

November 9, 2022
Lickdale, PA

On November 9, 2022, Union Township Board of Supervisors held a Public Hearing regarding a Petition to rezone land in Union Township.

Atty. Bametzreider called the Hearing to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present

Dennis Firestone, Chairman

Kerry McCrary, Vice Chairman

Gary Longenecker, Secretary

Brent McFeaters, Township Manager

Elizabeth Krause, Zoning Officer

Steve Sherk, Township Engineer

Paul Bametzreider, Township Solicitor

Gene Mease, Petitioner,

Nelson Ebersole, Suburban Realty

Mickey Thompson, Director of Land Development - Burkentine Builders

Aaron M. Navarro, Principal/Partner, Landworks Civil Design, LLC

Jarred Neal – Traffic Planning & Design

Twenty-nine (29) Citizens

Atty. Bametzreider announced that this Public Hearing has been advertised twice on October 24, 2022, and October 31, 2022, in accordance with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) and notice has been given to the landowners who are in the immediate vicinity of the property. Additionally, this matter has been considered by the Township Planning Commission and it has also been sent to the County Planning Department, but we have received no response from County Planning, and they have taken no position on the rezoning. Atty. Bametzreider stated that the MPC requires that the Township hold a Public Hearing before any kind of zoning or map change occurs and this Hearing is being held because the Petitioner, Gene Mease is requesting that 3219 State Route 72 be rezoned from Agricultural Zoning to an Industrial Use Zoning. Atty. Bametzreider turned the matter over to Atty. Arnold and asked him to explain to the Board exactly what his client would like to do.

Attorney Jeffrey Arnold of Christianson/Meyer Law Firm presented a sketch plan of the proposal and explained that Gene Mease owns two tracts of land with the first one being 11 Wolfe Drive which is already zoned Industrial, and he would like to have the adjoining tract at 3219 State Route 72 zoned the same to facilitate a warehouse that would encompass both properties and be similar to the surrounding neighborhood. He pointed out that Swift recently purchased two residential properties directly across the street from Wolfe Lane that were previously zoned Agricultural and were rezoned to Industrial earlier in the year and that directly south of this property is Amp (TE Connectivity), and to the west of this property is the Interstate.

Aaron Navarro of Landworks Civil Design, LLC, on behalf of Burkentine Builders presented the concept of the 250,000 sq. ft. industrial use proposed building which would be constructed to the north side of the property with full access to State Route 72 which would be

the main access for the trucks and a secondary access at Wolfe Lane which would be utilized for access to employee parking. explaining that they separate the employee parking from the trucks because they don't like them intermingling. In addition to the development, two stormwater facilities would be located on the southern portions, and any improvements to Route 72 as part of the development will be proposed and meet the Township's requirements. He said the plan is self-explanatory with truck storage parking areas with docks on one side of the building.

Jarred Neal of Traffic Planning & Design said he was attending the meeting to explain what can be expected traffic wise and said a 250,000 sq. ft. building with two points of access with one for trucks and the other for employee vehicles accessing at Wolfe Lane with a formal traffic study being required by Penn Dot to determine what will be required to make sure the access is safe and convenient. To get a general sense of trip generation of what a facility of this size generates, there is a standard that is used with the Institute of Transportation Engineers who put together a publication to get a general feel for trip generation. What they can anticipate of a building at this size, they will look at the a.m. and p.m. peak hours to determine what the additional traffic will be. He said they anticipate that the peak hours will generate 20 to 30 additional vehicles. During the peak hours there may be 5 to 8 trucks entering the facility in that one-hour period which is about what would be seen in the peak p.m. hours as well. In the course of the day, you will see additional vehicles but normally the traffic to a warehouse is spread out. They will also look at site distance to make sure the site distance is met for the location of driveways which will all be reviewed by the Township as well as Penn Dot 's engineers, and will also have to file a scoping application, traffic study, and formal plan to obtain their permits.

Atty. Mickey Thompson, Director of Land Development with Burkentine Builders provided a brief history of their company and said they are very excited about this project and will start working on all the details as soon as they receive zoning approval and said he will be happy to answer anyone's questions. Atty. Arnold that the reason for this Hearing is to add the five-acre parcel to the Industrial Zoning in order to move along with the project.

Atty. Bametzreider opened the floor for public comments or questions.

Marty Finlan of 3204 State Route 72 pointed out that the proposed driveway will come out directly across the street from his house and asked when the trucks will be going in in out. Atty. Thompson said that most of the traffic coming in will be on a certain schedule and that there will be at least two shifts operating at the location where trucks will be coming in from 7 in the morning until 7 at night but they will do whatever they can to make it as safe and less noxious as possible. He said they would be willing to speak with neighbors and explore options to make the project as tolerable as possible for them. Mr. Finlan said the main issue for him is the traffic because of the entrance being right across from his house and he will be getting the brunt of the noise. He said he understands the parcel next to the State Police Barracks is already zoned Industrial and he can't do anything about that, but as it currently stands, the existing lot that is already zoned Industrial is smaller and is limited as to what can be put there, but if this other parcel is rezoned, the lot that is created will be much larger and any entity going in might end up operating three shifts. He said he will be getting the brunt of the lights from the property as well as the noise and the traffic, but his main concern is the trucks going in and out.

Atty. Thompson asked if Mr. Finlan would be willing to explore the developer putting extra buffering in front of his house, but Mr. Finlan said it would take away from the looks of his house and Atty. Thompson said they will look at the possibility of moving the entrance-way to the property. A discussion was held regarding a different access location that could still meet Penn Dot's requirements, but Mr. Finlan said he will still get the brunt of the noise and the traffic.

Kerry McCrary said he agrees that regardless of where the driveway is located this project will create more traffic coming through the Township. Kerry noted that the sketch plan shows that there will be 35 docks at this warehouse, and Atty. Thompson agreed but said that this is a "conceptual" plan and the only other way you could put more trailers on the property would be if the docks were put on the other side of the building, but at this time they can't predict that.

Mr. Finlan said that if this property is rezoned, it will allow for a larger warehouse than what would be allowed on just the Wolfe Lane Parcel that is currently zoned industrial and will create a lot more traffic.

Dennis Firestone asked what will happen to this project if the parcel at 3219 State Route 72 does not get rezoned to Industrial. Atty. Thompson said it would scrap the project and said that they are already limited to the size of the building and if the additional lot would not be added, the project would not be feasible. Atty. Thompson did point out that the use of the warehouse would not generate near the traffic that a commercial use business such as Dunkin Donuts would generate, even though a warehouse is a much larger building.

Tim Shuey of 30 Bohns Lane said that his property is next to 3219 and by putting a warehouse there, it will make his property worthless as a residential property and asked if the Board would be willing to rezone his nine-acre parcel and would the developer be interested in purchasing his property which would then be at the end of an Industrial Park. Marty Finlan asked how this will affect the value of all the neighboring properties.

Alex Seaman, of 3343 State Route 72 said there is already a problem of truck parking in the Township and asked how the truck parking will be handled for this project. He said warehouses do not allow trucks to stay parked at their facility and that new warehouses should be required to have a dedicated parking area in their plan, to eliminate the problem of trucks parking along the road.

Nathan Dove of 3299 State Route 72 asked if the Township will have to increase the time contracted for the Cleona Borough Police in order to control the parking and traffic issues that could be generated by this proposed warehouse which in turn could be an extra cost to the taxpayers. He added that the road surface is already terrible on State Route 72 especially at the corner of Fisher Avenue and SR 72, and by adding more trucks traffic on this road is a major concern.

Bill Carroll of 141 Huckleberry Road agreed about the truck parking issue, and said that additional land should be taken off Bordnersville Road and be turned into a bigger parking lot for trucks. Atty. Thompson noted that there are about 90 trailer spaces shown on their plan so they should be able to easily contain the trucks coming to this site. A discussion was held about dedicating areas for the trucks to go upon arrival and about how things work if the trucks are out of hours. He noted that it will not be a truck stop having trucks coming in and parking to stay overnight.

Mr. Seaman asked where these trucks will be able to park because everything is packed, and Gary Longenecker commented that an area for additional truck parking is something already being discussed by the Board.

Atty. Bametzreider asked the Board if they had any additional comments.

Kerry McCrary said there definitely is a problem with traffic in this area, especially truck traffic, and the Fisher Avenue & Lickdale Intersection has been an ongoing issue with Penn Dot for many years. Kerry said he doesn't have a full grasp of the project at this point.

Brent McFeaters, Township Manager said his only concern is that Wolfe Lane be upgraded to the Township's specifications because of the traffic that will be generated by the employees traveling to and from the warehouse.

Steve said since the Township does not have an impact fee ordinance in place, if the Board is considering rezoning this piece of property, a financial contribution to improvement of the Fisher Avenue and I-81 on ramps should be a condition of the approval. He pointed out that there are already grant applications that have been submitted, but more funding will be required to make the necessary improvements at these intersections.

Atty. Bametzreider said the Hearing is ready to be adjourned but informed everyone that the proposed Ordinance for rezoning this property is on the agenda for the Board of Supervisors meeting that will be held immediately after the Sewer meeting, but he does not know if the Board will take any action at their meeting.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Krause
Recording Secretary