

The regular meeting of the Souderton Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm on the above date by Chairman Edward Huber. Other Commission members present included Jeffrey Gross, Laurie Reynolds and Andrew Schlosser. The meeting was attended by Borough Manager P. Michael Coll, Borough Engineer Melissa Prugar of Boucher and James, Inc. and Danielle Baer, Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission. The meeting was also attended by Borough Councillor Julie Munden.

Chairman Huber asked for consideration of the minutes from the August 4, 2021 Planning Commission meeting. A motion was made by Laurie Reynolds and seconded by Andrew Schlosser, to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2021 meeting of the Souderton Planning Commission as presented. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported on two applications to be heard by the Souderton Zoning Hearing Board on Tuesday, October 12, 2021. The first application is from Bruce and Dorothy Leidy concerning a vacant parcel situated between 426 Lincoln Avenue and 412 Lincoln Avenue. The applicant is seeking a Special Exception to consider this parcel as a lawful non-conforming single family building lot. James Conti and Angela Fulginiti of 426 Lincoln Avenue, Julie Smykal of 412 Lincoln Avenue and David and Audrey Harding of 411 Lincoln Avenue presented a letter through their attorney expressing opposition to the application. Souderton Planning Commission Chairman Edward Huber explained that the Planning Commission is advisory in nature and they will defer to the Zoning Hearing Board to determine the merit of this application.

Borough Manager Michael Coll also reported on the second Zoning Hearing Board application by Emmanuel Lutheran Church for a dimensional variance to permit the former church parsonage to be converted into a three unit residential dwelling for the purpose of ministry work. The parsonage is part of the entire church parcel. A three unit residential dwelling is a permitted use in the R-3 Residential District, however, the church will need a dimensional variance from lot width and a side yard setback to permit the conversion. The Planning Commission offered no comment on this application.

Realtor Ron Acuff and his client discussed a proposal to construct five townhomes on a vacant lot at E. Reliance Road and N. Second Street. The property was owned by the Kenneth Kratz Company with an approved land development plan dating back to 1995. The developer proposes to construct the five townhomes in a similar configuration as the approved 1995 plan. The carport will be substituted with 10 parking spaces in the rear yard with a rear loaded garage and rear deck for each unit. The 1995 plan had a small retention basin in the side yard which will be evaluated under current regulations. The developer is aware of the architectural requirements and will provide a rendering to demonstrate compliance. Front porches will be provided. Revised plans will be prepared for the next meeting.

Architect Constance Lezenby, along with owner Barbara Smith, provided revised development and renovation plans for the property at 143 N. Main Street. This project was first presented and reviewed in 2019 prior to the pandemic. The project has since been downsized from the original submission. The owner is now working with a brewery for the basement street

level of the building, a café located in the middle area and the existing apartment on the upper level will remain. The revised development plan complies with the parking requirements. The back yard space and the potential connection into the adjoining municipal parking lot will be considered at a future date. Originally the plan incorporated changes on the front porch area; however, opening the front porch creates challenges to the proposed lower unit. The plan has now been revised to retain the enclosed porch but to renovate the enclosure. The owner desires to renovate the property in two phases. The first phase will include building renovations, the café space will mostly be focused on take out service and overall site work will be limited to specific items needed to comply with building permits. The second phase will take on more of the site work, adding sidewalk, outdoor dining space, drive isles and increased impervious coverage. This phase will most definitely require land development review prior to beginning any construction. Allowing the owner to proceed with Phase 1 will allow the start of operating revenue in preparation to prepare for the subsequent phase. The Souderton Planning Commission recommended that the owner proceed to permitting to complete the phase 1 renovations as described.

Borough Manager Michael Coll discussed the unfortunate flooding and damage to Jesse's Barbeque during Tropical Storm Ida. The flooding came from County Line Road, which is a PennDOT roadway and border street with Hilltown Township. Storm drainage along County Line Road is poorly sized and maintained. Andrew Schlosser discussed the benefit of considering a regional storm water basin possible on the former school site in Hilltown Township. The basin could be beneficial in allowing the downstream facilities in the Borough more time to dissipate storm water and may help with surcharging experienced along the Chestnut Street culvert. The Planning Commission discussed a desire to consider potential improvements with the Towne Gate Commons development plans to aid in the flooding concerns.

The Souderton Planning Commission discussed a request from Studio "B" to be more flexible in the Zoning Ordinance requirements to allow the installation of box signs. A proposed sign was provided for review. The Planning Commission was not supportive of the proposal and felt that the current Zoning Ordinance requirements should be followed.

Danielle Baer reviewed her August 27, 2021 letter to the Souderton Planning Commission defining and illustrating a useable front porch specifically for a townhouse dwelling. She recommended that the front porch should cover one half of the front façade of each townhouse building with a minimum depth of 7 feet, open and fully roofed.

Danielle Baer circulated a memorandum dated August 27, 2021 which summarizes conditional uses and associated conditional use standards currently existing within the Souderton Zoning Ordinance. Danielle Baer noted that there are several conditional uses in the C-1 Commercial District, but there are no specific conditions spelled out for the uses. The Planning Commission discussed conditions associated with drive through service windows. Also the pandemic has forced restaurants to provide take out and drive through service windows to remain open. Some even utilized a drive up pick up service for customers and for the various delivery companies. Drive up windows should have some form of operational study and traffic study requirement. The Planning Commission further discussed splitting some of the existing categories, limiting the category of uses and maybe considering limits on hours of operation and limits on the size of the operation. Some uses may not have to be provided given our membership with the Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan. Some of the uses in the commercial

districts will need to be coordinated with the current Souderton Borough Revitalization and Economic Redevelopment Plan.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Sincerely,

P. Michael Coll
Recording Secretary