

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, April 20, 2023, in the Township Municipal Building Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, located at 1820 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, PA 15241.

PRESENT: Robin Weissert
Jake Polochak
David Wade
Adam McGurk
Adam Benigni, Director of Planning and Community Development
Chris Cahillane, on behalf of the Township Attorney
Matthew Innes, Planning and Zoning Assistant
Callie Munch, Community Development Department Secretary

ABSENT: David Sirota, Yvonne Piecknick, Jeffrey Krantz

PUBLIC: 6 residents as per the attendance log

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE INFORMATIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF MARCH 16th, 2023.

On motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Mr. Polochak, carried by a voice vote, 4 Yes, 0 No, 3 Absent, 0 Abstain, the minutes were approved for filing.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

PLC23-0002 – Boyce Road Residences – Planned Development – Final Approval

Rob Ardolino, 2298 Sidgfield Lane, thanked the Planning Commission for their consideration and is excited to begin construction.

Mr. Benigni summarized the project and the planning process thus far.

Mr. Wade asked if Mr. Ardolino had reviewed the engineer comments to which he had replied that he had and that they would be addressed.

Mr. McGurk inquired further regarding the future occupancy of the units, to which Mr. Ardolino explained it would be owner occupied.

MOTION: THAT the Planning Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners grant approval for PLC23-0002 – Boyce Road Residences – Planned Development – Final Approval subject to satisfactory resolution of the outstanding comments.

Motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Mr. Polochak, carried by unanimous voice vote, 4 Yes, 0 No, 3 Absent. Motion Carries.

PLC23-0003 – Vibe Salon – Unified Conditional Use/Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval

Mr. Benigni stated that the applicant had requested to table the application until the May meeting and that the staff recommendation is to accept the tabling request.

MOTION: THAT the Planning Commission recommends the applicant's request to table the application until the May meeting.

Motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Mr. Polochak, carried by unanimous voice vote, 4 Yes, 0 No, 3 Absent. Motion Carries.

PLC23-1303 – Zoning Text Amendment to Chapter 130 of the Township Code entitled “Zoning” to add standards and criteria for mini warehouses in the RM District – Restricted Light Industrial District

Kevin McKeegan, lawyer at Meyer, Unkovic & Scott introduced himself to the Planning Commission and thanked them for their consideration. He continued by explaining that he represents Fairfield Southpointe LP who owns 1351 McLaughlin Run Road, located in the RM zoning district. The site is the location of a former indoor athletic facility but has been vacant for some time. In 2021, Fairfield Southpointe LP received a Conditional Use approval from the township to convert the building to a mini warehouse, a climate-controlled self-storage facility. Due to several circumstances, the project as initially conceived cannot move forward as planned and would like to use the site as intended but on a larger scale to be consistent with modern self-storage practices.

Mr. McKeegan stated that they had originally considered asking the Zoning Hearing Board for a number of variances but after speaking to the Township, it was decided to inquire about amending the zoning text to make it consistent with modern self-storage practices.

Mr. McKeegan then presented the history of the self-storage industry as well as examples of the layout and amenities of current facilities.

Mr. McKeegan stated that a draft amendment has been prepared and provided to the Planning Commission. He continued by explaining the process of approving a text amendment.

The draft amendment would reduce the required site size from 5 acres to 1 acre, increase the maximum height from 15 feet to 45 feet, reduce site parking from 3 spaces to 1 space and reduce the need for loading berths. The current text prohibits sales at the property; however, the Pennsylvania Self Storage Act allows for the auctions for unpaid rentals. Finally, the amendment asks for relief of the requirement for on-site security by way of video surveillance and electronic means.

Discussion was held regarding the RM Zoning District, conditional use process, parking requirements and loading berths.

Mr. Wade inquired how many units the building would hold, Mr. McKeegan replied that it could potentially house 450-500 units and that studies have shown that storage facilities see only about 7 visitors a day.

Mr. Benigni explained that the maximum height of buildings in the RM Zoning District is 45 feet tall, apart from storage units, this would make it universal across all uses in the district.

Discussion was held about the next steps of the text amendment process.

MOTION: THAT the Planning Commission forward an ordinance amending Chapter 130 - Zoning to the Board of Commissioners for a recommendation for approval forwarded to the Allegheny County Economic Development Department along with the scheduling of a public hearing.

Motion by Mr. Wade, seconded by Mr. McGurk, carried by unanimous voice vote, 4 Yes, 0 No, 3 Absent. Motion Carries.

PLC23-1302 – Zoning Text Amendment to Chapter 130 of the Township Code entitled “Zoning” to add standards and criteria for short term rentals

Mr. Benigni explained that the current residential zoning code does not mention short-term rentals or transient lodging, but the township has been following the standards of other municipalities and enforcing short-term rentals of less than 30 days. He continued by referencing the 4 sections of code to be amended, which include amending the definition of “dwelling” and “family” and adding definitions of “short term rental” and “tenant”. Mr. Benigni stated that the staff is proposing to define anything less than a 90 day stay a “short term rental” and therefore not permitted in a residential zoning district.

MOTION: THAT the Planning Commission forward an ordinance amending Chapter 130 - Zoning to the Board of Commissioners for a recommendation for approval forwarded to the Allegheny County Economic Development Department along with the scheduling of a public hearing.

Motion by Mr. Polochak, seconded by Mr. Wade, carried by unanimous voice vote, 4 Yes, 0 No, 3 Absent. Motion Carries.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Dr. Kevin Smith approached the Planning Commission to ask why his application was denied participation in the annual Community Day. He explained what is involved in his screenings and the process of his practice.

Mr. Benigni explained to Dr. Smith that his question should be directed to the Parks and Recreation Department as the Planning Commission does not have a say in the Community Day event. He then offered his information to help him reach out to the proper contacts to voice his concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the meeting be adjourned at approximately 8:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Callie Munch

Community Development Department Secretary