

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with the law, was called to order by the Chairman at 7:33 PM, Thursday, December 16, 2021, in the Township Municipal Building Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, located at 1820 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, PA 15241.

PRESENT: Jake Polochak
Robin Weissert
David Sirota
David Wade
Yvonne Piecknick
Adam Benigni, Director of Planning and Community Development
David Mongillo, on behalf of the Township Attorney
Mike Galet, on behalf of the Township Engineer
Matthew Innes, Planning and Zoning Assistant
Callie Munch, Community Development Department Secretary

ABSENT: Jeffrey Krantz, Robert Stevenson

PUBLIC: None

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE INFORMATIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF NOVEMBER 18, 2021.

On motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Ms. Weissert, carried by a voice vote, 5-0, the minutes were approved for filing as written.

OLD BUSINESS

PLC21-0017 – CHICK-FIL-A RESTAURANT – UNIFIED CONDITIONAL USE/PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL

Tyler Prime of Prime & Tuvel explained the purpose of the application being to expand the existing building to reconfigure the interior space to enlarge the kitchen area for a more streamline operation and to add a second drive-thru lane to the exterior of the building. Mr. Prime explained that Chick-Fil-A has been making these same improvements to locations all over the country to expedite orders and keep drive-thru lines to a minimum.

Justin Thornton of Colliers Engineering, who designed the remodel, presented drawings to the planning commission. Mr. Thornton explained that the proposed changes are to make this location both more efficient and safer by adding the second drive-thru lane. He explained that McMann Associates did a queuing study at the location and found that the maximum amount in the queue was 26 cars at one time and by adding the second lane, it would lessen the chances of the intersection being blocked and causing issues at the rest of the site.

Mr. Thornton explained the canopies used by Chick-Fil-A to take customer orders and the safety reasons behind using them. He then explained the building additions being proposed which would be to extend the kitchen to add more equipment and work stations. The second addition would be used as a drive-thru “cockpit” area for team members.

It was explained that adding a second drive-thru lane would cause the parking lot to lose 16 spaces but the parking requirements in the code would still be met at about 43/44 spaces remaining on the Chick-Fil-A property. In addition, there is currently no cross-parking agreement between Chick-Fil-A and Trader Joes.

Mr. Thornton continued his presentation by discussing the request to remove the loading zone and requesting the allowance of performing night deliveries. He explained that most locations are doing “key drop” deliveries where the delivery truck comes when the building is closed so there are no customers on the site and that when he visited the site earlier in the day, the Trader Joes’ delivery driver had issues in the parking lot during business hours, with night time deliveries a loading zone would not be needed. Mr. Thornton explained that he is aware that there is a residential area nearby and there may be concern with noise and lighting but Chick-Fil-A’s protocol includes shutting off the engine and refrigeration unit to the trailer and takes about 1 hour to deliver and that the truck can circulate the building as to not reverse and use the backup alarm.

Tom Will from Jones Lang LaSalle introduced himself as the representative of the owner’s project manager.

Mr. Thornton then went on to explain the proposal to extend the enclosure used by Chick-Fil-A to house their dumpsters and other outdoor tools. Mr. Benigni explained that as long as it does encroach the property line, there is no issue extending the enclosure. Mr. Thornton continued by addressing the outdoor canopies that would encroach the front yard setback but is for the safety of its employees. He explained that studies have been done on the prototype for canopy size and placement. Discussion was held between the applicants to determine whether the plans could be changed. It was decided to pull that modification request for the time being.

Mr. Thornton covered the other items that are existing non-conformities such as not having access to Rt. 19, the delivery times and having a restaurant within 400 feet of another restaurant - the closest being 220 feet away which was an existing non-conformity.

In response to the Trans Associates review letter, Mr. Thornton addressed the comments about the loss of parking spots and the loading zone.

In response to the Gateway Engineers review letter, Mr. Thornton addressed the comments about parking, the front yard setback variance, a line that needs to be removed from the plans, stormwater infiltration testing and updates. Discussion was held with Mr. Galet in regards to Stormwater plans. The manhole cover comment has been addressed. The grading comment will be addressed.

Mr. Wade spoke about his concerns regarding night deliveries as it was a concern for neighbors in the past when the Chick-Fil-A location was first proposed to the site. Further discussion was held in regards to the delivery process and safety precautions as well as a possible parking lot agreement between Chick-Fil-A and Trader Joes.

Discussion was held to decide what the next steps are for the applicant and whether or not to table the application until the January meeting to review the planning commission’s comments and make any necessary changes to the application. The applicants stated they would adjust the canopy to remove the need for the modification. Mr. Wade asked that a detailed request and plan of action for night deliveries be made before it gets to the Board of Commissioners as the public will be present for the meeting and will have questions and concerns to voice at that time.

The applicants left to speak in private and decided to table the application until the January meeting.

MOTION: THAT the Planning Commission recommends tabling PLC-21-0017 – Chick-Fil-A Restaurant – Unified Conditional Use/Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval until the January 20, 2022 meeting.

Motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Ms. Weissert, carried by unanimous voice vote, 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the meeting be adjourned at approximately 8:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Callie Munch
Community Development Department Secretary