

**NORTH EAST TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Monday, August 1, 2022

7:00 P.M.

Minutes

Call to Order: Chairman Vern Fry called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. In attendance were Board members Char Kerr, Leann Parmenter, Matt Putman, Dennis Kershner and Zoning Administrator Jay Jobczynski.

Minutes of the July 5, 2022 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve was made by Char, seconded by Dennis. Approved – Unanimous

Old Business:

1. Kevin-Maureen Wolf: Tax parcel #37-032-125.0-007.00. Jim Welka, on behalf of Ms. Wolf, presented the Wolf's plan to subdivide two acres, to be part and parcel of the purchaser's property. There were no changes to the preliminary that was approved at the November 1, 2021 meeting.

Final R-1 Motion to approve was made by Matt, seconded by Dennis.
Approved—Unanimous.

2. Ms. Kathleen Johnston: Tax parcel #37-001-062.0-007.00. No-one showed up to discuss this project.

Preliminary A-1

New Business:

1. Richard Stetson: Tax parcel #37-009-014.0-006.00. Mr. Stetson proposed to move the property line to the east, to provide a larger lot to the west. Easements are provided for his drive as well as for the Township water line.

Preliminary R-2 Char motioned for approval, Dennis seconded. Approved-Unanimous

2. North East Campus LLC: Tax parcel #37-005-052.0-001.00. Timothy Polaski from Urban Engineers presented a preliminary plan to subdivide the residential buildings from the remainder of the property. It was suggested that easements should be included for access to this parcel from SR 89 and that this be stated on the plans. As an alternative, a drive could be added off SR 89 into the east parking lot.

Preliminary R-2 Matt motioned for approval with the condition that the access be included as an easement or an access off SR 89 be included on the plan. Dennis seconded.
Approved—Unanimous.

3. Mary Schuster: Tax parcel #37-025-109.0-012.01. Ms. Schuster presented a plan to construct a 2500 SF addition to her existing home located on this parcel off Singer Road. Since this home is in an A-2 district, it is already a conditional use. Jay is assisting her with notifications to the neighbors and the various steps in the process. Since it is a conditional use, the PC only makes a recommendation to the Supervisors.

Conditional Use: A-2 Matt made the motion to recommend approval of the 2500 SF addition to the existing house for a two-family residence. Dennis seconded. Approved—Unanimous.

4. Clean Choice Energy: Tax parcel #37-031-130.0-006.00. Grif Jones, Project Manager, Solar Development for Clean Choice presented a proposal to develop a 25-acre solar farm on a 90-acre parcel south of Crawford Road and west of SR 89. Clean Choice is a small solar energy company. A 5-megawatt facility is being proposed. Legislation is currently pending at the state relating to this type of facility.
 - A handout was provided indicating that the project would take place in late 2023 and early 2024, and last 30 years.
 - The company would provide decommissioning and restoration of the land at the end of the project back to agriculture.
 - The solar farm would be fenced in with a 7'-8- high fence and locked. Green buffers would be provided from any residence it borders, with agreement from neighbors. Neighbors have already been visited.
 - Since this is a conditional use, the Supervisors would have the final say. If they agree, a public hearing would be held. This project is within the renewable energy (wind) overlay zone.
 - No substation is required due to the size of the facility. There will be a transformer in the NE corner of the property with a direct tie into the 3 phase First Energy line.
 - There are no government funds or subsidies in this project.
 - Any power generated by the facility must go back into the local grid. It cannot be sold outside the area. Credits can be sold to local companies and residents, resulting in about a 10% savings on electric bills.
 - A 24-hour phone number will be posted on site. A local contractor will be available and a local contractor will handle mowing, etc.
 - Panels will tilt with the sun as it moves and will be non-glare. There are no concrete footers; the panels are pounded directly into the ground.
 - Clean Choice is leasing the property from Mrs. Kirschner. The property is currently an old apple/pear orchard that has not been maintained.
 - A stormwater management plan is required per DEP regulations.
 - The State has laws regarding decommissioning procedures after the 30 years.
 - Local tax revenues will be increased and no services will be required. Clean Choice pays all the increased property taxes.
 - A bond would be provided to the township for the duration of the project.

Conditional Use: R-1 The PC requested that Mr. Jones get back to Jay with the following information:

- A list of similar solar farms nearby that we can visit and/or discuss with the municipality.
- Information on the community network—how people can buy into the network, etc.
- Copy of a standard contract.
- Other municipal conditional use permits that affect their projects. (Bloomsburg PA will have one completed shortly. There is also a standard template on line.)

The PC discussed certain parameters to include in a conditional use permit:

- A decommission plan
- A stormwater management plan
- Information on glare
- Fencing—to be locked with no public access
- Buffers
- Noise limits
- Bond

Vern made the motion to table approval of the conditional use until further notice and additional research. Char seconded. Approved--Unanimous

Variances:

1. Saiph Development, LLC: Tax parcel #37-022-102.0-002.00. A variance request was submitted for front yard setback, parking, and signage for a proposed Dollar General to be constructed on this parcel on SR 89 north of I-90, north of the Mr. Leamer's tractor repair shop. It was mentioned that Dollar General has a corporate goal to have a store every 7 miles. There was no discussion about the impact of a new Dollar General on the one in the Valley. Access would be off SR 89. The Zoning Hearing Board will have to deal with this request.

Discussions:

1. Matt summarized a meeting that he and Char had with Russ regarding the status of the Short-Term Rental ordinance. Even though we had provided a copy of the ordinance with the changes that Attorney Jeffreys had made, they had not seen that. (Char provided another copy.) Russ was hopeful that a public hearing could be held in September and approval in October. He would try to get the Supervisors to take action soon. Dennis mentioned that the Air B&B organization has changed its policies and mandates "no parties".
2. Scott Samson is not moving forward with his storage building project on the Orton property.
3. Rumors abound about the Dohler project. Some say it is going thru and that properties are sold, which is doubtful since the lots have never been recorded. Another rumor is that the septic issues are not being resolved, so the number of lots may be reduced. Nothing official has been filed with Jay.
4. Based on earlier discussions, it was noted that as part of the Comp Plan process and future zoning updates, we should consider Mother-in-Law suites in the zoning code, as well as adding solar farms to the renewable energy ordinance, or add a new ordinance.

There being no other business, the Char motioned to adjourn.

Secretary:

Charlene M. Kerr

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