

HANOVER TOWNSHIP, LEHIGH COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

February 20, 2024
6:30 P.M.

Present: Yoder, Steitz, Nauroth, Engelman, Thomas; Melissa A. Wehr; Paul Harak, Esquire
Kevin Chimics, P.E., Vicky Roth; Audrey Anderson

Absent: Rossi, Hawk

Attendance: 9

Approval of Minutes: December 19, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting
January 8, 2024 Reorganization Meeting

Motion: I move we waive the reading of the Minutes of the December 19, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting and accept same as presented.

Thomas, Steitz: Moved and Seconded Unan.

Motion: I move we waive the reading of the Minutes of the January 8, 2024, Reorganization Meeting and accept same as presented.

Thomas, Steitz: Moved and Seconded Unan.

Correspondence:

Chairman Thomas stated that all correspondence before him this evening relates to Agenda items.

General Business:

1. Preliminary/Final Land Development Review, ABR Realty Inc., 795 Roble Rd., Allentown, PA 18109 (Review and Recommendation)

Dan Lyons appeared on behalf of the Applicant along with Don Peters of Bohler Engineering. Mr. Lyons gave a summary of the project. Applicant proposes to demolish the existing building and redevelop the property with a 307,500 sq. ft. building with parking, new stormwater management facilities and associated landscaping. There have been a number of prior submissions and subsequent reviews. They are in receipt of the most recent review letter from Keystone Engineers dated February 15, 2024 as well as outside agency review letters. All comments in the review letters are acceptable. The waivers are acceptable to the Application.

At this time, the Chairman reviewed the Lehigh County Planning Commission on their letter dated December 5, 2023.

On page 2, the ADA compliant ramps. Mr. Peters stated there are no building design or user set for this as of yet. The locations of the entrances are to be determined. The ADA spaces are shown on the parking lot.

The Chairman stated they recommended a traffic impact assessment. Mr. Peters replied a trip generation letter was submitted it with their October submission. The Township Engineer review shows it is outside of the threshold requiring a further traffic impact study just based on the number of trips that are proposed compared to what are existing for this use. Mr. Peters added that they had a comment on the first letter that they are increasing traffic over a 24 hour period which is about 170 additional trips. During the A.M. hour and the P.M. peak hour it's only about 13 trips, showing one additional vehicle every four minutes.

On page 3, Site and Emergency Access indicates a third access point is being removed. The Chairman asked for an explanation of this. Mr. Peters commented they are maintaining the two access points along Roble Road, there is no need for a third access along Marcon Blvd. They have two full access points shown for circulation, emergency vehicle access, which is part of the established fire lanes and will have signage accordingly. They are trying to bring all the truck entrances off of Roble Road. A Commission Member asked how much truck traffic will be increased on North Irving Street going in toward the city. Mr. Peters said the truck traffic would more than likely go out toward the highway rather than cutting back through the city. A Commission Member asked if there would be several businesses in the building as there is in the current building. Mr. Peters said it is not the intent of the new building. The Applicant is looking to propose a development with one user in the building. At this time, it is designed as a speculative type of warehouse design.

A Commission Member questioned if the fire connection is being moved off of the lower road as noted on the blueprints. Mr. Peter replied that the fire connection right off of Marcon Blvd. and are going to provide a fire connection on the building. The fire connection off of Marcon Blvd. can remain. If there is anything more needed, i.e. shift fire hydrants, add additional ones, provide additional connection, they certainly will comply. They worked with the City of Bethlehem on this plan with the water design. They had a few comments which they incorporated into the plan. They provided them an approval letter in January which Mr. Peters forwarded to the Township Engineer. Mr. Peters said if additional fire hydrants are needed, they will comply with that request.

The Chairman questioned what accommodations are being made for truck parking. Mr. Peters replied that there are the loading areas, the parking areas for the trailers, and they added a pull-off area along the main truck route driveway to the back of the truck courts so a truck can pull off, idle for a few minutes to fill out their paperwork and then go without blocking the entire path. The Chairman specifically wanted to know what if trucks back up or they need to leave their rig overnight for an extended period of time; does the Township have any recourse if this becomes a problem. The Manager replied the Township has their Code Enforcement which enforces the regulations if they park on the street or in a no parking zone. Other than that, that is all the Township has.

A Commission Member questioned the height of the building. Mr. Peter replied the Zoning Ordinance allows up to 50 feet. They received a letter from the Lehigh-Northampton Airport Authority and PennDOT Aviation. They are waiting on a formal approval letter from the FAA. Mr. Peter does not anticipate any issues with the 50 feet. If they restrict to 45 feet, they will design the building to this height.

The Chairman stated the LVPC letter talked about adding a separate site access for tractor trailers connected to North Irving Street. They felt might help the movement of trucks on site. Mr. Peters replied they wanted to keep the access to Roble Rd. This will have some grading challenges if they were going to provide access out to North Irving Street. At this time, everyone is accessing the site through Roble Rd. If they put trucks going onto Irving Street, they will be encouraging trucks to go toward the city rather than the highway. They don't want to do this. There were comments on the letter regarding loading docks being too short. Mr. Peters said they have the full loaded docks designed to what is typical. If the space would be short, the turning space in front of it would be larger. They are designed pursuant to industry standard.

Mr. Peters said they submitted for the NPDES Permit. They received a review from DEP and resubmitted to address some of their comments. They will continue to work through the process and will copy the Township on all correspondence moving forward.

One of the Commission Members asked why they are building a spec warehouse. The Applicant is trying to get a plan established so they have somewhere where they can go to find that end user. It's a matter of finding the right one.

Motion: I recommend Preliminary/Final Land Development Review, ABR Realty Inc., 795 Roble Rd., Allentown, PA 18109 subject to the conditions identified in Keystone Consulting Engineers' letter dated February 15, 2024 and the additional request to arrange some communication with the Applicant concerning truck traffic flow.

Thomas, Engelman: Moved and Seconded	
Yoder, Steitz, Nauroth, Engelman:	Nay
Thomas:	Aye
The Motion did not pass.	

Mr. Peters asked if there is anything they can do outside of the Preliminary approval. They have done everything to address all concerns that the Township Engineer had down to a few minor drafting items. He received no response.

Motion: I recommend to Council the eight Waivers requested by the Applicant.

Thomas, Yoder: Moved and Seconded	Aye	Unan.
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Mr. Peters wanted to understand if there is any planning related comments, concerns, or issues between preliminary and final that he can look to satisfy before resubmitting for a final plan. Based on the conditions of the letter, there are two minor drafting comments of the plan itself and would be the same plan they would be discussing as a final. If there are concerns that prevent a preliminary/final, they would want to take it into consideration so they can properly address it. A Commission Member stated it would help if they had a tenant. Mr. Peters stated that in spec design

warehouses it is very typical to wait and have a tenant. They could be one to two years out before they have that right tenant. They want a good end user who will mesh well into the community.

The Manager stated that the Commission should keep in mind they still have to come back and still has to get reviewed by Zoning to make sure the plan meets all the requirements of the Ordinance with parking, etc. If they would not meet those requirements, that would be a zoning issue and not anything that this board would address. Planning is just the use of the property for its the use of a spec building, i.e. like a shopping mall. You would approve a shopping mall, but you wouldn't necessarily have the tenants when you approve the shopping mall. She would view this typically as the same. If they can't find a user that will meet the parking that is there, either they'd have to come back and get relief through the Zoning Hearing Board, or they'd have to come back for additional relief from this Commission if it meets the requirements through SALDO. As a whole, it's the use.

2. Preliminary/Final Land Development Review, Provident Group-Lehigh Valley Properties LLC, 3337 Airport Rd., Allentown, PA 18109 (Review and Recommendation)

Frank D'Amore, Esq. with Fitzpatrick, Lentz and Bubba represented the Applicant, Provident Group-Lehigh Valley Properties LLC., Rick Roseberry with Colliers Engineers, Tony Peterman with Lehigh Valley Properties and the Andrew Coomb with Boyle Construction came before this Commission for a special exception use. There is a zoning approval for the use in the AI Zoning District. They are proposing a lease of approximately five acres of land on airport property for the construction of a Courtyard Marriott Hotel to be constructed in two phases. One hundred forty rooms in the first phase and 28 in the second phase. Most of the public improvements are in the first phase. They have the Engineer's review letter dated January 31, 2024 with the follow-up letter dated February 15, 2024. All conditions are acceptable. They are before this Commission this evening to answer any questions or concerns. They reviewed the LVPC comment letter. The Chairman commented the Keystone Consulting Engineers comment letter dated February 15, 2024 items to be cleaned up on their proposed plan for them to consider it as a Preliminary/Final. He recommend the Waiver approvals, but could only go along with the Preliminary at best. He feels that the overall plan needs to be cleaned up and the items need to be addressed more fully before presenting them to the Planning Commission. From an engineering standpoint, they are still finalizing some details on the water and sewer lines. There is still some stormwater issues that need to be addressed. It would help to get some input from the Conservation or PennDOT. If they're going to require changes, we would want to see them upfront.

A Commission Member stated they need more than one fire hydrant since only one is showing. He asked if the Airport's fire company looked at it and what were their recommendations. Mr. D'Amore said they didn't have any recommendations on additional hydrants. The Commission stated they need to look at where the FDC is going to be located and make sure they have a hydrant within 75 feet of the connection.

Mr. D'Amore formally requested this Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan be tabled and grant all necessary extensions under the MPC.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Steitz
Secretary