

LOWER MACUNGIE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING – May 18, 2021

The May 18, 2021 meeting of the Lower Macungie Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Tom Beil at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom Meeting. Commission members in attendance: Tom Beil, Jon Hammer, Amy Miller, Bob Rust, and Wesley Barrett. Also, present were Nathan Jones, Director of Planning and Community Development, Brian Cicak, Township Engineer, CKS Engineers, and David Brooman, Township Solicitor.

Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Rust, second by Mr. Barrett, all in favor to approve the April 13, 2021 minutes. All in favor and minutes are approved 5-0.

Boyer Allentown SMF, LC Life Care Center- 1345 Minesite Road Conditional Use

From the applicant's team in attendance are Attorney Nate Fox, Spencer Summerhays of Boyer Allentown, Engineer Victor Grande, and Joe Walker of Advance Healthcare.

Mr. Jones provided an overview of the project. A conditional use rendering is shared. Mr. Jones commends the applicant team for the amount of outreach that they have done. The proposed site is a 33,349sqft, 46 Bed 1- story life care center for residents after surgery. There is a large stormwater basin to the north northwest of the site which will handle the run off as well as the state water requirements. There is a large pipeline easement in the rear of the property as well as a walking path onsite to be used by patients in the facility. Street trees and buffers will be provided on site as well as an existing tree line in the rear that will be filled in where necessary. In terms of planning a lot of the key points have been taken care of. There is naturalization in the storm water basin as well as dark sky compliant lights and street walls are proposed along Minesite Road. The township is asking for ornamental plantings along the front. There is a waiver request for curb improvements along Minesite Road.

Mr. Cicak states that there is not much in terms of technical comments discussed at the conditional use stage. CKS is currently conducting a land development review. Trip generation quantities were provided at 226 trips per day and therefore does not warrant a traffic study.

Attorney Fox announces that a project website was created for this location to provide more information. This will be a transitional care facility for patients who had a medical procedure that would require them to have a need for skilled care for no more than 90 days. It will be a branded Advanced Healthcare Facility and will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> of these facilities coming to Pennsylvania, second to a location in Hanover Township. This location will be serving patients local to the area who are

coming from the local hospitals. The Sunoco Pipeline in the rear of the parcel will remain mostly undisturbed other than the trail, minor grading, and planting.

Attorney Brooman is asking for comments on the employees as well as the architectural renderings.

Attorney Fox shares the project website to the commission. The building design is standard to the region in which the project is located. It will be stone or brick and some siding along with dormer and gingerbread type features. This will be a 24/7 facility and staffed as if each bed is occupied.

Mr. Walker states that typically there will be 30-35 daytime employees, 55-60 midday staff, as well as 10 overnight employees from 10 pm-6 am.

Mr. Beil would like to have discussion on food and laundry services, where patients come from and visitation. Mr. Summerhays states that there will be a full-service kitchen with a dining room, full laundry services, as well as a salon. A large physical therapy gym is also a large part of the facility. There will be community partnerships with the local hospitals and visitors are welcome and encouraged.

Mr. Rust would like to know about the distances from the back of building to the edge of the property. The setbacks are around 212ft from the north and 163ft from the east. Mr. Rust also questions who pays for care at this facility and is advised that it is covered by insurance, mostly Medicare. Mr. Rust has concerns about light pollution, but is assured that the applicant will comply with all township ordinances.

Mr. Beil questions why the applicant is showing more parking than required and would like to discuss the trail system. The parking is generous for patient and visitor satisfaction. The on-site walkways are for patient use only as physical therapy and as a liability perspective would not be for public use.

Mr. Beil asks the applicant to consider a connection the existing sidewalk on Lisa Ln to connect to a new path along the front of the property for public use. The applicant states that they have talked about that internally and will continue discussions on the right approach to that. They would like to be able to provide that to the best of their ability within the public right of way. Mr. Rust and Mr. Barrett agree with the need for a public path.

Discussion is held regarding the configuration of Minesite and Hidden Valley Roads with the driveway to the facility. Mr. Beil would like for this to be looked at during the land development process. Engineer Grande states that a meeting has been held with PENNDOT in terms of the design and the driveway will be considered a low volume driveway.

Mr. Hammer questions the possibility of noise coming from the 3 out buildings and disturbing the neighboring properties. The generator only runs at specific times such as regular inspections and power outages. The shed will be used for grounds equipment. The buffering will also protect from possible noise issues.

No further comments from the planning commission.

Mr. Beil opens the floor to public comments. No public comment.

Motion was made by Mr. Hammer to approve modification with the 13 conditions that were stated. Second by Mr. Rust.

Discussion for clarification on Condition #2 (Class B Buffer) as well as Condition #3 (Stone Changes.) #6 (Trail slopes are not ADA compliant for therapeutic reason, but will meet with staff to discuss before committing.) #12 (Pedestrian path in the township right of way.)

Motion Carries 5-0.

#### Guardian Storage Lower Macungie, LLC- Cedarbrook Road Conditional Use and Preliminary/Final Plan Submission

In attendance from the applicant team are Attorney Kate Durso, Engineer Michael Lardi, and Bill Krahe from Guardian.

Mr. Jones shares the overview plan and feels it would be beneficial for the board to see. He states that this project is a 3-story Guardian self-storage building that will be taking the place of 4 single family dwellings at the corner of Cedarbrook and Service Roads. The 4 lots would be consolidated into 1 large lot. The building will have a 40,000sqft footprint, but will be a 120,000sqft climate-controlled space in total. This will be one of the first sites in Eastern Pennsylvania. Due to the overhead lines, chosen trees will be utilized that do not conflict with the lines. There is a fence and piers proposed for aesthetic and security purposes. Mr. Jones commends the applicants for the architectural integrity. He did bring up the use of branding colors, but the design guidelines so state that the majority needs to be in Earth tones. Walking trails and paths have been discussed, which is a technical matter and will have further discussion.

Mr. Cicak states that since this was a land development plan, the following items were reviewed storm water management, grading, landscaping, sewer, and traffic. The biggest concern is that there is no widening of the road shown along Cedarbrook Road. There is currently a 19ft road width and it requires half width widening. Mr. Cicak states that the other review comments will be able to be addressed.

Mr. Lardi states that Guardian Storage has 20+ operations in Pennsylvania and Colorado. They recently obtained approval for a facility in Hanover Township. He states that the branding colors are blue and orange accents, with mostly neutral coloring. There is not outdoor storage,

everything is internal. Access is through keycard/keycode entry. Some units will have external access but the units are all internally contained. There is no outdoor storage of any kind. There will be 2 employees maximum, with hours 7 days per week, but will not be a 24-hour access facility. The parking up front will be limited only to employees and visitors. Patrons will load and unload in front of the garage or building. Trash from the facility will be serviced by a private hauling company. The facility will be in the Highway Commercial District. The surrounding sites are a hotel, a stone supplier, a clinic, and a cemetery. The buffer to the one surrounding resident does meet the SALDO. There will be a two-way circulation driveway in and across the parking lot which turns into a one-way secure counter-clockwise configuration. All lighting will be dark sky compliant. There will be concrete curbing as well for storm water management in underground extended detention basins. All signage will be approved and will meet township standards.

Mr. Lardi shares a 3D overhead video rendering of the location.

Mr. Krahe shares that this facility accommodates patrons in the journeys of life by offering them a first-class experience. There will be approximately 750 fully conditioned, carpeted units. There are security cameras to offer patrons a comfortable experience as well as a Business Center/Retail space.

Mr. Barrett questions what differentiates this business model vs the typical self-storage location. Mr. Krahe states that 20% of their customers are business clients (ex. Retail) and 50% are women who may need a secure location to store valuables. The self-storage model has evolved and patrons expect the best from them. This location was chosen for the retail presence.

Mr. Beil questions the hours as well as truck rental possibilities. Hours are typically 9 or 10am to 6 or 7 pm on Weekdays and 9 am – 4 pm on a Saturday and a few hours on Sunday. They will not be renting out trucks to the public and have one truck that is for onsite patron use only. Their models are shifting from a box truck to a Sprinter Van for use.

Mr. Beil calls for comments from the commission.

Mr. Hammer questions the use of the outside entry units for boat/car/RVs. The units are wide enough for a car but not an RV. These units can be utilized for cars that need the extra attention of storage.

Attorney Durso states that from a conditional use stand point there are no specific conditional use requirements for a self-storage center. They do meet the general requirements of the ordinance such as health, safety, public welfare, comprehensive plan, etc. She states that they are looking for guidance on the land development side for some items. There is a concern with being able to construct a pathway along Cedarbrook Road, however, once it was surveyed that this is a "sticky" area for drainage. There is virtually no virtual slope. There is some run off, but they suspect that some drainage is being taken from across the street. The applicant would rather divert the runoff rather than taking it on. The applicant is interested in a waiver for the sidewalk, widening, and curbing along Cedarbrook Road. It is a dead-end street that leads nowhere and is not heavily travelled and not a heavily walked area.

The commission discusses this waiver and the consensus is that the waiver does make sense. There will be further discussion to be sure that there should be some sort of widening of the road.

Mr. Beil states that there may be a compromise to widen the road to get the waiver of the sidewalk requirement.

Mr. Beil states that no action will be taken on the Land Development. Attorney Durso asks to speak with Mr. Cicak at some point for concerns over percentages of the swales that may require a waiver. Clarification will be needed on Service Road and who it belongs to. The applicant would like the opportunity to discuss the branding colors at some point as well as concern over the intervals of the fence which is more for security purposes than aesthetic.

Mr. Beil calls for a motion to table the Land Development. Motion by Mr. Rust with a second by Mr. Barrett. Motion carries 5-0.

Mr. Beil calls for public comment. Mr. Robert requests that walkway should be put in on Service Road to access the hotel. Applicant states that are proposed along the frontage.

Mr. Beil calls for a motion to approve the conditional use. Motion to approve with stated 11 conditions is made by Mr. Hammer with a second by Ms. Miller.

Atty. Durso is requesting to remove the conditions concerning the pathway construction, facade, and fence intervals that will be discussed with township staff. In terms of conditions 7 and 8 they will not be removed, but have the flexibility to reflect them at land development. Condition 8 will be carried over to Condition 7. Mr. Beil agrees to amending the motion to remove the condition of the pathway construction which was agreed to be amended by Mr. Hammer and Ms. Miller. Mr. Jones will be sending amended conditions to the board.

Motion passes 5-0.

#### Department Report

Mr. Jones states that due to the resignation of Mr. Perez there is now a need for a commission secretary. Ms. Miller volunteers.

Mr. Beil calls for a motion to appoint Ms. Miller to secretary. The motion was made by Mr. Rust with a second by Mr. Barrett. Motion passes 5-0.

Mr. Jones states that the upcoming June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting will be Jaindl Mertztown, Advance Healthcare, Spring Creek Properties Lot 12, and the Allen Organ Redevelopment Project. Applicants will be looking for review letters before deciding attendance. There will be no second regular meeting for June. The July Zoning lookback will be for potential zoning changes.

With revolving COVID restrictions it seems that if an attendee is fully vaccinated no mask is needed, if not then a mask must be worn and socially distanced. It will be on the honor system. July

20<sup>th</sup> workshop meeting will be held at 6 pm. Preview for August and September meetings will depend on the project load, but are looking for one regular meeting each. In July there will be ordinance language recommendations and looking to forward to the BOC in September.

Replacements for the open commission positions are being interviewed by the BOC and hopefully will be appointed in June.

Ms. Miller will be missing the second meeting in July, but could possibly call in if needed.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Rust with a second by Mr. Barrett. Motion carries 5-0.

Mr. Beil adjourns the meeting at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kimberly Boyer, Permit Clerk  
Lower Macungie Township