

**Highland Township Planning Commission
Record of the 1391st Meeting
September 15, 2022**

Roll Call:

Scott Green, Chairperson
Eugene H. Beach, Jr
Grant Charlick - absent
Kevin Curtis
Chris Heyn
Beth Lewis - absent
Roscoe Smith
Scott Temple - absent
Russ Tierney

Also Present:

Elizabeth J Corwin, Planning Director

Visitors: 6

Chairman Scott Green called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Hearing

Agenda Item #1:	Parcel:	11-30-200-042
	Zoning:	C-2 General Commercial District
	Address:	Vacant M-59
	File#:	URSA 22-01
	Request:	Special Approval of Land Use for self-storage in C-2 Zoning District
	Applicant:	Feigley Two, LLC
	Owner:	Feigley Two, LLC

Mr. Beach introduced the request for special approval of land use to allow self-storage on a parcel zoned C-2, General Commercial Zoning District. This request applies to a portion of a site plan previously approved by the Planning Commission at the August 18, 2022 meeting, conditioned upon addressing the use issue. The project is located on two parcels on the south side of M-59, west of Hickory Ridge Road. The special land use permit would apply only to the northern parcel. Self-storage is a permitted use on the southern parcel.

Mr. Dan LeClair, P.E, with Green Tech Engineering, was present representing the applicant. He explained that they are working to complete the engineering drawings for the project.

Mr. Green opened the public hearing at 7:33 p.m. There was no public comment. The public hearing was closed at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Beach noted that this special use approval was required only due to the oddity of the mixed zoning. He believed the request was reasonable and that the applicants had done a good job of shielding the use from the neighbors.

Mr. Curtis made a motion to recommend the approval of the special land use permit to allow use of that portion of parcel 11-30-200-042 which is contained within the site plan previously approved by the Planning Commission for Prime Time Self Storage. Mr. Tierney supported the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Curtis - yes, Mr. Heyn - yes, Mr. Green - yes, Mr. Beach - yes, Mr. Tierney - yes, Mr. Smith - yes. The motion was approved with six yes votes.

Work Session

Agenda Item #2:

Parcel #:	11-15-351-015
Zoning:	IM Industrial and Manufacturing
Address:	1655 N Milford
File#:	SPR 22-09
Request:	Site Plan Approval
Applicant:	Dave Borlace
Owner:	Borlace Associates, LLC

Mr. Green introduced the site plan review for the addition of a warehouse building at 1655 N Milford Road, parcel zoned IM, Industrial Manufacturing. There is an existing residential structure on site that has been converted to office use. Mr. Beach explained the historic significance of the home, which originated in the Benjamin Leonard family, and represents the cobblestone construction of the early 1900's.

Mr. Tierney disclosed that he owns the property adjacent to the south. He has no issues with the project and believes he could fairly in his role as a Planning Commissioner. Mr. Beach noted that it is good practice to recuse oneself when there is an immediate proximity since it could have the appearance of an impropriety. Mr. Green moved to recuse Mr. Tierney from the discussion as an adjacent property owner. Mr. Beach supported the motion which carried with an unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Dave Borlace, property owner and Mr. Chad Holdwick of Greentech Engineering, Inc. were present to answer questions.

Mr. Beach asked if the variance issues are due to the nature of the site as a "through lot" as this parcel does not benefit from access to Transfer Drive. Ms. Corwin explained that adjacent parcels had been handled two ways—one parcel was treated as a traditional lot with one front yard, and another had been requested variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Beach noted that Transfer Drive was not intended as access for these parcels, and that it could easily have been separated by a one foot spite strip, in which case the front yard setbacks would not apply. Since this parcel does not benefit from access to Transfer Drive, it should not be penalized as a double loaded lot. Mr. Beach suggested that ordinance language be proposed to deal with similar situations, as well as corner lots adjacent to undeveloped or underdeveloped rights of way.

Mr. Beach noted that there were two more issues identified in the Planning Department memorandum. One issue is that the photometric plan shows no light on the farthest parking spaces. Mr. Borlace explained that the most eastern spaces were covered by lighting on the back of the residential garage, which were not included in the photometric plan. Mr. Holdwick of Greentech Engineering noted that the wall pack lights are mounted at 15 feet high; but may be able to light the farthest northwestern spaces if they were raised a bit.

The other issue is whether it is appropriate to allow the area west of the garage to remain as a gravel surface. Mr. Holdwick explained that the gravel area was behind the building and will see very little traffic, since the overhead doors are on the north face of the building. It is intended to limit the amount of runoff to the existing drainage basin. Mr. Beach noted that overhead doors on the west side of the building would be impractical due to the snow.

The Planning Commission discussed the marginal access requirement. It was acknowledged that marginal access was not practicable for this site, and marginal access for an industrial neighborhood is not as relevant as it is in retail settings as there are seldom “linked” trips where one visits from business to business.

Mr. Smith asked about the landscaping plan. Mr. Borlace noted that the new construction is surrounded by a six foot privacy fence, and no landscaping in that yard would be visible from the street. Mr. Smith would still like to see some shrubs added to the yard.

Ms. Corwin noted that the Fire Marshall had reviewed the plans, and while he has no concerns about the site layout, there may be limits on the use of the building, particularly dependent upon what type of products would be stored or whether vehicles would be serviced.

In addition, the engineering consultant has worked with the design engineer. The concepts are sound and will be reviewed in greater detail when construction plans are submitted.

Mr. Beach moved to approve the proposed site plan for a new warehouse building at 1655 N. Milford Road, parcel 11-15-351-015 subject to final review by staff and consultants with the following facts and findings: 1) the lack of access to the private road to the west makes the subject site “not a through-lot” which renders the requirements of a second front yard relationship on the west side as inappropriate. 2) due to the nature of the use of the property, it is acceptable to allow the gravel surface on the west yard behind the building 3) the marginal access would be inappropriate in this industrial neighborhood due to the configuration of neighboring lots. Mr. Green supported the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Curtis - yes, Mr. Heyn - yes, Mr. Green - yes, Mr. Beach - yes, Mr. Smith - yes. The motion was approved with five yes votes.

Mr. Tierney returned to his seat at the table.

Agenda Item #3: Committee Updates
Zoning Board of Appeals:
Township Board:
Highland Downtown Development Authority:
Planning Director’s Update

Committee updates were discussed.

Agenda Item #4: Minutes: August 18, 2022

Mr. Beach moved to approve the minutes of August 18, 2022, as presented. Mr. Curtis supported the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

At 8:20 p.m., Mr. Tierney made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Green supported the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Roscoe Smith, Secretary
ARS/ejc