

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2015**

A meeting of the East Norriton Township Planning Commission was held at the East Norriton Township Building, 2501 Stanbridge Street in East Norriton, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, July 15, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Attending were Planning Commission members Robert Schottmiller, Jeffrey Moller, Keith Tornetta, John Kolb, Judy Belkowski, Kevin McDevitt, George Kennedy and Harold Smith. Zoning Officer, Bryan Bortnichak was also in attendance.

1. Approve Minutes of the June 17, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting:

Chairman Schottmiller called for a motion to approve the Planning Commission's June 17, 2015 meeting. Mr. McDevitt made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was second by Mr. Moller and the motion and the motion passed 8-0.

2. ZHB Case #2015-9, 923 Independence Road:

Present: Everett Lenters, Owner

Mr. Lenters explained his request noting that there is an existing deck and covered porch on the rear of his home and that he would like to expand it along the length of the house and to extend it 4' further into the rear yard of his property. Mr. Tornetta noted that the existing deck already encroaches into the rear yard.

In response to a question from Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Bortnichak noted that notice of the public hearing has not been mailed to the neighboring property owners. Mr. Schottmiller suggested that Mr. Lenters obtain a letter of support acknowledging the variance request from his most affected rear neighbor.

Mr. McDevitt made a motion to recommend that the Zoning Hearing Board approve of the variance request. The motion was second by Mr. Kennedy and the motion passed 8-0.

3. ZHB Case #2015-11, 2700 Dekalb Pike:

*Present: Derrick Anderson, Real Estate Director, Savers
Karen Wallace, Engineer for Savers
Todd Morano, Construction Manger, Savers*

Mr. Anderson explained that Savers is a for profit thrift store that is seeking to grow into the Philadelphia area and that they are currently expanding at a rate of about 25 to 30

stores per year. Mr. Anderson continued noting Savers partners with charities such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters and that they will make use of about 25,000 square feet of tenant space of which 5,500 will be dedicated to the sorting of donated materials. The hours of operation of both the retail component and the donation component of their operation will be from 9:00am to 9:00pm from Monday through Saturday and that they are open on Sundays from 10:00am to 7:00pm. Mr. Anderson explained that the donation component of their use will consist of a drive through canopy that is staffed and where the public can pull up in a vehicle and have Savers staff members remove donations from the vehicle.

In response to a question from Mr. Kennedy about donations being made after hours Mr. Anderson noted that they will have security cameras and signs in place and that they do prosecute those who leave donations on the property. As an incentive and to encourage the donation of goods during business hours Savers provides tax receipts.

Mr. Schottmiller asked if cash is provided in exchange for donations. Mr. Anderson replied that no cash is offered, only a tax receipt.

Mr. Moller asked how Savers decided on East Norriton Township. Mr. Anderson explained that they performed a market study and that they look for areas on the edge of a retail market near major retailers. Mr. Anderson explained that their annual gross revenue is about \$3,000,000 per store and that they sell furniture, bikes, household goods and clothing. Mr. Anderson noted described the stores as a well-planned retail store and noted that Savers does not operate similar to the Salvation Army or St. Vincent DePaul stores that Planning Commission members may be familiar with.

Mr. Tornetta asked what materials are not accepted. Mr. Anderson explained that old televisions, hazardous materials, lawn mowers and large appliances are not accepted and noted that Savers discards up to 50% of the donations they receive.

Mr. Blue reviewed the site plan and pointed out the location of the drop off area and the receiving canopy. Ms. Wallace reviewed the circulation path through the drop off area and noted that the donation use is not defined in the zoning code and reviewed the three forms of zoning relief being sought for the donation use.

Ms. Belkowski asked about employee parking. Mr. Blue noted that there are or will be 834 parking spaces on the property and that employees will park to the rear or side of the store.

Mr. McDevitt asked about the details of the canopy. Ms. Wallace noted that it would provide 11' of clearance under the canopy and that it would be four to six feet tall. Ms. Wallace also noted that they will add wall packs for lighting and that there will be lighting under the canopy.

Mr. Jay Tornetta asked if there is any drop off of donations at the rear of the building. Mr. Anderson responded that there would be. Mr. Jay Tornetta expressed concern about

the donation drop off on the north side of the building and noted that he would consider closing the vehicle access between Northtowne Plaza and this shopping center. Mr. Tornetta asked that fencing and buffering be installed between the centers along the common property line.

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to recommend that the Zoning Hearing Board approve of the request for a special exception from Section 205-68.J of the Zoning Ordinance. The motion was second by Mr. Moller and the motion passed 8-0.

4. ZHB Case #2015-10, 2700 Dekalb Pike:

*Present: Ross Weiss, Attorney for Broad Street Realty
Aras Holden, Broad Street Realty
Michael Jacoby, Broad Street Realty
Robert Blue, Broad Street Realty's Engineer*

Mr. Weiss reviewed the existing pylon sign and the proposed sign noting that the proposed sign is under 25' in height. Mr. Weiss continued noting that the owner of the shopping center is making significant improvements and investments in the center before reviewing the three interpretations and/or variances that they are seeking for the proposed freestanding sign that include 1) A determination that the names on the signs are advertising or a variance to allow advertising on the sign; 2) A determination that the sign complies with the required sign area or a variance to allow the size of the sign; and 3) A determination that the proposed location of the sign is a continuation of a nonconformity or a variance to permit the proposed sign location.

Mr. Weiss noted that he believes that the relief needed is de minimis. A discussion ensued regarding the way in which a pylon sign is measured.

Mr. Kolb asked how the proposed sign is non-conforming given the fact that it is a new sign in a new location with new footings and asked if the Applicant would agree to relocate the sign at their expense if needed as a result of the widening of State Route 202. Mr. Weiss agreed that the sign would be relocated at his client's expense if needed.

Mr. Kolb asked how close the new sign will be to the edge of the driveway. Mr. Blue responded that it would be four to five feet away from the driveway. Mr. Kolb asked if it would be landscaped and spoke to a concern with the proximity of the sign to the parking spaces and vehicles striking the sign. Mr. Blue suggested bollards or restriping if the parking spaces are oversized. Mr. Tornetta suggested losing one parking space to afford protection to the sign from vehicular impacts.

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to recommend that the Zoning Hearing Board grant a variance from Section 205-117 of the Zoning Code to permit advertising on the sign. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kolb and passed 8-0.

Mr. Moller made a motion to recommend that the Zoning Hearing Board grant a variance from Section 205-117.C of the Zoning Code to permit the sign to be larger than 150 square feet. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kennedy and passed 7-1 with Mr. Schottmiller opposed.

Mr. Moller made a motion to recommend that the Zoning Hearing Board grant a variance from Section 205-117.D of the Zoning Code to permit the sign to be located closer to the right of way line and the driveway than required with a condition that the one parking space nearest the sign be eliminated unless it can be demonstrated that the parking space is required pursuant to the property owner's lease with Applebee's Restaurant . The motion was seconded by Mr. Kennedy and passed 8-0.

5. **Other Business:**

Mr. Moller noted that the owners of both the Dekalb Plaza and Northtowne shopping centers were present in the audience and spoke to the synergy that may arise from future uses in the shopping centers and the nearby apartment complexes.

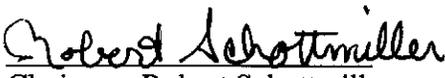
Mr. Kennedy requested an update on the sidewalk grant proposal. Mr. Bortnichak noted that he would submit a request for \$7,500 as part of his 2016 budget proposal to be earmarked for grant application writing.

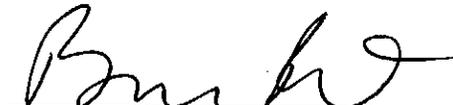
Planning Commission members reviewed the Land Development and Construction update that was provided by Mr. Bortnichak.

6. **Adjournment:**

Mr. McDevitt made a motion to adjourn. The motion was second by Mr. Kennedy and passed 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,


Chairman Robert Schottmiller
East Norriton Township Planning Commission


Bryan Bortnichak
Zoning Officer