

Call to Order:

It is 6:30 p.m. on March 21, 2024 and this is the regular meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Board. Notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act and a copy was posted on the 2nd floor bulletin board in Town Hall and on the Township's website.

“Be advised, no new item of business will be started after 10:30 p.m., and the meeting shall terminate no later than 11:00 p.m.”

The Board saluted the flag.

Roll call: Present; Mr. Brown, Mr. Giacomucci, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Young, Mr. Marino. Also present; Mr. Rocco, solicitor, Mr. Kernan, Engineer, Mr. Dochney, Planner, Ms. Gallagher, secretary, Ms. Gabbianelli, transcriber. Excused; Mr. Helsel, Mr. Maure.

Memorialization of Resolution:

1. PB-15-24 - #1828A – Philadelphia Suburban Development Corp. – Site Plan Waiver Approved

Motion to approve by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Marino. Roll Call; Ayes- Mr. Brown, Mr. Marino, Mr. Giacomucci, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Wolfe, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Young. Nays- Zero. Motion passed.

Oaths:

Mr. Solicitor shall swear in the Board Professionals.

Mr. Rocco swears in Doug White, Chis Dochney, and Tim Kernan.

Public Portion:

1. #1723A - Morgan Development Group LLC – Final Major Subdivision Amendment

The applicant received prior approvals for preliminary and final major subdivision (PB-39-2019 & PB-37-22). The applicant is seeking an amended final subdivision approval for the reconfiguration of water main connections and the elimination of the pump station; along with any other variances or waivers deemed necessary by the Board. This property is located on Morgan Road, also known as Block 2901, Lots 3 & 3.01 in the RG-MR Zoning District.

1. #1723A - Morgan Development Group LLC – Final Major Subdivision Amendment (cont.)

Mr. Rocco swears in Peter Flannery. He states the applicant is back in front of the Board for the removal of the pump station and the reconfiguration of the water main lines. There are no new variances and no new design waivers. The single-family dwellings and the configurations of the streets stay the same.

Mr. Rocco swears in Katie Daroshefski, Professional Engineer and Ken Schatz, Applicant.

Mr. Rocco asks if there are any exhibits that were not included in their applications and Mr. Flannery responds they would like to included the coloring rendering. They mark this as Exhibit A-1.

Ms. Daroshefski begins her testimony stating this is approximately a 41-acre site. Since the last time they were heard they have removed the pump station, raised the site slightly (certify gravity sanitary sewer), and changed the location where the water connection was.

The water connection was previously along Christina Lane and Fryers Lane, now for the approval they are seeking Fryers Lane and along Morgan Road.

They are still having the same amount of lots with 82 units. Still the same two basins and same entrance. As previously mentioned the only changes are the removing of the pump station and the water main connections.

Mr. Flannery states they had a response to T & M review letter and there was some request for some new items and asks if Ms. Daroshefski could address those. She replies in terms of the testimony they agree there are no further progress for additional relief. She doesn't assume there will be any issues in terms of ground water for the basements or in terms of depth of ground water. They are in accordance with the MUA for the sewer and water system so that they are adequately serving to this development.

Ms. Daroshefski speaks about the traffic impact study and they are concluding that this development will not result in any significant impact on the studies of the intersection in the traffic report. And all units are expected to still continue to operate at good levels of service during the peak of a.m. and p.m. hours.

Mr. Flannery states the various comments regarding conditions of the prior approval and they are going to comply to satisfy all of those conditions set forth in their March 11th response letter. Ms. Daroshefski agrees to everything in the letter except for the comment regarding electric, telephone and gas services to be designed on the plans. However, they are seeking for final approval and the utility companies will design based on that final approval.

1. #1723A - Morgan Development Group LLC – Final Major Subdivision Amendment (cont.)

Mr. White addresses his review letter dated January 31st, 2024. There are only a couple issues to discuss in front of the Board.

First is item #10 is their letter, where Mr. White asks Mr. Kernan to point to the soil balance area. This area is where a large amount is to remain vegetated/treat under the previous applications. In order to lift the site to get the utilities and sewer to work there are going to cut approximately 8 or 9 feet. So, they are going to take 8 or 9 feet of soil out of there, the back area, and bring it into the development to lift the site. Which resulted in a clear area that will be very flat, somewhere in the area of 1%. This is flatter than Mr. White would like to see, in terms of drainage, so you don't get standing or ponding water or wet soggy areas.

Mr. White would like the applicants to test the soil at the depth of 9' down and show Mr. White it's still sandy and there are no clay layers or salty soils that would hold the water and the area will drain well. These are yard areas because the lots extend all the way back of the subdivision even though there is a conservation easement.

Their plans do call for them to replant the area that they are clearing but Mr. White does not want too much standing water if there are poor soils there. This would not be good for the vegetation that is being put in there. Mr. White has asked the applicants to look and see if they can increase the slope any to get it up closer to the 1.5% or even a little more. The applicants did agree and stated they would try to do but it would depend on the amount of dirt they take out.

Mr. White reiterates they will do an official soil testing after the soil is removed and can test a few more feet down. And to work to try to improve the slope of that area when they are done. He states the Board has to look at all of the vegetation being removed, some is put back but it is not mature vegetation and will take some time to grow back in. And this is not much of a buffer to the property to the left of the plan as it was there under previous applications.

Mr. White states the phasing of the project is slightly different. The entrance road is Phase 1, staying on the top of the loop with Phase 2 and Phase 3 will depend on how the developer proceeds to the sales/how quickly those phases merge together. Mr. White says what was on the plans is putting the smaller storm basin on the right in Phase 1. And the other basin in Phase 2. They realized during their review is that both basins are needed right out front because they will have to do the clearing right out front. So, draining the left side of the plan they need both basins.

Mr. Kernan begins his testimony by stating this was approved many years ago and it is coming forth for the amendment to eliminate the pump station and go gravity with the sewer. He asks Mr. Schatz if he has the Pinelands development credits as needed and he replies yes. Mr. Kernan states this was one of the conditions because of the density.

1. #1723A - Morgan Development Group LLC – Final Major Subdivision Amendment (cont.)

Mr. Kernan comments about the buffers. The previous plan kept a lot of the woods but to get the fill to raise the site, to eliminate pump station/drain gravity out the back, there is a lot more cleared. He states there is also more clearing, not just in the back of the site in the south, but to the west to the north of the site. It is proposed to clear right to the northern property line from Morgan road back. Mr. Kernan points out on the Exhibit that from one point and half way back is a big wooded lot shaped strangely, frontage on both Morgan and New Brooklyn road. But then there is a big rectangular lot in front of that lot which is the junkyard. The buffer that was not needed in the past because it was going to remain wooded is now needed.

Mr. Kernan states these areas need to be beefed up and the first five lots need to be beefed up with buffers. Whether its staggered or comet, a combination of evergreens and some other stuff, along the auto parts salvage yard there needs to be a very strong buffer. The applicants agree to work with the Board Professionals and arrive on some sufficient buffers.

Mr. Kernan states the clearing limit line in the rear of Lot 23 should be adjusted to not infringe upon the conservation easement area. Ms. Daroshefski agrees to this.

Mr. Kernan says under housekeeping there was a condition from before that the applicant had agreed to an open space/recreation fee of \$2,500 per building lot or an amount higher if a waiver from the basin maintenance fee is grated, which occurred. Mr. Flannery states this was addressed in their prior resolution.

Mr. Dochney states he has not reviewed this application so he does not want to comment on anything else, but he agrees/supports with Mr. White and Mr. Kernan.

Mr. Wolfe would like to make sure the MUA was included in the pump station and are aware of it. Ms. Daroshefski replies yes.

Mr. Brown asks about the contamination from the junk yard to the lot facing it, has there been any types of plans to remediate the soil or test the soil. He is concern with contamination from the inflow from the junkyard. And asked the applicants if they have taken any steps to test the soil. Ms. Daroshefski replies they have not tested that area. Mr. Kernan states in Phase 1 the soil was tested in that area. Mr. O'Reilly states he would assume the developer would have completed Phase 1 on the property. Mr. Kernan says Phase 1 was done on July 30th, 2021.

Mr. Marino asks the Engineers about the buffering near the junkyard. He believes the town is going to have problems down the road when people move in along that if there is not a really beefed up buffering. He lives on Radix road, about .5 miles away, he can here the banging when its fall and there are no trees or no leaves on the trees at all. He states it is loud and the houses that will be backing up to it, there needs to be adequate buffering. Ms. Daroshefski replies they will work with the review Engineers and have plans for that.

1. #1723A - Morgan Development Group LLC – Final Major Subdivision Amendment (cont.)

Mr. O'Reilly adds to Mr. Marino's statement and says they have had numerous complaints to the town on that. While the noise is within the limits of the activities they still get a lot of complaints. He would like to go on the record and say that if they get complaints, they are going to give the same results that they have been giving for years, which it is within the decimal limits of that commercial activity and the residents are in a buy or beware. He states the noise will be there and you can buffer it as much as you want, but you're going to hear it. As a town it's within the limits of the noise through working hours and he just wanted to make sure that this was on the record.

Ms. Kennedy says she lives a good mile or two away from there and she can hear it in her backyard.

Mr. Kernan asks if a point of sale disclosure would be a good idea.

Mr. Marino asks where is the sample house going to be and says that really doesn't matter because you're going to hear it when you go there during the day. He doesn't think it is obscene, it is just there. He doesn't believe you would have to disclosure it because if someone goes for an open house during regular work hours then they are going to hear something. Mr. Flannery states they will have a sufficient buffer there.

Mr. Brown asks when they finish the gravity fed septic system will it be available for anybody else on that road. They respond that this would be an MUA issue. Mr. Marino asks if they are going out the back with the sewer line and not going out to the street. Mr. Kernan replies they have to bring it very close to Morgan.

Mr. Flannery asks Ms. Daroshefski how deep is the first manhole coming off of Morgan and she was not sure. Mr. Kernan replies with all of the fill that they have been talking about to get it to pitch the roads and the sewer under the roads out and back, he imagines it would be hard for any other property to get in it by gravity. Could someone pump up to that with MUA approval, perhaps he states. Mr. Flannery agrees. The applicants say it is not that deep. Mr. Kernan states the new road coming up off of Morgan to get cover as well, so maybe 5 feet from the new road. Compared to Morgan it may be a couple feet deep.

Mr. Young is looking at the grading and asks about the residential property in the front corner. He says according to the grading it looks lower than the surrounding areas, is there anything to stop water drainage from the higher level of these houses. They ask if Mr. Young is addressing the existing house on the lower right and he says yes. Mr. Flannery states they have a swell on the plans around the jagged edge of the property to direct water to their basins. Ms. Daroshefski states they are providing a berm to prevent additional water.

Ms. Gallagher ask if the public that is present would like to look at the plans and they take a five-minute break.

Motion passed to close the hearing to the public.

1. #1723A - Morgan Development Group LLC – Final Major Subdivision Amendment (cont.)

Mr. Rocco summarized the application for the Board.

Motion to approve by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Marino. Roll call; Ayes- Mr. Brown, Mr. Marino, Mr. Giacomucci, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Young. Nays-Zero.

2. #538-SP – Ameri Auto Inc. – Minor Site Plan

The applicant is proposing a minor site plan to construct 720 square feet of retail store addition to the existing electric room and restroom building and reconfiguration of the parking area, on the site of an existing fueling station; along with any other variances or waivers deemed necessary by the Board. The property is located at 2944 Fries Mill Road, also known as Block 14701, Lot 1 in the Commercial Zoning District.

Len Schwartz, Attorney, is representing Lakhwinders Multani and Rudpinder Kaur. Mr. Rocco swears in Mr. Multani, Ms. Kaur and William Gilmore, Engineer.

Mr. Schwartz begins by stating this is an application for a convenient store. There is already an existing gas station located at the corner of Fries Mill and Cross Keys Road that the applicant is operating. On the existing asphalt, as indicating in the reports, there is a convenient store going to be put there. It is a minor site plan and the only variance is a buffer that is really preexisting. There is a 10' buffer requirement, preexisting is 9', so there is a one-foot difference in terms for the variance. They are waiting for Gloucester County Planning Board since resubmitting some documentations, but all documentations have been submitted.

Mr. Gilmore begins by showing the Board a color rendering to the existing site plan that was including in the application package. The oriented to plan, north is straight up, Glassboro-Cross Keys road is running horizontal on page, Fries Mill road is running vertical on the page. It is approximately a 2.0-acre lot. It was currently improved in the north western corner, which is the existing pump island, canopy, kiosk and existing parking spaces. To the right or east of the corner there is an electric room and a rest room.

The rest room is supplied by a multi septic system and a well. The septic system is located in the east area on the site and the well is located north east of behind the existing restroom.

Currently, the area is all parking lot and they are proposing to add 720 square foot. It is a 24' x 30' addition onto the existing building. The retail store will offer products such as cigarettes, soda, gums, etc. They will be servicing the actual clients that are already visiting the gas station. It is an added convenience for them because a lot of customers are now asking for cigarettes and such things.

2 #538-SP – Ameri Auto Inc. – Minor Site Plan

They are proposing a sidewalk out front and reconfiguring the parking lot. Mr. Gilmore points out the light gray area on the plans is just a part of the pavement they have to cut away and regrade/reshape so storm water still runs to the existing basins They are located on the sides and front that run along Fries Mills and Glassboro-Cross Keys.

Mr. Gilmore spoke to Mr. Kernan and Mr. Dochney, whom all agree about the comments on the existing trash enclosure located there, which is dilapidated. Mr. Gilmore states instead of restoring it, they are going to relocate as suggest, so it is easier for the trash truck. They will strike a loading area so it is obvious where the trucks will unload. They have plenty of parking so they can take a few spaces away for that.

The site circulation is you would come in, service to get fuel and then walk or park to go into the store. You can exit either the driveway on Fries Mill or the driveway on Glassboro.

Some of the waivers they are requesting will be eliminated by moving the trash enclosure by the loading area. They will re-stripe the handicap stall per the ordinance. They will comply with both sets of review letters. They will work with Mr. Dochney as for more landscaping around the building, around the sign and in the front yard areas. They would like to be more in compliance with the code for the landscape requirements at this time.

Mr. Schwartz asks about the number of employees, Mr. Multani replies around 2 employees, one inside and one outside. Mostly likely 4 total all day.

Mr. Schwartz asks if it will be a general convenient store type of sales. He replies yes, soda, gum, cigarettes, candy, etc.

In the report there indicates a U-Haul truck on the property and will that be removed and Mr. Multani replies yes. They will not need to go to the Zoning Board for a use variance for the truck and he replies no.

Mr. Kernan begins with a few submission requirements that are not on the plan and he supports waiving those requirements. The topography that is gathered when they put together their survey/topographic map, not only is it on the tract but it is within 200 feet of any paved portion of the tract. He says this is not the case, it does not extend 200 feet around the entire property itself. It is a very limited topographic survey. But even within the paved portion of the tract, it only shows the area that is being proposed to be changed around; to add the convenience store, addition on, move the trash enclosure and move parking around.

Mr. Kernan states the property is on septic and the well is shown which is directly behind the existing building with a drainage basin behind the well. The septic system is off to the right side and there is a clean out to the right of the framed building. Mr. Kernan is undecided if that septic

2. #538-SP – Ameri Auto Inc. – Minor Site Plan

system needs to be located, but certainly any work done relocating stuff should not be done where the septic system is.

Mr. Kernan speaks about architectural buildings, elevation shown-front side, rear views and so forth. He asks the applicants if they have anything to show what the look of the convenient store addition might look like. Mr. Multani does not have anything to show but he is planning for a steel building with the front being a large glass window. Mr. Kernan states as a condition of approval he would like Mr. Multani to turn into Ms. Gallagher what the building is going to look like and they can do one quick review. If there is any objection to the look of the building then they can bring it back in front of the Board. The applicants agree.

Mr. Kernan reiterates there are no sewer and water facilities to show but there is the well and septic shown. He will leave it up to the Board but he is fine with waiving it, but would prefer if Mr. Gilmore would figure out where that is going to be. And to make sure any improvements proposed are not messing up the septic system.

Mr. Kernan recommends an out right waiver for will serve letter from utility companies. The property already has electric so there is no need for will serve letter. But Mr. Kernan wonders if the applicant will need to go to the County Health Department to get a waiver of looking at the Septic. Mr. O'Reilly says the applicants are going to be required to file with Gloucester County Board of Health for the septic. Mr. Kernan states they are not adding restrooms but they are adding a sink or something. He says the Board as no information because they do not have any floor plans of the new addition. He agrees with Mr. O'Reilly that the County Health Department will be an outside approval. Mr. O'Reilly believes the Township will not issue the building permit for the facility unless the County Planning Board touches it.

Mr. Kernan states that is all for the completeness.

Motion to deem the application by Mr. Marino, seconded by Mr. Giacomucci. All Ayes- motion passed.

Mr. Kernan states now that the applicant is going to provide the loading spaces the Board can regard comment 1 on page 4. And with the new trash enclosure that takes care of item 2 and 3 on page 4.

Mr. Kernan's comment 1 under automotive fueling station and automotive fueling station convenience store states no parking of commercial vehicles shall be permitted. There was a U-Haul parked on the property but the applicant has agreed to remove it so that goes away.

Mr. Dochney begins with his report dated February 5th 2024. He states for the record this is a combination of a gas station/convenient store permitted as a conditional use and they have to satisfy all the conditional requirements. Most of these conditions are maintenance issues and not measurable conditions such as a setback or buffer.

2 #538-SP – Ameri Auto Inc. – Minor Site Plan

The building and the premises must be kept clean and no refuse shall be permitted to accumulate therein or thereon. He asks Mr. Multani if he will be keeping his site clean and he agrees.

Mr. Dochney states they have to have working restrooms on the premises and Mr. Multani agrees.

There will be no major repairs of vehicles on site and Mr. Multani agrees and states there will not be a repair shop.

The applicant's signage is supposed to be complainant with Township code. Mr. Dochney states they do not have any details on signs. He asks Mr. Multani if he installs any signs on the premises he will come to the Township and submit a signage package and comply. Mr. Multani agrees.

He states any case or rack for the display of petroleum products shall be constructed of metal and may not exceed seven feet in height. He asks if the applicant will have any propane tanks that are 10' in height and he replies no.

No parking of commercial vehicles that Mr. Kernan already pointed out and the applicant agrees to get rid of the U-Haul trucks.

Mr. Dochney asks if he will be selling any cars on the property and Mr. Multani responds no. And no towing services will be operated from the premises and he agrees no towing.

Mr. Dochney is satisfied with the conditions of the conditional use therefore the Board has the jurisdiction to review the application and not being sent to the Zoning Board.

He states there is one variance required and as indicated by Mr. Schwartz it is an existing condition. It is a 10' buffer required and on the west side they have an existing 9' buffer. That is already there and they are not changing it and this application does not impact it in anyway.

Mr. Dochney says there are a few design waivers. The buffer is supposed to include a combination of grass and groundcover. In their buffer area they do have grass and groundcover about half on each side. On the north and west sides of the driveways there just signage but the south and east side there is quite a bit of landscaping there, including shady trees and shrubs. He believes the vegetation they have in most of their buffer is adequate. He would like to see a little more in terms of the base of the existing free-standing signs. He asks if they could plant some flowers and shrubs to enhance the esthetics of the area a little bit more. He suggests at the edge of the parking if they could add shrubs or bush to frame the parking lot a little bit more.

They have agreed to put in a loading space. Mr. Dochney is unsure if a loading space is absolutely necessary for a small convenient store but it will remove the requirement for that waiver.

2 #538-SP – Ameri Auto Inc. – Minor Site Plan

He says technically there is a waiver because they are supposed to have landscaping between the building and the parking lot. But given the size of the property, Mr. Dochney feels this may be unnecessary. He says if they agree to do the other landscaping then that would more than offset any impacts from that.

Mr. Dochney states our Township code calls for a 12-foot wide handicap space but what the applicant is proposing meets ADA requirements. Mr. Dochney and Mr. Kernan prefer the applicants to keep what they already have on their plans. The standard ADA space, the 8-foot wide striped side and the 8-foot parking space. Also, he assumes the ramp to get up to the front door is ADA compliant. He believes the Board should grant this waiver and they should not comply with the section of the code, which could possibly be in violation of ADA. So, he will go with the Federal standard rather than the Township's code standard.

Mr. Dochney comments there are no architectural drawings of the building and would like to see something. Generally, he assumes if you have a building footprint then some level of an architectural drawing has already been put together. There is a possibility that once you actually get architectural drawings, if the footprint is substantially different, the applicant may have to come back to the Board. He states this is a very small building and agrees with Mr. Kernan, once they have something drawn up they submit it to Ms. Gallagher and they all can look at it.

Mr. Dochney concludes if the applicant agrees to the additional landscaping then he has no issues with application.

Mr. Marino supports the architectural because it is an addition on the existing building and with tying a roof on he wants to make sure it is aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Marino is in favor of this application and believes it is a great use of the property to add this in there.

Mr. Marino asks if the existing restroom is a public restroom. Mr. Multani replies it was mostly for employees but if someone wanted to use it than they are welcome. Asked if it was one unisex restroom Mr. Multani replies yes.

Mr. Marino saw the lighting plan and notice new lighting on the corner of the building. With the proposed building addition, it will block natural light and any visibility of the restroom. His concern is security. Will there be cameras and Mr. Multani reply yes. Mr. Marino suggests lighting in the back where the restroom will be so there is not a dead space.

Motion passed to close the hearing to the public.

Mr. Wolfe would like to state this is the best petroleum transfer places in Williamstown and he fuels there every day.

Mr. Rocco summarized the application for the Board.

Motion to approve by Mr. Wolfe, seconded by Mr. Marino. Roll call; Ayes- Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Marino, Mr. Brown, Mr. Giacomucci, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Young.

Approval of Minutes:

1. March 7, 2024

Motion of minutes approved. All-Ayes. Nays-Zero.

Reports:

Adjournment: This meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

These minutes are an extract from the meeting that was held on the above date and are not a verbatim account or to be construed as an official transcript of the proceedings.
Respectfully submitted by: Scottie Gabbianelli, Clerk Transcriber