

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 2021**

*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, June 16, 2021. Attending were Planning Commission members John Kolb (Chairman), Jeff Moller (Vice Chairman), Ken Grimes (Secretary), Kandy Heckman, John Barrett, and Keith Tonetta were present. Ed Cavanaugh was absent. Jim Sullivan (township engineer) was also absent but Mr. Alan Booz was present for the township.*

1. Call Meeting to Order at 7:00pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance was completed.
3. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for May 19, 2021:
  - A motion was made by Mr. Tornetta to approve the minutes from the May 19, 2021 meeting to be edited to remove Mrs. Heckman from the votes. She was absent from the May meeting. Mr. Moller seconded and the motion with the amendment which passed 6-0 in favor.
4. Review ZHB Application #2021-07 located at 2722 Dekalb Pike located in the SC Shopping Center  
Zoning District:
  - Mr. Mike Malloy
  - Existing Taco Bell will be demolished, improve the site and build a new Taco Bell in its place.
  - Applicant looking for approval of zoning exemptions: particularly in parking and set-back.
  - Parking will be reduced by 12 spaces as they feel they do not need it
  - Also, location will be closer to Dekalb Pike as PennDOT widens the roadway
  - Additional drive through lane will be created due to construction
  - Variance on set-back of 27 feet
  - The building will remain in line with the existing Starbucks next door
  - Access to site located behind the building will remain as it is the same access as Starbucks which prevents the building from being shifted back
  - Parking reduction is the result of the additional drive through lane
  - Traffic will flow in the same way as it currently does
  - Landscaping designed to meet the ordinance. Anything removed will be replacedQuestions from ENPC:
  - Mr. Moller asked if the instore seating will be reduced?
    - There will be a reduction to 52 seats in doors
    - Drive through is more valuable as the parking has never been used to capacity
  - Mr. Moller asked how long it will take to demolish and rebuild?
    - Usually 110-120 days from building permit
    - Relocation of transformer
    - Maximum 4 months
    - Stormwater and basic utilities will remain

- Mr. Moller asked if the new store will be modeled after the newest Taco Bell design?
  - As a franchisee, they are required to maintain and update their buildings over time
  - Building design will be good for 20-25 years
  - This will be the latest building design
- Mr. Grimes asked about traffic flow asking how people coming off Dekalb will enter the drive through? Will the turn be
  - Customers will turn right, or left off Dekalb, turn right into access drive and u-turn to enter drive through lane
  - Addition of second lane and movement of building forward will provide sufficient turning radius to enter the drive through lane
- Mr. Grimes asked if there will be disruption to Starbucks during construction.
  - There will not be any disruption
- Mr. Barrett asked about peak time customer usage backing up into the shared driveway.
  - The double drive will allow more cars to que-up for service
- Mr. Kolb asked what is the average time to move through the drive through
  - 2-3 minutes for the delivery of the food
- Mr. Kolb stated that Chick-Fil-A was building a bigger kitchen to move customers through faster in addition to the second drive through lane
  - The kitchen is not going to be bigger, but the preparation of the food is different as Taco Bell has more prepared foods.
- Mr. Kolb asked about the current set back?
  - 36 feet, which is already not compliant
- Mr. Kolb asked Mr. Booz if they are already out of compliance at 36 feet, do they need a variance for 27? Extending a non-conformity.
- Mr. Grimes asked if the parking in the front (near Dekalb) would be eliminated?
  - Not eliminated in front, but changed to angled parking
- Mr. Barrett asked where the transformer is currently?
  - It is located where the entrance is.
  - It is being moved but not far
- Mr. Moller asked if they could get a firetruck in to fight grease fires?
  - Same layout and circulation
  - Coincidentally, a grease fire occurred recently with no issues.
- Mr. Kolb asked about required parking spaces based on just this lease lot area or is there parking for the whole center?
  - Just the lease lot area

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Mr. Kolb made a motion to recommend initially only to the zoning hearing board for review on approval. Mrs. Heckman seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

5. Review ZHB Application #2021-08 located at 2714 located in the SC Shopping Center Zoning District:

- Mr. Stein for the applicant.
- Former Aldi Supermarket of 16,000 square feet
- Proposal is to use 10,000 for Celebre Day Care. The balance will be used for future retail client

- The daycare would be 144 students with 25 staff
- Additional play area associated with the daycare located to the west of the building will be 6,000+ square feet
- Zoning application for two proposals
- Bob Blue, PE speaking for the two proposals
- Described the main drive aisle off Dekalb Pike
- Hours are 6:30 am to 6:30 pm 5 days per week, no weekends
- Alternative #1
  - Dedicated drop off parking spaces in the front of the building
  - The caregivers walk the children across the crosswalk
- Alternative #2
  - Drop off along the front of property in fire lane.
  - Caregiver would drop off after looping around to face Dekalb
- Parking has 850 spaces
- Aldi had 84 dedicated spaces
- The required parking for the day care will be 50
- The retail area will need 33 spaces so there is sufficient parking
- Applicant showed rendering of building
- Another location is under construction in Montgomeryville

#### ENPC Questions:

- Mr. Moller asked which of the alternatives the applicant prefers and why
  - Alternative #1 which utilizes the existing parking spaces
  - Minimizes the effect to the shopping center
  - Also maintains the existing fire lane and parking lanes
  -
- Mr. Moller asked why did they think ENPC would like Alternative #2 better?
  - Mainly because there is some language about contiguous parking and drop off
  - Would require modifying curb lines and fire lanes, shrinking the space width on the drive lane.
- Mr. Tornetta asked if the day care uses multi-tenant buildings or are they usually stand alone?
  - They have seen it both ways. Celebre prefers to have end cap building where they can put in a play area.
- Mr. Grimes asked about the outdoor play area will look like
  - The tenant will build to their particular specs
  - Synthetic turf, impervious play areas
  - 65 square feet per child using the play area, less for toddlers
- Mr. Kolb asked if they are proposing having caregivers walk their children across a 2-lane commercial drive? Will there be signage, crossing guard?
  - A speed bump or speed table between cross walks would be agreeable
  - 7am and 9am is peak drop off 4-6 pm is peak pick-up time
- Mr. Kolb asked if they landlord would control what type of retail would move into the day care building
  - Yes, they would

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Mr. Kolb made a motion to recommend Option #1 with consideration of a speed table as necessary.  
Mr. Tornetta seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

6. **Presentation by Citizen** – Valley Forge Medical Center Open Space Opportunity

- Presented by Jason Lubar residing on North Trooper Road
- Heard that Medical Center is being sold and is concerned that it will be developed
- Handed out a 7-page proposal which included information from 2005 EN Open Space Preservation Plan and 2019 Comprehensive Plan which outlined recommendations that included a Greenway Trail in this area
- The greenway trail would link Ballard-Wolfe Park with the Norristown High School.
- Last remaining pine forests in this area of Montgomery County with Stoney Creek running through the area in mostly its natural state
- This is a unique opportunity to preserve around 42 acres of open space for East Norriton Residents that had previously been identified in the Township's Open Space Plan and recent Comprehensive plan and high-priority ecological assets.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

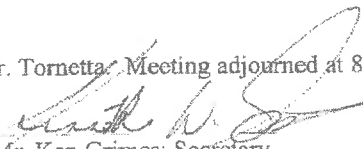
- ENPC supports this initiative to be presented to the Supervisors
- Mr. Moller recommends Mr. Lubar go talk to the County Planning Commission as well to help bolster the request to remind the township of their Open Space statements and commitments in the past
- Mr. Moller also suggested getting neighbors involved as 'grass roots' support for the project

7. **Next Planning Commission Meetings Scheduled for Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 7:00pm.**

8. **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by Mrs. Heckman and seconded by Mr. Tornetta. Meeting adjourned at 8:12PM

  
Mr. John Kolb; Chairman

  
Mr. Ken Grimes; Secretary