

May 13, 2019 Workshop

A scheduled workshop meeting of the Milford Township Planning Board was called to order at 7 P.M. by Chairman Mr. James SeChrist, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Also present were other Members Robert DiLorenzo, Kevin Nearing, Alternate Member Larry Kotar, Zoning Officer Shawn Bolles, and Assistant Secretary Shahana Shamim.

Mixed Usage Amendment Request/20 Acres Parcels or Greater:

Mr. SeChrist handed the PowerPoint to the Members and the audience, and said that he had divided the parcels of the DD Zone that were at least 20 acres or more by 30,000, 3,000, and 3,700 square feet to show how many apartments could be built in those parcels. His PowerPoint also showed the max 100 apartments that could be built with the proposed Ordinance of Section 409. The total apartment comparison slide showed that the totals of 670, 5,518, and 6,805 apartments could be built with the criteria of 30,000, 3,700, and 3,000 square feet per dwelling unit. He also showed that when the number of dwelling units is capped at 100 dwelling units per 20 acres, much fewer units could be built. Mr. SeChrist also showed the number of apartments that could be built with the square-foot requirements of 25,000, 20,000, 15,000, 10,000, and 5,000 per dwelling unit. He added that 2,100 extra people would be added to the DD Zone when an average of 3.5 people are assumed per family, and each 20-acre parcel is capped with 100 dwelling units. Phyllis Simpson asked how they came up with the number 3.5 for a family, and Mr. SeChrist replied that it was just an assumption. The power-point also showed the number of parking spaces that would be needed for all of the above criteria. Two parking spaces for each dwelling unit was assumed.

Rachel Hendricks asked Members to explain why the Proposed Amendment to Section 409 of Zoning Ordinance was not a spot zoning. She explained that only four of the properties in the list of 20-acre land were not nature preserved or under Act 319. Two of those four properties were not owned and Econo-Pak did not qualify as the mixed use. She also pointed out that in the Comprehensive Plan spot zoning is defined as an Ordinance that is only for the benefit of a specific developer instead of for the benefit of the general public. Ms. Hendricks also informed that in 1996 a neighboring property owner challenged the Township for rezoning 221 acres of property from agricultural to industrial. The court overturned the rezoning because of the Planning Commission's failure to review. Other complaints against that Township were failure to send the rezoning proposal to the County for the review and inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Rachel added that not following the Comprehensive Plan, and changing ordinances that do not care for public safety and goals can be signs of spot zoning. Shawn said that the described court case involves changing the zoning, whereas zoning is not being changed in the current proposed Amendment for the mixed use. The Members added that the properties that qualify for the proposed amendment had been in the DD Zone since the seventies.

Mr. Matthew Contreras expressed his concern about the density increase associated with the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Mary Sorrel from Milford Township inquired about the area that was being studied for the Sewage Extension. Rachel Hendricks told her that the map of the Sewage study was left by the HRG Engineers. Ms. Evelyn DiLorenzo said that enough recreational facilities needed to be added in the Township in case the Amendment for density increase got approval. Ms. Phyllis Simpson said that building apartments in the Santos' property would stop commercial developments, such as Amazon factory and junkyards. Ms. Rachel Hendricks questioned how likely it was for the Amazon to be in the Santos' property, as it was quite far from the 84 exit. Shawn replied that it was quite possible, as warehouse is permitted according to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Weber from Milford Borough inquired about building businesses that would create jobs. Shawn replied that no healthcare facilities approached this property. Mr. SeChrist asked Penney Luhrs, the Vice-Chair of the Board of Supervisors, to express her opinions. Penney said that she would rather like to see sidewalks than a Target in the Town. She added that the community Milford Landing exists, but it does not feel like it is even there.

Mr. SeChrist reviewed the comments of Pike County Planning about the proposed Amendment of the Zoning Ordinance. The Members and the Zoning Officer took their own responsibilities taking actions of these comments. Mr. SeChrist also showed some definitions that needed to be added to the existing Zoning Ordinance. He made some additions to the definitions of apartment building in page 5 of the Zoning Ordinance. He added the definitions mixed usage to page 8 of the Zoning Ordinance. He changed the width of the sidewalk from three to four feet. He added a sentence in the Ordinance# 414.4 for specifying the percentage of lot coverage for 20-acre parcels. Mr. DiLorenzo said that he would bring PennDOT specifications for safety in the next Planning Board meeting. He also proposed studying emergency management system for the proposed Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. He added that density increase in town would increase the school tax. Phyllis Simpson said that according to Dave Chant, the Realtor, these apartments would be mostly occupied by seniors whose children leave, and hence the school may not be burdened with more children.

Mr. Fred Weber from Milford Borough inquired if it was ever thought of using the square footage requirement of 15,000 per dwelling unit (this would allow putting in 22 condos). Ms. Penney Luhrs, the Vice-Chair of the Board of Supervisors, said that the developer of the Legend Properties initially had offered 2,500 square feet per dwelling unit, and the Supervisors had been working on raising this square-footage requirement since then. Ms. Rachel Hendricks commented that the sewage Engineers were asked if the Extension of sewage would require the Zoning Ordinance to be changed for a higher density, and the Engineers' reply was a 'no'. Shawn replied that a Developer can always ask for a density increase whenever a central Municipal sewage is available.

There being no further businesses to come before the Members, they voted to adjourn.
The adjournment was at 8:42 P.M.