Maidencreek Township Planning Commission
August 7, 2024

Attending: James Schoellkopf Jr., Matt Davenport, Randy Hauk, Gavin Milligan, Aaron Rogers, Pamela Stevens of Systems Design Engineering, Inc., and Diane Hollenbach, Secretary/Treasurer

Guests: Dan Laudenslayer, Barron Gerhard, Dan Brown

Mat Davenport called the August 7, 2024 regular meeting of the Maidencreek Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Maidencreek Township Municipal Building and asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Approval of the Agenda

Jim Schoellkopf, Jr. made a motion to approve the agenda. Randy Hauk seconded and hearing no questions on the motion, it passed unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Jim Schoellkopf, Jr. made a motion to approve the June 5, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Aaron Rogers seconded and hearing no questions on the motion, it passed unanimously.

Communications – None.

Public Comment – None.

Business

Crossing at Maidencreek Time Extension

Randy Hauk made a motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors accept the developer's offer of a time extension to the plan review period for the Crossings at Maidencreek Final Plan until December 4, 2024. Aaron Rogers seconded the motion and hearing no questions on the motion, it passed unanimously.

Deerfoot Farms Winery Planning Module

Jim Schoellkopf, Jr. made a motion to authorize the chairman to sign the Deerfoot Farms Planning Module Component 4a. Randy Hauk seconded and hearing no questions on the motion, it passed unanimously.

Maidencreek Banquet Hall Variance Request – The Commission discussed parking concerns for a 3,000 square foot banquet hall, the maximum amount of people allowed in the facility and what other businesses would be open at the same time. The parking lot is to service all 22 units. They asked that a letter be sent to the Supervisors explaining that the Commission supports the use but would like the applicant to demonstrate at the zoning hearing how they can accommodate parking for the amount of people allowed at their business. Some suggestions were a shuttle or valet parking from a rented offsite parking lot.

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Estate of Gloria Gerhard Final Subdivision Plan

Jim Schoellkopf, Jr. made a motion to accept the Estate of Gloria Gerhard Subdivision plan for review. Randy Hauk seconded and hearing no questions on the motion, it passed unanimously.

Mr. Laudenslayer explained that he had drawn the lot lines through the contours. There may also be a future farmhouse. There will need to be some standard notes added to the plan for SEO testing and a possible waiver to allow the lot lines as drawn.

Jojaz Subdivision and Land Development Plans – Dan Laudenslayer introduced a sketch of the Jojaz Property which has been sold to Specialty Rigging. Specialty Rigging is currently in Muhlenberg Township. They have 11 to 14 employees and provide industrial rigging and machinery moving services. They would like to redevelop the Jojaz site and move their operation to 1300 Maidencreek Road. They do not want to subdivide the property. They would demolish the existing building at the top of the property, build a warehouse for equipment storage on the demolished building's existing concrete footprint and utilize the existing septic system. A pole barn would be built for vehicle and company equipment storage. The NPDES permit and Penn DOT HOP have been issued for the Jojaz project and would need to be modified for the new owner. Diane Hollenbach stated that the subdivision plan would need to be withdrawn if the new owner wasn't going forward with a subdivision. Pamela Stevens suggested submitting a Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan with phasing and to also submit a request for an extension for submission of a final land development plan before the October 13, 2024 deadline. Mr. Laudenslayer asked if the use fit in the Industrial zoning district. The main building would be for storing the equipment for Specialty Rigging's clients until Specialty Rigging could take it to the client's site for installation. The Commission agreed that storage is a typical warehouse use and warehouses are permitted in the Industrial Zoning District.

Solar Ordinance - Pamela Stevens reviewed the draft Solar Ordinance. Comments from the Berks County Planning Commission have been addressed. The largest area allowed for accessory solar will be 2000 square feet. Solar arrays must be compliant with the township storm water ordinance and are considered impervious. Native plant language has been added and soil maps and agricultural preservation maps will be added to the ordinance. The Commission suggested annual reports on the electric generated or an annual inspection so that the township knows when a solar farm stops operating and needs to be decommissioned. Dan Brown asked why the ordinance asks that solar arrays avoid installation on slopes. Pamela Stevens explained it had to do with storm water management and poor drainage. Gavin Milligan stated he had a brief conversation with Emily Smedley of the Berks County Community Foundation about incentivizing solar accessory use. More information on who, how and why was sought by the Commission.

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Zoning Regulations – Tabled.

Letter of Support for the Cornerstone Drive Bridge Project – Matt Davenport signed the letter of support for the Cornerstone Drive Bridge project that will be submitted with the LSA Grant in September.

Agricultural Security Area Seven Year Review – Diane Hollenbach reported that a few properties have not responded and since they are in the Agricultural Preservation Program, they must remain in the Maidencreek Township Ag Security Area. The Planning Commission recommended no changes to the Ag Security Area.

Having no further business, Aaron Rogers made a motion to adjourn the August 7, 2024, Maidencreek Township Planning Commission meeting. Jim Schoellkopf Jr. seconded the motion and hearing no questions on the motion, it passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Hollenbach
Manager