

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Monday, July 14, 2014
7:00 pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its first regular meeting of the month on Monday, July 14, 2014 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission:	Rob Crassweller, Chairman	Staff:	Maria Tranguch, Director of Planning & Zoning
	Ralph Wheland		Jeffrey Ressler, Zoning Officer
	Kurt Homan		
	Scott Harkcom		
	Marc McMaster		

Others in attendance included: Heather Bird, Recording Secretary; Steve Watson, Penn State University

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Crassweller called the Monday, July 14, 2014 Ferguson Township Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

III. PENN STATE CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION FOR 1445 WEST COLLEGE AVENUE

Ms. Tranguch stated that Penn State submitted a letter for conditional use for 1445 West College Avenue for a mixed martial arts studio. The reason for the request is because the Terraced Streetscape District regulations state that anything not specifically listed in the ordinance must apply for a conditional use. The closest use listed in the regulations is a health club. Staff included conditions for this use which include keeping the original agreement for conditional use for the golf course maintenance facility and require that as part of the original agreement, part 3a, the landscaping on the east side of the lot be completed. Staff will include in the agreement that if parking issues come up that Penn State would be required to develop the lot adjacent to this property for additional parking. The agreement will also include requiring submission of proper lighting and sign permits and that the facility will only be used for training purposes and not a place of assembly for matches.

Mr. Harkcom confirmed that the conditional use can be extended for a period of 5 years by having a tenant in the building. Ms. Tranguch confirmed that if this maintains the same tenant they could extend for the 5 year period.

Mr. Crassweller questioned the tax status of the property with a tenant that is not a part of the University.

Mr. Homan confirmed that Penn State is fulfilling their conditional use by bringing a tenant into the facility. Mr. Homan asked Mr. Steve Watson what Penn State's long term goal is for the property.

Mr. Steve Watson stated that the extension of the conditional use was added to the agreement to encourage retail use of the property. The reason for the conditional use is because fitness studios are permitted in the district but martial arts studio is not specifically defined. After the 15 year term of the conditional use Penn State would be required to add to the front of the building to bring it closer to the road for the Terraced Streetscape District or if the University wanted to redevelop at that time, the option was available. The long term for the golf course maintenance facility will be to relocate it back on the golf course property. Part of the original conditional use agreement was for the University to construct sidewalk and landscaping on the streetscape contingent on the Township having the specifications for corridor in order to comply. Once the Township has these specifications the University will have approximately one year to comply.

Mr. Crassweller questioned if the University anticipates a problem with parking. Mr. Watson responded that the golf maintenance vehicles will be moved to within the facility or into the rear yard. If the parking becomes a problem, the adjacent lot will be developed to accommodate the needs of the facility.

Mr. Homan confirmed the difference between health club and a mixed martial arts studio. Maria stated that the definition of a health club would include locker rooms and showers.

Mr. Crassweller and Mr. Wheland again questioned the taxing of the property. This information should be looked into to ensure the property is properly taxed.

Mr. McMaster questioned why the University never used the property for golf retail. Mr. Watson was unsure of why this use was never done.

Mr. Harkcom asked if there were going to be any changes in the access and exit of the facility. Mr. Watson stated that at this time there will be no changes. Ms. Tranguch stated that the long term goal would include only one entrance/exit for the property.

The agreement would allow a time frame for the University to install the landscape buffer giving them the time to determine if the adjacent lot will need developed for additional parking.

Mr. Wheland made motion to recommend APPROVAL of the conditional use with the following conditions: installing an east buffer, the Township will have the ability to require additional parking, must comply with lighting and signage regulations and the facility may not be used as a place of assembly for matches. Mr. Homan seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

IV. CHARITY DROPBOXES

Ms. Tranguch stated that these types of boxes have been appearing in parking lots and outside of businesses around town. Occasionally, these dropboxes occupy required parking. Should the Township regulate these?

Mr. McMaster asked what the Township would do if a dumpster were occupying a required parking spot. Mr. Ressler stated that the Township would ask them to move the dumpster. Mr. McMaster asked if we have an ordinance permitting items other than vehicle in a parking spot.

Mr. Wheland stated that if a complaint is received it should be referred to the property owner. If this would be regulated it should only be for the size of the boxes.

Mr. Crassweller questioned if the businesses receive money for these dropboxes.

Mr. McMaster does not think these boxes need to be regulated.

Mr. Homan stated they are good means for items being reused.

Mr. Ressler stated that at this time these boxes do not seem to be a problem to expend the time and resources to regulate.

Mr. Homan stated that businesses should be reminded to mind location.

Mr. Crassweller is concerned with them having donations surrounding the box.

The consensus of the Commission at this time is to allow these dropboxes with no regulations.

V. NEW PLANS

Ms. Tranguch reviewed the new plans currently under review by staff which include Burns subdivision plan changing a lot line to accommodate a garage and Pine Hall Phase 2A revisions.

VI. APPROVAL OF JUNE 23, 2014 MINUTES

Mr. McMaster made a motion to APPROVE the June 23, 2014 meeting minutes. Mr. Homan seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

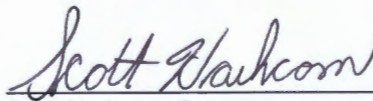
VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Harkcom made a motion to adjourn. Mr. McMaster seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business, the July 14, 2014 regular Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Scott Harkcom", written over a horizontal line.

Scott Harkcom, Secretary
For the Planning Commission