

ROSS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING
May 21, 2024

The Ross Township Planning Commission meeting scheduled for May 21, 2024, was called to order by Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell, at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Township Municipal Building.

In attendance were the following Planning Commission members: Vice Chairman Rick Meixsell, Dave Labar, Frank Piraino, Roger Green, Herb Stecker and Lauri Lapping. Chairman Roger Christman was absent.

Also in attendance were Attorney Michael Gaul, of the King Spry Law Firm, Planning Commission Solicitor, Township Engineer Russ Kresge and Tighe Meckes, Alternate Engineer from Keystone Consulting Engineers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion to approve the minutes of April meeting as written was made by Herb Stecker and seconded by Roger Green. The motion was carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATION:

OLD BUSINESS:

Arsha Vidya – Preliminary Plan (8/5/2024)

Representatives of the plan were not present for the meeting. A request to table the plan was made from the applicant's representative. The Board of Supervisors at their meeting held on May 6, 2024 approved request for extension of the plan until their meeting scheduled for August 5, 2024. By consensus the Planning Commission tabled the Plan to the next Planning Commission meeting.

Anthony J. Gionino – Minor Subdivision (7/15/2024)

Applicant and his Surveyor Brian Courtright were present to discuss the proposed Plan. Comments from Engineer's report dated 5/14/2024 and letter dated May 6, 2024, from Monroe County Planning Commission were discussed with the applicant and his Surveyor. As noted in the Township Engineer's report and the report from Monroe County Planning Commission, inconsistencies in the plan and GIS analysis are present and must be resolved. Surveyor will share boundaries with the Engineer and Solicitor. Plan needs to go before the Zoning Hearing Board to resolve zoning issues. The Planning Commission only makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on the application of the Subdivision and Land Development to the proposed Plan, and cannot grant variances to Zoning Regulations. The applicant was advised the Plan presented here is not ready for approval. Further, any zoning issues would need to be resolved prior to final Plan approval.

Applicant's Surveyor acknowledged the inconsistencies in the Plan and prior plans or mapping for the property site, and stated that he would continue to work on resolving them.

NEW BUSINESS:

Daniel Saunders- Sketch Plan – 140 Elmer Drive

Russ Kresge, Township Engineer, has recused himself from commenting on this plan due to a conflict of interest. Alternate Tighe Meckes has reviewed the sketch plan and provided preliminary comments.

Dan Saunders attended the meeting with John Dennis. Dan stated that he previously presented a plan to the Township Zoning Officer and BCO for the building of a second house on his Aunt's property, and was told to get a septic plan and septic permit. Four months later, when he tried to obtain a building permit for the second house, he was told by the Zoning Officer and BCO he needed first to obtain land development or subdivision plan approval. Mr. Dennis explained they were aware that the Board of Supervisors preferred that Dan subdivide the property, but Dan intended to only file a land development plan application.

Mr. Meckes made several comments about the SALDO's requirements for the plan including for private access streets, and noted that the sketch plan did not appear to comply with those requirements, or additional work would need to be done. He offered to share his written comments with the applicant. Private access streets were only allowed to serve a maximum of 3 residential dwellings. Dan's new house would exceed that limit. If the proposed land development plan later submitted by Dan did not comply with the private access street rules, he would need to request, and receive, a modification or waiver prior to plan approval.

The solicitor raised concerns about land ownership and rights to use the second house and legal risks associated with this arrangement. He said the decisions regarding those matters should be made prior to land development plan submission, as their resolution could impact the preparation of the plan, processing the plan application, and Township's decision on the Plan.

The applicant was advised that, if he was going to pursue a land development, the SALDO required that both a preliminary and final plan be filed and approved, unless a waiver was requested and received, to file a combined plan. The Solicitor also advised that an open space fee may be required, and adequate parking would need to be demonstrated on the plan. He also recommended that the applicant take the plan to the Zoning Department again before presenting it to the Planning or Board of Supervisors.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Resident asked about putting the name on the Veteran's plaque. Resident was redirected to the Board of Supervisors meeting.

Howard Beers mentioned a previous issue regarding a past situation related to access on Elmer. The property/developer was required to gain access on a Township Road. They were not allowed to use Elmer road and had to put the access on Ross Road. Township Engineer Russ Kresge commented that this proposed development was different in that the property did not have direct access to a public street. Discussion regarding the language in the ordinance and interpretation of the resolution to this issue would need to be documented on the plan and approved and not based on what ifs.

PENDING:

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Herb Stecker, seconded by Dave Labar, and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Brown
Planning Commission Secretary