Ryan Fields, and Ralph Russek of The Pidcock Company and Supervisor David Colver.

1. Minutes of June 2017 Public Meeting

Motion: Approve, Moved by Robert Lammi, Seconded by Robert Walker. Passed. 4-0. Commission Members voting Ayes: Blanchfield, Lammi, Rossi, Walker

Commission Members voting Abstain: Grube, Wilkins
Commission Members Absent: Kicska

OLD BUSINESS

2. Werner Enterprises - Conditional Use Application - Trucking Terminal Use in PO/IP District

1470 Tatamy Road & Newlins Mill Road- K8-5-2 & K8-5-9

PO/IP District

Request by Werner Enterprises, Inc.

DISCUSSION

Present on behalf of the applicant, Werner Enterprises Inc., were Peter Terry of Benchmark Engineering, Paul Szewczak of Liberty Engineering and Attorney Joseph Fitzpatrick.

Werner Enterprises, Inc. is requesting conditional use approval for construction of a 67,005 square foot tractor-trailer training and maintenance facility on a 38-acre tract at the northwest corner of Newlins Mill Road and Tatamy Road. The parcel is located within the Planned Office/Industrial Park (PO/IP) zoning district. To the extent that the maintenance portion of the proposed facility meets the definition of a Trucking Company Terminal as defined under §190-13 of the Palmer Township Zoning Ordinance, the applicant is seeking conditional use approval under the following provision:

- §190-125.M – Trucking terminal in PO/IP, which shall meet the associated requirements at §190-210.B(33)

Blanchfield gave a history of this application, noting this was the 6th time the applicant had been before the Planning Commission since November 2015.

Russek reviewed the letter of July 10, 2017 pertaining to the meeting between Pidcock and Werner Enterprises. He summarized that Newlins Mill Road would

be rehabilitated using either full-depth reclamation/recycling (to be confirmed as acceptable by the Township Geotechnical Engineer) or full depth reconstruction. The limits of this work would be from the eastern end of Majestic's Newlins Mill Road reconstruction project to just east of the proposed eastern Werner driveway. The resulting pavement section would equal or exceed the structural capacity of the Township's typical Collector Street pavement section, which is adequate for the projected Werner truck traffic, but with a 2-inch 12.5 mm bituminous surface course in lieu of the typical 1.5-inch 9.5 mm bituminous surface course. In addition, in designing the pavement rehabilitation, the finished top-of-pavement grades would allow for a future 2-inch overlay (by others) at the time of future development of the remaining, surrounding vacant parcels. The Township would not seek improvement of the pavement structure by Werner beyond that required for the currently proposed development. Future developments would be tasked with pavement overlay as needed. The area of Newlins Mill Road east of the proposed eastern Werner driveway would not be improved as a part of this project. It is anticipated that this length of pavement would be improved in conjunction with the future development of the Werner corner parcel, and/or the vacant parcels along the south side of Newlins Mill Road. An appropriate note would be added to the Werner Plan to document this condition;

The Werner traffic study projects minimal impacts at the Tatamy Road/Newlins Mill Road intersection, particularly concerning installation of a traffic signal at this time. As the current Werner proposal creates a separate 11.5 acre lot at the corner, any future improvements (including signalization) would be tied to the development of that parcel as well as to the remaining three, vacant corners.

Frontage improvements (road widening, curb, sidewalk, street trees, etc.) along the remaining Werner frontages on Newlins Mill Road and Tatamy Road would be deferred until further adjacent development occurs. However, Werner would dedicate now, as a part of the improvements associated with their plan, right-of-way along these frontages in accordance with the Township's "ultimate" right-of-way widths of 60 feet (30-foot half width from centerline) for Newlins Mill Road and 80 feet (40-foot half width from centerline) for Tatamy Road.

Werner would make a cash contribution to the future traffic signal at the Van Buren Road/Hollo Road intersection commensurate with its traffic volumes compared to overall traffic volumes at the intersection. Werner previously suggested a contribution of \$16,400; Pidcock has no objection to this amount.

Szewczak stated that they would like to reclaim the pavement rather than reconstruct Newlins Mill Road and would like to talk about the cash contribution for the traffic signal at Van Buren/Hollo Road. But the letter is acceptable to Werner Enterprises. Blanchfield said they would have to discuss the cash contribution with the Board of Supervisors. Wilkins asked if Werner purchased the land at the corner of Newlins Mill Road and if they had plans for future development. Szewczak said Werner purchased it but not for development at this time, but the house will be taken down. Blanchfield asked if there would still be enough room for buffers and berms. Szewczak said yes, they would be in full

compliance.

Kerrie Ruch, 206 Mill Race Drive, asked if the traffic study was done while Newlins Mill Road was under construction. Why was there no 24 hour study done? Can we see the study? Does it fall within the Township requirements? Was there a noise and pollutant study done? Are they building a 2 story or 3 story building?

Charley Young, 33 Glasgow Way, asked when they repave Newlins Mill Road would it be 2 or 3 lanes. Is the left turn entrance still part of the plan?

Marsha Loverso, 90 Freedom Terrace, stated she is concerned about safety. Is it a training school or not? Will there be training on country roads?

Larry Cecio, 33 Country Side Court, asked if they are we allowed to get a copy of the traffic study. He has concerns about traffic, pollution, fumes and noise. Are substitutes from other companies going to be in the terminal? Will one and half year old trucks be the only trucks or will there be older trucks in the terminal?

John Halligan, 12 Canterbury Lane, stated that it was stressed that this would be a training facility. It was not said that Werner's Allentown Facility would be moving here. What will it look like in 5 Years?

Kerrie Ruch, 206 Mill Race Drive, asked if there would be a fueling station.

Michael Hambleton, 11 Penn's Grant Drive, asked if the corner building would be removed.

Monica Voloshin, 200 Brendan Road, asked how long the road would last after it is done.

Marianne Caliguire, 111 Mill Race Drive, asked if trucks would turn left onto Newlins Mill Road. Nothing would go to Tatamy Road?

Charley Young, 33 Glasgow Way, asked what was the traffic count was in Allentown. Does this mean the Allentown facility was too small?

Kerrie Ruch, 206 Mill Race Drive, stated they do not want all this truck traffic around the school children.

Richard Karp, 107 Stephanie Drive, stated the Planning Commission should reject this project.

Seeing no other comments, Blanchfield called for a motion.

The Commission recommended approval of the Board of Supervisors, subject to compliance by the applicant with the July 10, 2017 letter from the Township Engineer's office.

Lammi noted that the Planning Commission had been meeting on this project since November 2015, that this use is allowed in the PO/IP District and that the applicant had made a lot of changes to accommodate the public's concerns. He recommended that the Board of Supervisors look at the minutes of the Planning Commission meetings for the comments of the public, staff and applicants.

Motion: Approve, Moved by Robert Lammi, Seconded by Thomas Grube. Passed. 6-0. Commission Members voting Ayes: Blanchfield, Grube, Lammi, Rossi, Walker, Wilkins
Commission Members Absent: Kicska

PLANNING DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Kramer noted that the consultant for the Comprehensive Plan was currently working on the draft and there would be no committee meeting in July. Blanchfield asked what is next after the draft. Kramer said the draft would go out to the public, LVPC, and adjoining municipalities for comment then eventually it would come before the Planning Commission. It should be done in the next few months and definitely by the end of the year. Blanchfield asked about the Zoning Ordinance. Kramer said it is not part of this contract but they begin working on that immediately after.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Colver commented that the Board of Supervisors would get much deeper into the Werner review and applauded the Planning Commission for listening to everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Motion: Adjourn, Moved by Thomas Grube, Seconded by Richard Wilkins. Passed. 6-0. Commission Members voting Ayes: Blanchfield, Grube, Lammi, Rossi, Walker, Wilkins
Commission Members Absent: Kicska